



SEPTA Forward: Bus
Revolution

Transit Talk

July 14, 2022

AGENDA

- 1 Welcome and Introductions
- 2 Update on Bus Revolution
- 3 What's Next
- 4 Get Involved

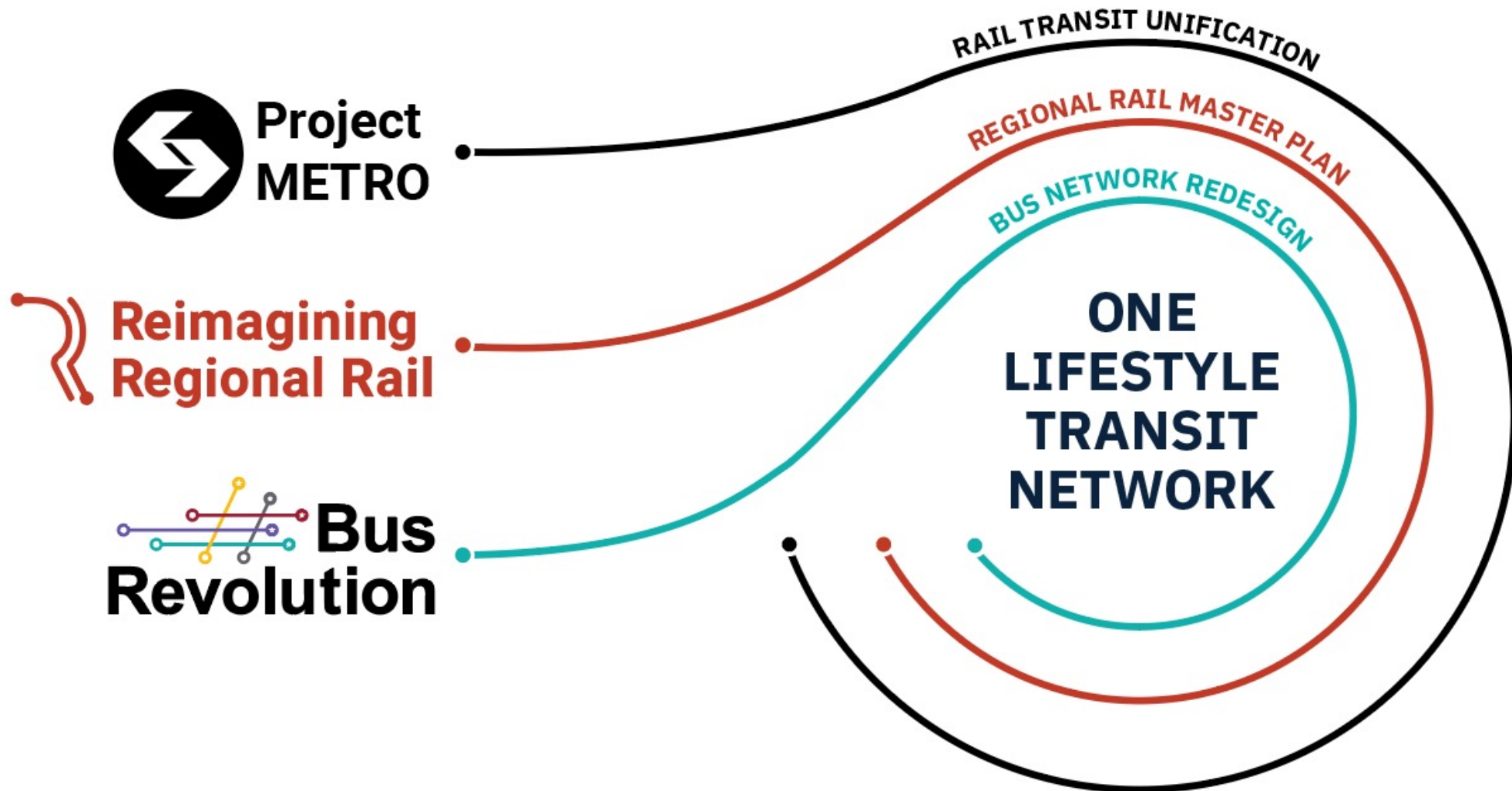



Welcome and Introductions



1

SEPTA Forward – Key Projects





Bus Revolution

“Blank Slate” redesign of SEPTA’s fixed-route bus network

- Design new bus routes
- Redesign existing routes
- Recommend service structure or hierarchy
- Introduce new service types
- Identify capital improvements

Established and Confirmed Goals



Put the Rider Experience First

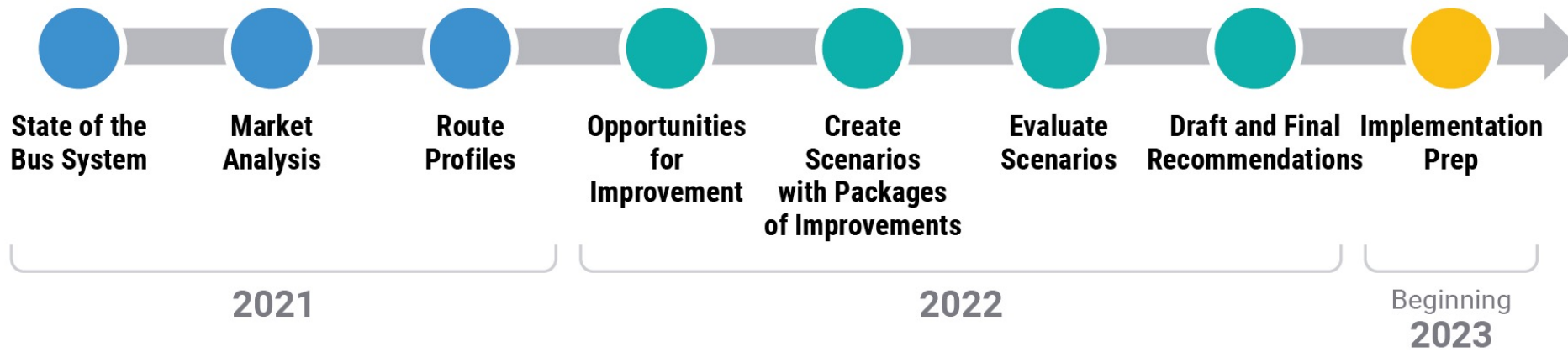


Increase Access to Opportunity

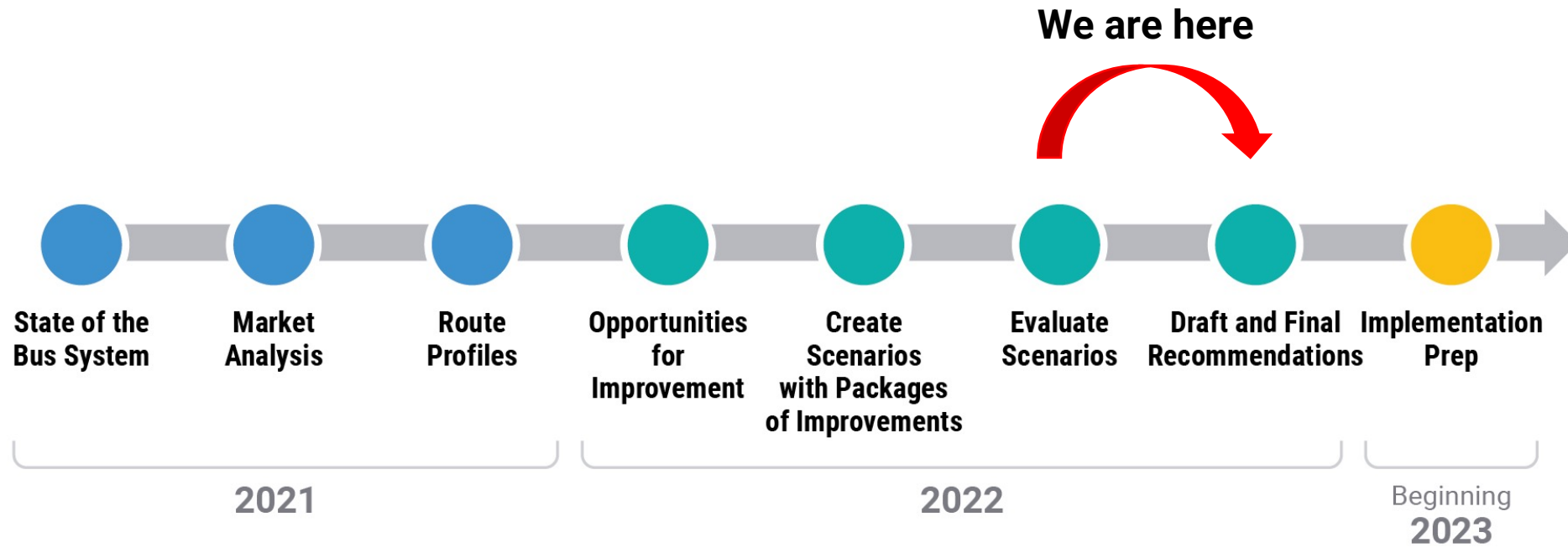


Build Trust with Reliable Service

Project Approach



Project Approach



SEPTA Forward: Bus Revolution

Summer 2022 Update



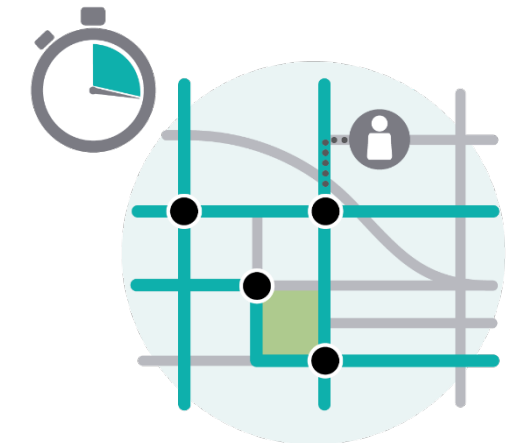
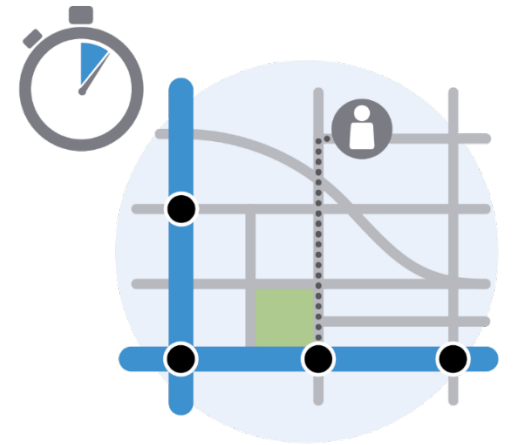
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Bus Revolution Network Options

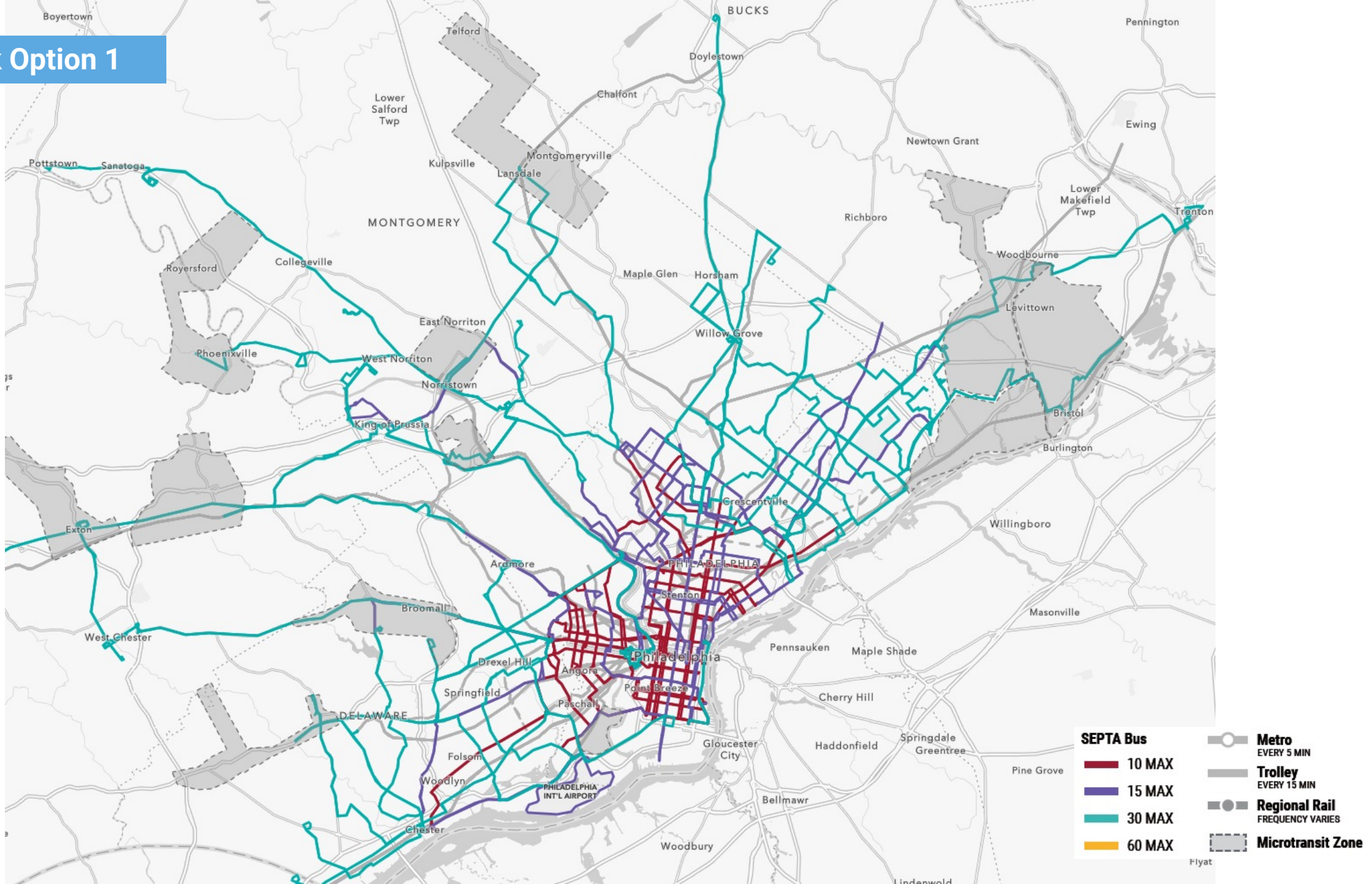
In Spring, 2022 Bus Revolution shared two network options with the public

1. Focus on frequency and simplicity
2. Balance frequency and accessibility

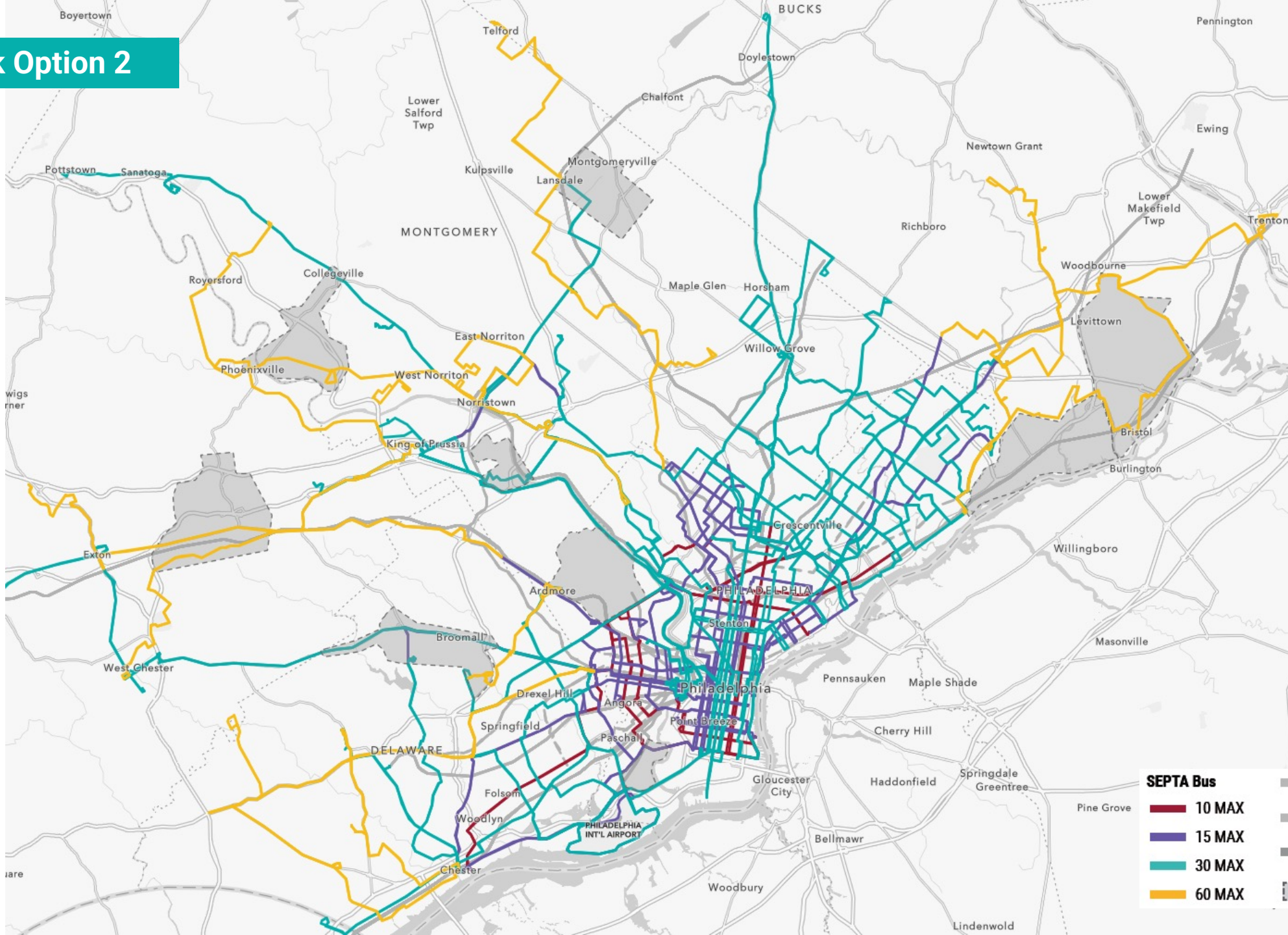
| | Existing Network | Network Option 1 | Network Option 2 |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| All Bus Routes | 125 | 93 | 109 |
| Frequent Bus Routes | 32 | 48 | 36 |
| Microtransit Zones | 0 | 13 | 9 |
| Annual Revenue Hours (<i>in millions</i>) | 3.77 | 3.75 | 3.68 |



Network Option 1



Network Option 2



| | |
|------------------|--|
| SEPTA Bus | Metro EVERY 5 MIN |
| 10 MAX | Trolley EVERY 15 MIN |
| 15 MAX | Regional Rail FREQUENCY VARIES |
| 30 MAX | Microtransit Zone |
| 60 MAX | |

Stakeholder and Community Engagement

Included social media, pop-ups, surveys, and virtual meetings.

Social Media Strategy

Facebook, Instagram,
Twitter, SEPTA App
and Transit App

Pop-Ups at Bus Stops

Talk with Riders about
Network Options

Project Bus

Meet with broader
group of non-riders

Community

Conversations

In-depth conversations
targeted at specific
neighborhoods





Community Engagement by the Numbers

2,669 interactions at pop-ups and events

Handed out postcard and/or talked with staff

9,928 visits to the Story Map

Includes visits to Chinese and Spanish versions

10,539 visited the Bus Revolution website

after seeing a banner on Transit App

13 bus drivers participated in one of two focus groups

Multiple emails, social media posts, and electronic signs

1,774 completed surveys total

2,800 people responded to the survey but failed to complete it

Transit App “push” led to 391 completed surveys

Focused on people living outside of Philadelphia as well as Spanish speakers

Planners visited 8 SEPTA districts

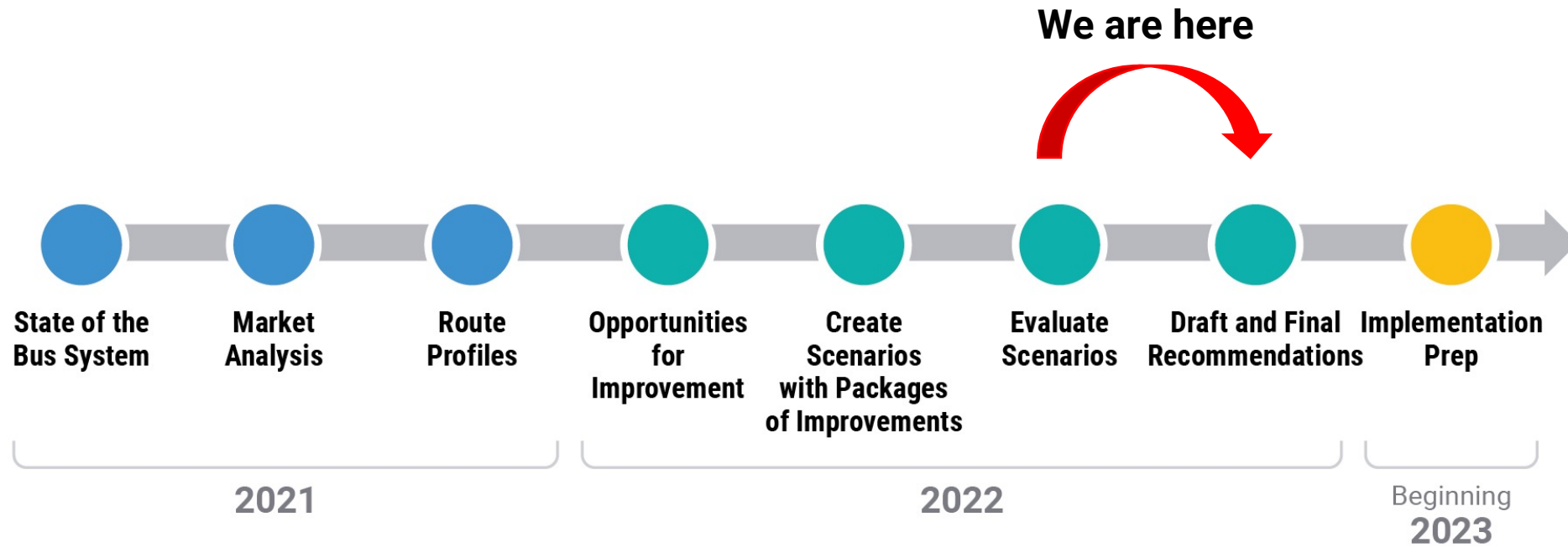
254 participants in Community Conversations

The best attended meetings were in in West Philadelphia, South Philadelphia and Northwest Philadelphia

Lessons Learned

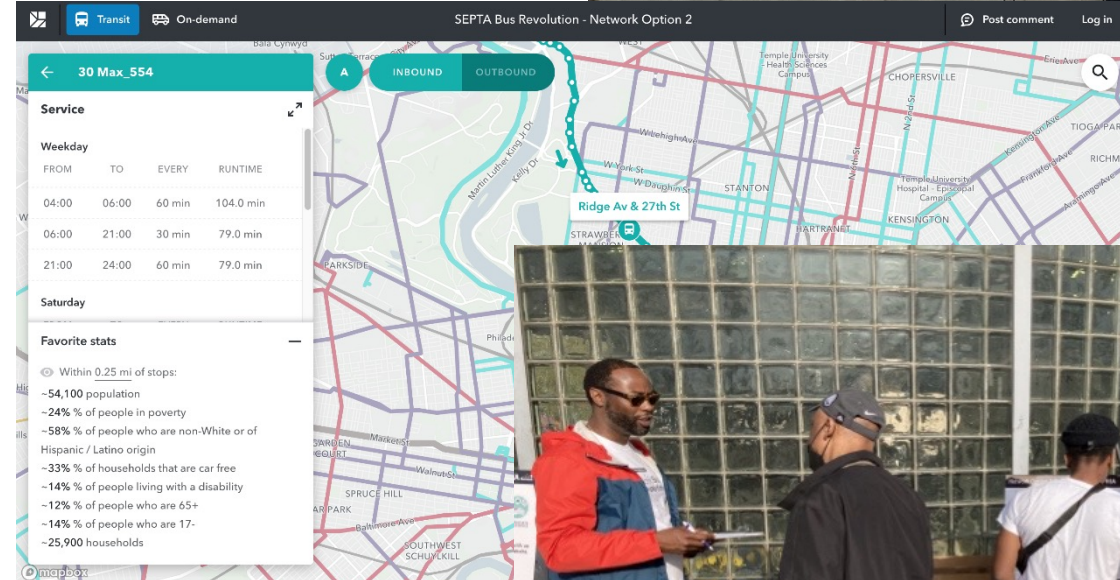
- Comparing and evaluating two network options proved challenging
 - Most people had limited time and attention
 - Exercise felt abstract and challenging
- Comments provided insights into much of the system, especially in Philadelphia
 - Enough information to prepare draft network
 - Limited input on some service choices, especially microtransit
- Awareness is not as high as we'd like
 - Especially in suburbs
 - SEPTA bus drivers and staff
- **Need another round of engagement before developing final draft of proposed changes**

Project Approach



Sources of Information

- Pop-ups
- Project bus
- Community Conversations
- Driver Focus Groups
- In-reach with staff
- Stakeholder conversations
- Surveys
- Emailed comments
- Website comments (in maps)



Survey Responses

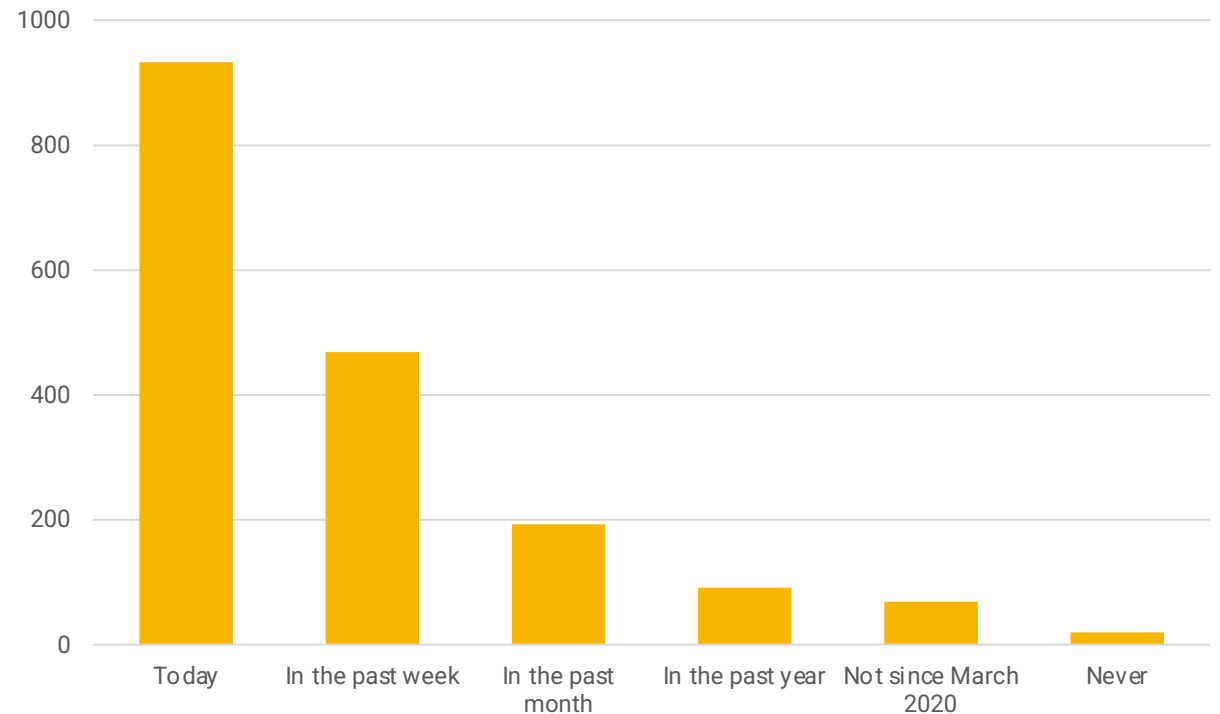
Respondents: 1,774

- Story Map: 940
- Transit App: 834

95% of Respondents have taken a bus since April 2020

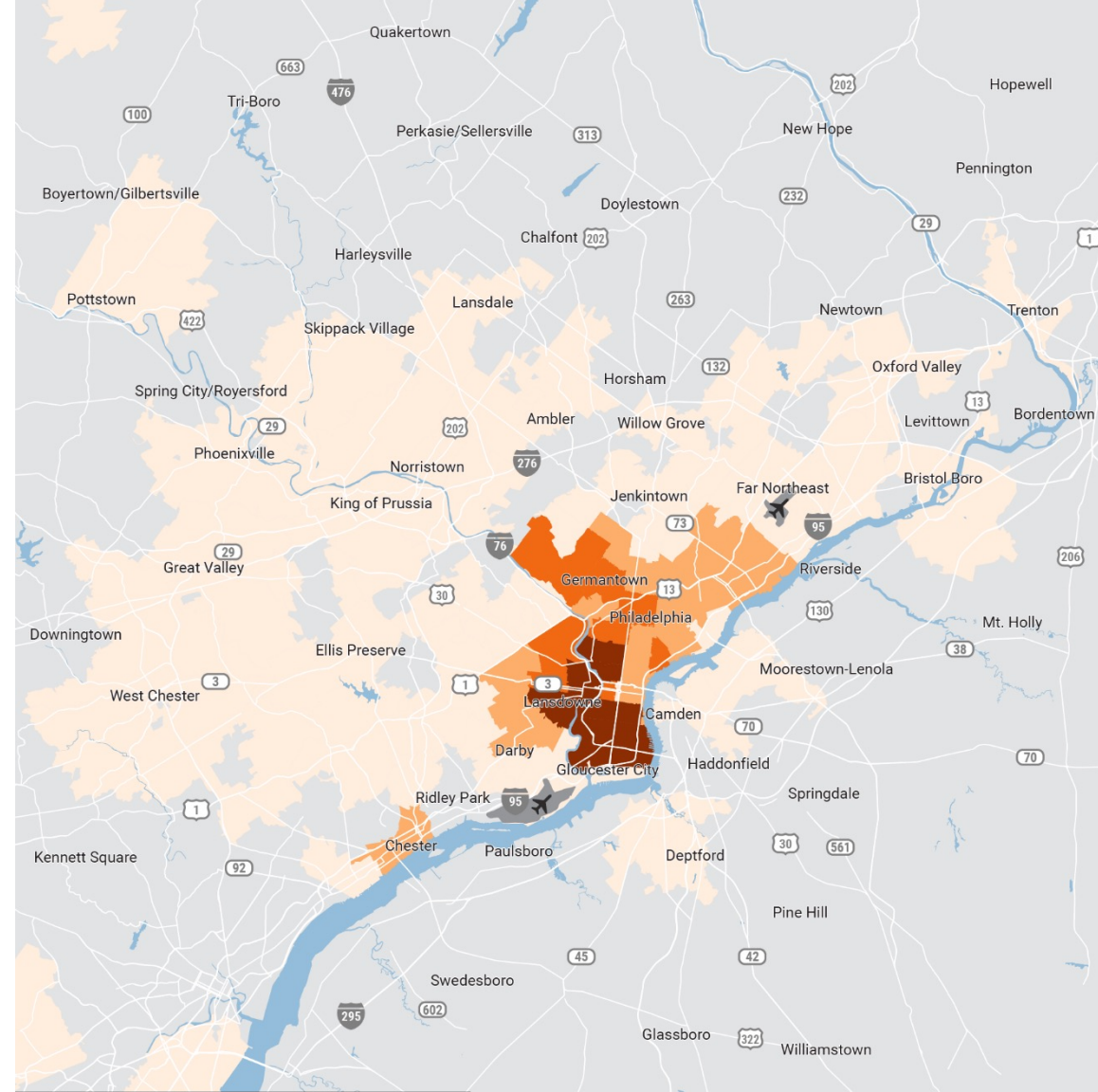
Over half of survey respondents (53%) took a SEPTA bus the day they took the survey

When was the last time you took a trip on a SEPTA bus?

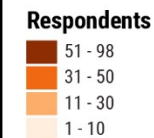


n=1,774

Survey responses were collected throughout SEPTA's service area but concentrated in City of Philadelphia.



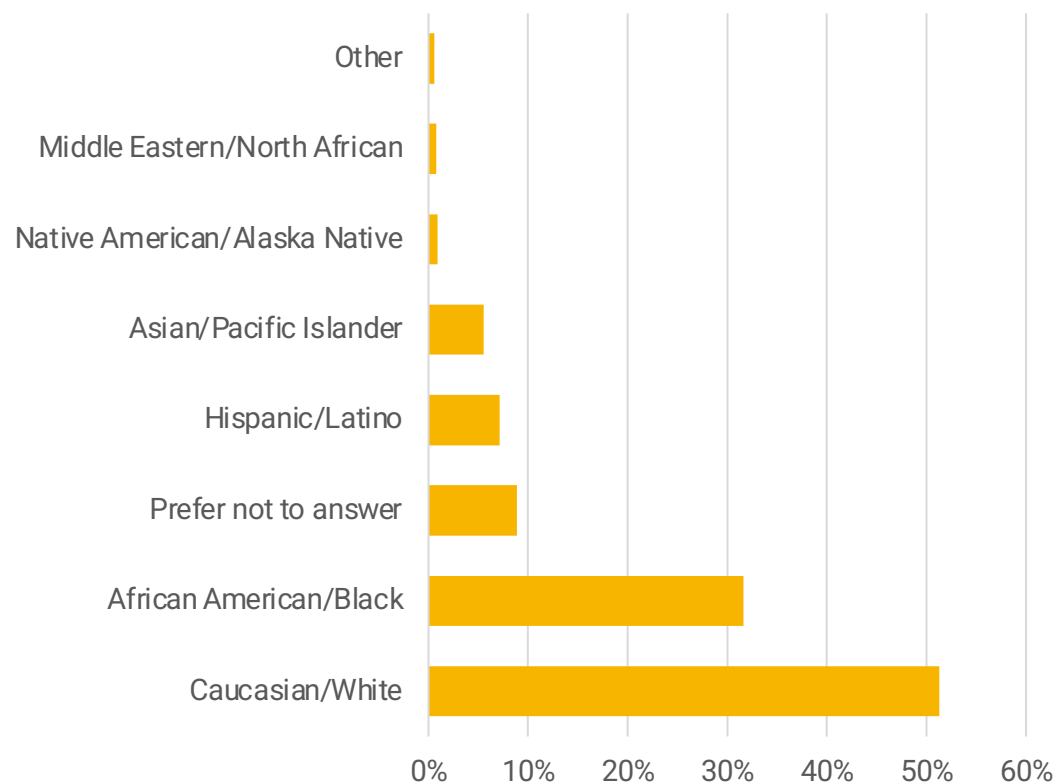
Network Options Survey Respondents by Zip Code



Online survey responses were not representative of SEPTA's bus riders.

Analysis weighted data by race to reflect SEPTA bus riders.

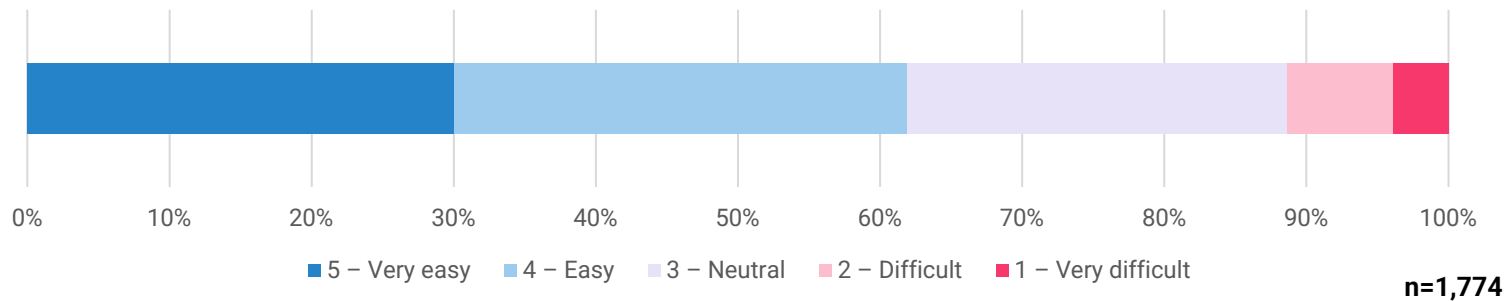
Responses by Race/Ethnicity



**Respondents were allowed to make more than one selection*

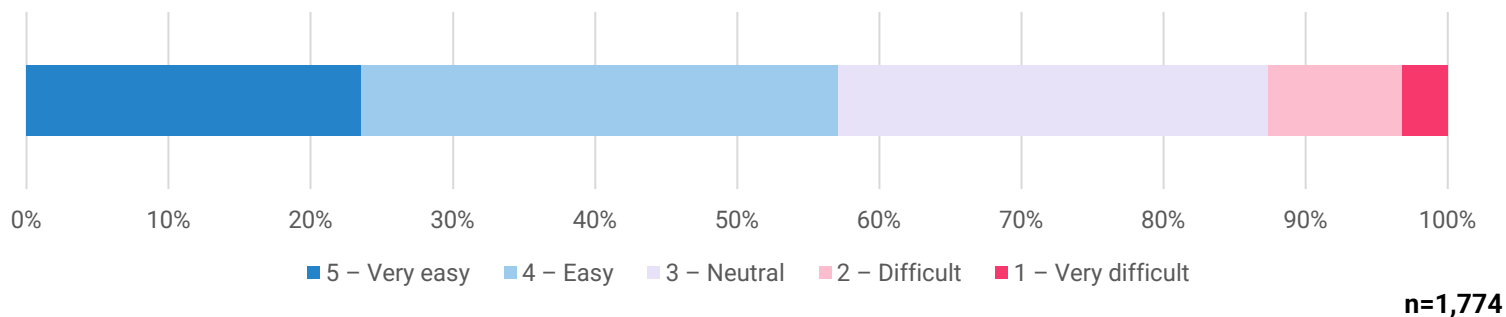
Comparison: Easy to Understand

On a scale of 1-5, how easy is **Network Option 1** to understand?



- 62% of respondents believe **Network Option 1** is easy or very easy to understand.

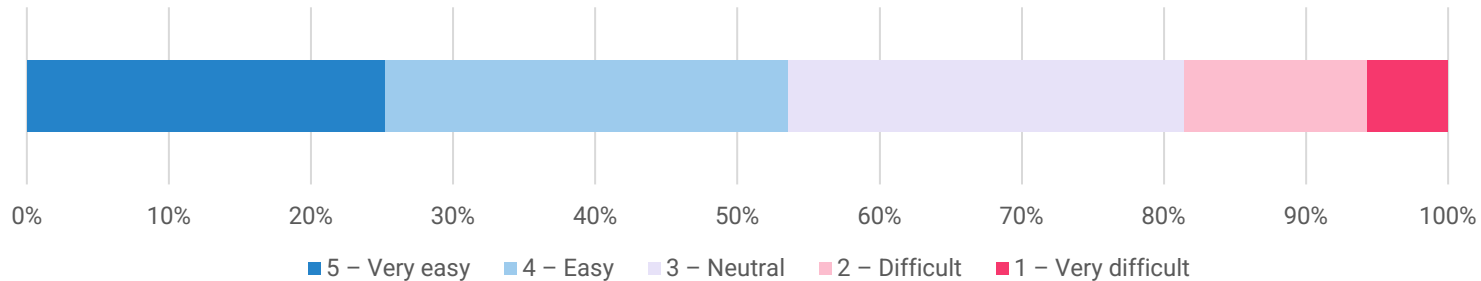
On a scale of 1-5, how easy is **Network Option 2** to understand?



- 57% of respondents believe **Network Option 2** is easy or very easy to understand.

Ease of Use

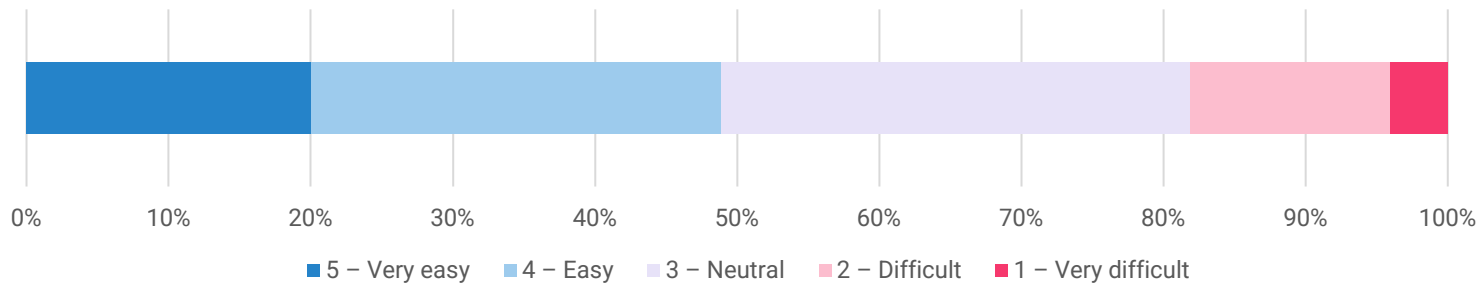
On a scale of 1-5, how easy would **Network Option 1** be to use?



n=1,774

- 54% of respondents believe **Network Option 1** would be easy or very easy to use.

On a scale of 1-5, how easy would **Network Option 2** be to use?

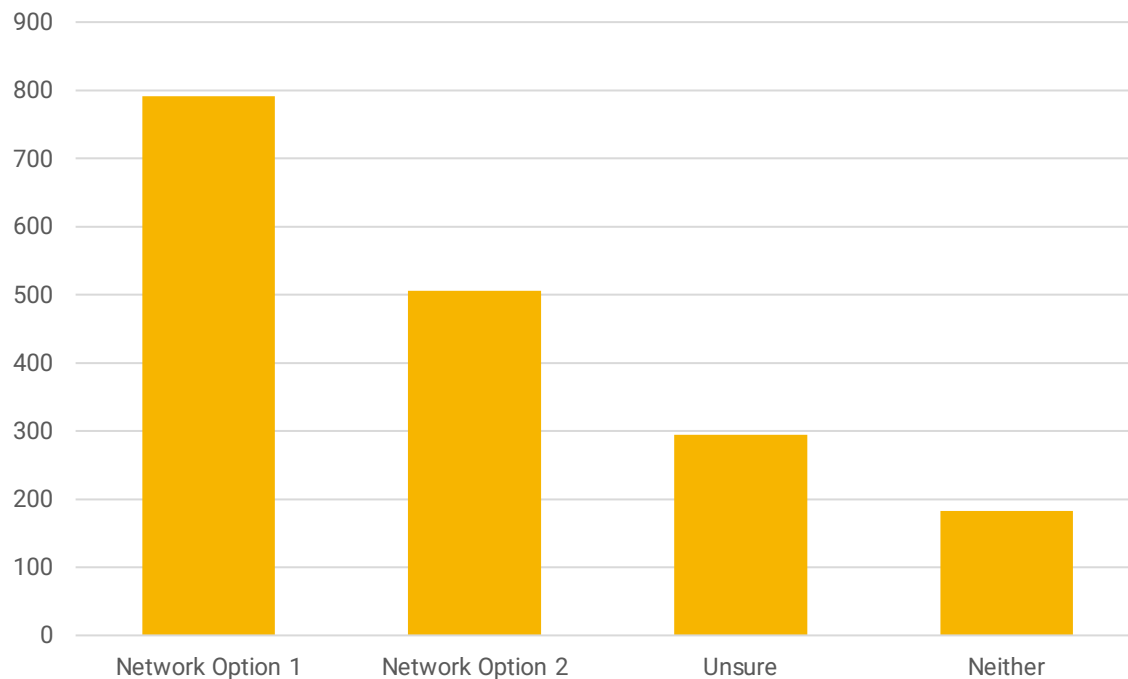


n=1,774

- 49% of respondents believe **Network Option 2** would be easy or very easy to use.

Preferred Option

Overall, which option do you like better -
Network Option 1 or Network Option 2?



n=1,774

- **45% of respondents selected Network Option 1.**
- Generally, more people selected Network Option 1 than 'Network Option 2', 'Unsure', or 'Neither' regardless of age, race/ethnicity, household income, car access or gender.

Reasons for Liking One Option over Another

If you answered "**Network Option 1**" in Question 8, please tell us why.

| | |
|--|-----|
| Buses arrive more frequently, so I won't have to wait as long at the bus stop. | 513 |
| The network looks simpler and easier to understand. | 121 |
| I think my bus trips will be faster. | 104 |
| I like the idea of an on-demand service like microtransit. | 32 |
| Other | 23 |

n= 792

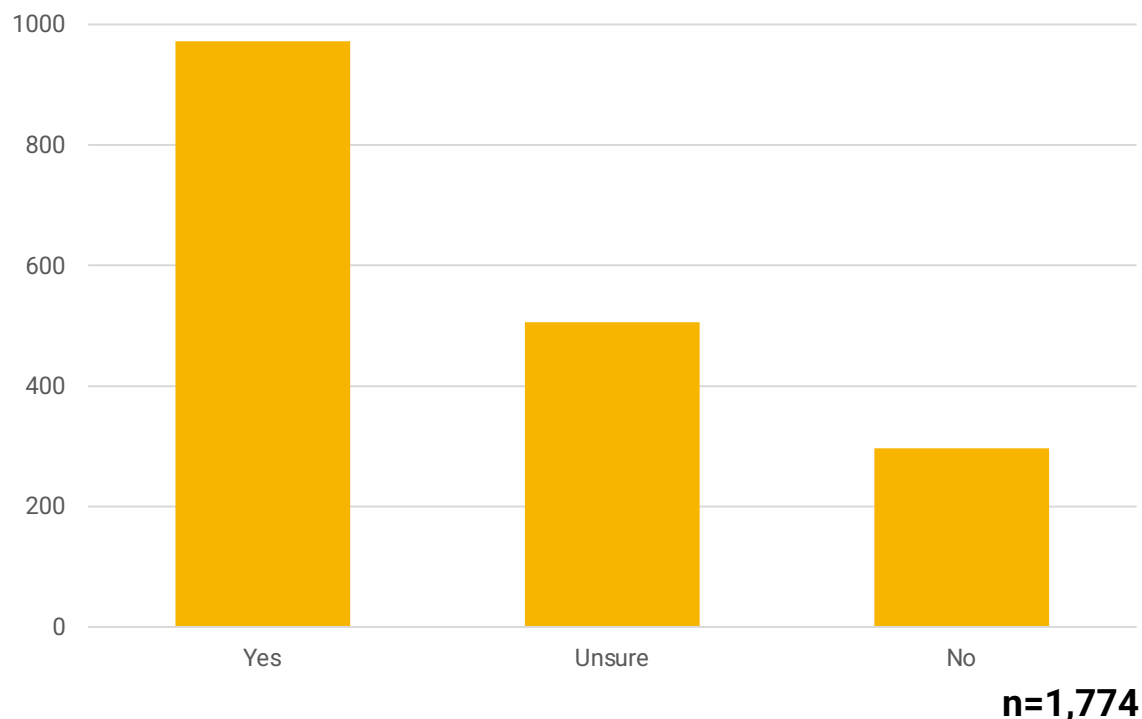
If you answered "**Network Option 2**" in Question 8, please tell us why.

| | |
|--|-----|
| There are more bus routes, so I won't have to walk as far. | 178 |
| I feel like I have more choices and options. | 150 |
| The network looks simpler and easier to understand. | 74 |
| It seems like my bus trips will be faster. | 74 |
| Other | 32 |

n= 506

Microtransit

Assuming the fare is the same (and/or you could use your key card), do you think you would use microtransit?



A majority of people who said yes reported they:

- are in households making under \$50,000
- both male and female
- both have and do not have access to a car
- Black, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino*
- ages 18 to 34 and 45 to 64.

**Does not include groups with smaller numbers of respondents.*

64% of respondents from Philadelphia suburbs* indicated an openness to using microtransit.

**Bucks, Burlington, Camden, Chester, Delaware, Gloucester, Mercer, and Montgomery Counties*

Pop-Ups: What We Heard

- 153 rider comments; about 2:1 preferred Option 1
- Comments also recorded about route suggestions not related to Option preference

Prefers Option 1

"It's not that bad walking, as long as I don't have to walk far." – Rider at Olney TC

"Option 2 is too complicated." – Rider at Norristown TC

"Much better. Would rather transfer than wait 20 minutes." – Rider at Broad & Oregon

"If you got more routes, it clogs everything up." – Rider at Wissahickon TC

Prefers Option 2

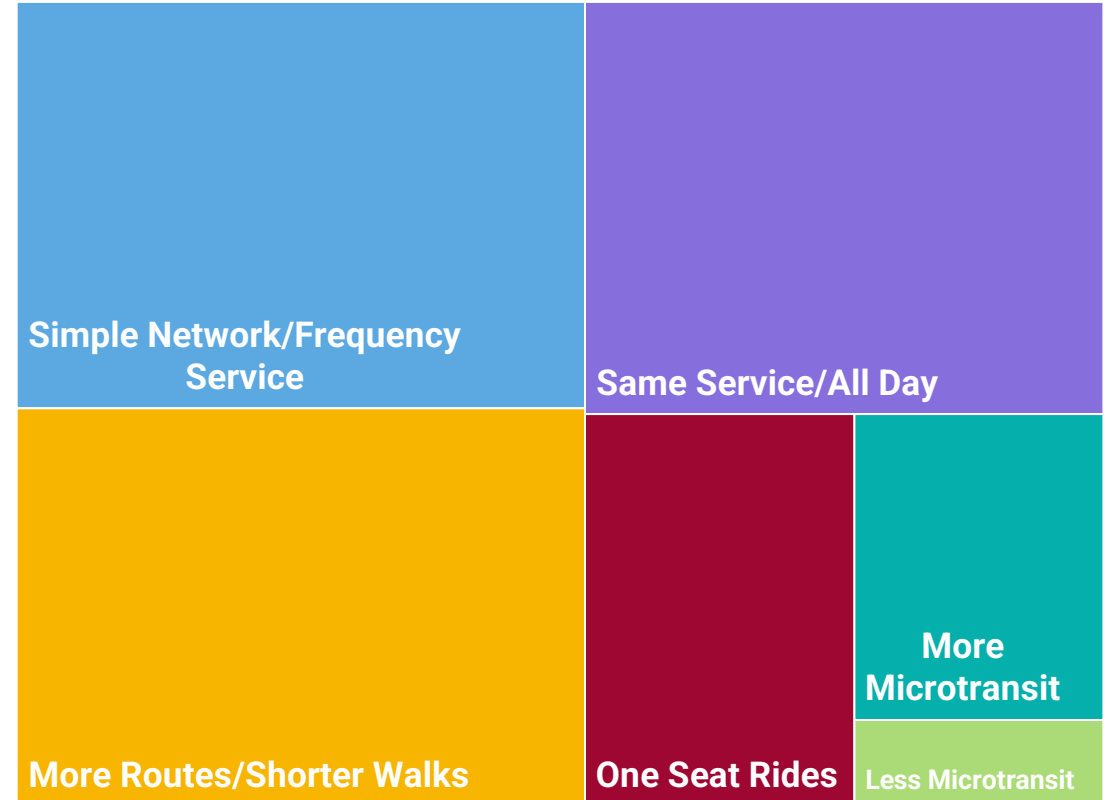
"Need to consider seniors when moving stops. Seniors already have to go too far at some areas." – Rider at Frankford TC

"More routes. Rather have options than have to walk far." – Rider at 69th St. TC

"I think it's good that we have a lot of options, even if we have to sacrifice a little time." – Rider at 15th & JFK

Project Bus: What We Heard

- Lots of requests for higher frequencies and later service
- More frequent service between West and South Philly
- Better connections between:
 - Conshohocken and the Main Line
 - Brewerytown and West Philly
 - Germantown and the Malvern
 - West Philly and Camden County, NJ
- Changes to specific routes



Results from voting exercise at Spring 2022 Project Bus outreach.

Developing the Draft Network

- **People who liked Network Option 1**
 - Simplicity
 - High frequency
 - Weekend service
- **People who liked Network Option 2**
 - More choices
 - Shorter walks
 - Concern for older adults and people with disabilities
- **People who were unsure said:**
 - Want both more routes and more frequency
 - Depended on when they were traveling
 - Want the bus to arrive on time



Developing the Draft Network

- Lots of comments about specific bus routes and connections
 - Add back some routes/connections
 - Direct connections into Center City
 - Reconfigure Chestnut, Walnut and Market
- Suggestions to reconsider some transfers
 - 30th Street Station
 - Center City
 - Airport
 - King of Prussia
- Retain midday and weekend service
- Reconsider evening service hours



Lots of comments about:

- Safety and security
- Cleanliness
- Operator shortage

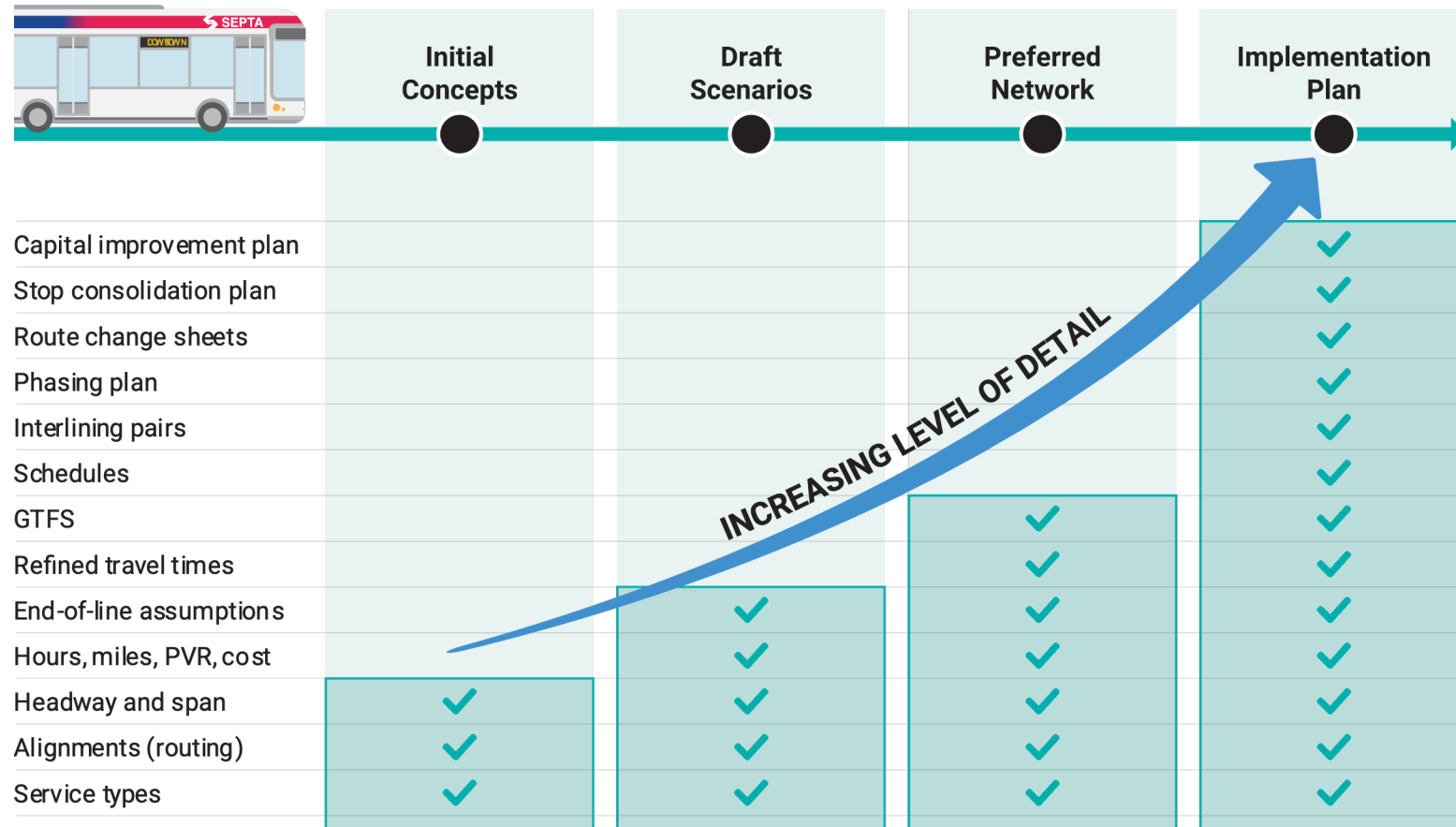
What's Next



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Prepare Draft Bus Network

- Create draft bus network
- Still needs to be cost neutral
 - SEPTA’s overall costs
 - Service levels by county
- Add detail and information
 - Hours of operation by day
 - Frequency by time of day
 - Bus stop spacing policies
 - Capital investments



Organize Engagement Effort

- Finalize engagement strategy
- Prepare materials
 - Proposed and existing network shown together
 - Maps (storymaps)
 - Trip planning tools
- Craft messaging
 - Broader awareness and engagement
 - Create sense of urgency “this is happening”
- Start scheduling fall engagement



Get Involved



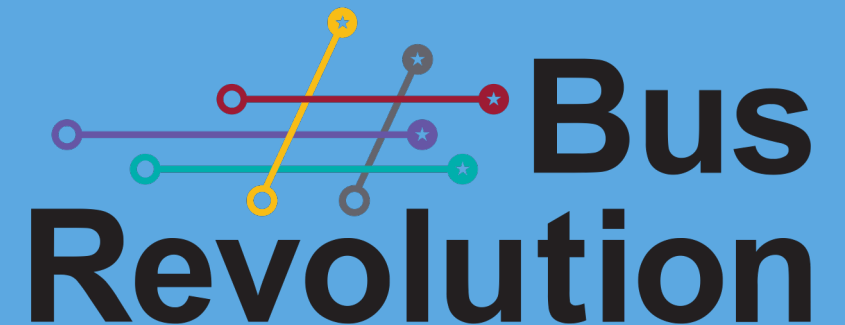
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Helping Out / Getting Involved

- Attend Open House / Invite your Friends
 - Multiple open houses will be held in the fall (October – early November)
 - *Schedule will be available in early September*
- Participate in Virtual Events
 - More transit talks scheduled for fall
- Invite us to one of your meetings
 - Project team will attend one of your meetings
- Advance Bus Revolution on Social Media



Join the Revolution!
septabusrevolution.com



Supporting Analysis

Service Standards and Guidelines

SEPTA's bus network hierarchy / approach for categorizing routes and communicating network

- Service design
- Frequency
- Span
- Service design
- Stop spacing
- Capital investment
- Productivity and performance

Bus Revolution defines a “frequent” bus route as one that operates every 15 minutes or better.



Capital Investments

- 1. End of Line Resources**
 - Updates to existing facilities
 - Potential new facilities
 - Support passenger transfers and operator layovers
- 2. Speed and reliability “hot spots”**
 - Capital investments to achieve operating savings
 - Targeted investments to address delays
 - Speed and reliability
- 3. Key bus routes and bus stops**
 - Stop level investments /improvements for accessibility and reliability

Early Ideas and Strategies

DRAFT ONLY

Create Awareness (about Bus Revolution and potential changes)

Expand the number of people who know about the project and understand potential changes

- Earned Media
- Canvas at bus stops and key bus routes
- Project Bus
- Social media campaign
- Transit [App]
- Electronic signage
- Posters on buses and at transit centers
- Emails to stakeholders and community partners
- Collaborations with government partners

Online Materials (Be transparency and open about ideas)

Continue practice of full transparency. Allow people to dive into proposed changes and trade-offs

- Updated website and interactive story map
- Interactive trip planner that lets people compare trips
- Descriptions of individual routes and proposed change
- Comment forms and cards

Strong Engagement (Create opportunities for riders & community members)

Talk with riders and community members about proposed changes

- Open Houses / Community Meetings
- Presentations in existing community meetings
- Collaboration with community partners (attend existing meetings)
- Stakeholder presentations

Understanding the MAX Series

- The Bus Revolution uses the “MAX series” to talk about bus routes.
- MAX means the maximum time between buses. For example, a 10 MAX route will arrive at least every 10 minutes.
- All bus routes are described as:
 - 10 MAX
 - 15 MAX
 - 30 MAX
 - 60 MAX

} **Frequent Bus Service**

| | | | |
|---|-----------|---|----------------------|
|  | 10 MAX |  | Metro |
|  | 15 MAX |  | Trolley |
|  | 30 MAX |  | Regional Rail |
|  | 60 MAX |  | Microtransit Zone |

Bus Revolution defines a “frequent” bus route as one that **operates every 15 minutes or better.**



Introducing Microtransit

- On-demand, flexible service
 - Same day service – book a ride when you want to travel
 - Schedule ride by calling SEPTA, using your smart phone or on your computer
 - Vehicles will be accessible
- Serve low density, high need areas

| RIDER EXPERIENCE FAQ | Fixed Route | ADA Paratransit | Microtransit |
|--|--|---|--|
| Where will I be picked up or dropped off? | Bus Stop | Front Door | Front door or nearby intersection |
| Where can I ride? | Trips must begin or end at fixed-route bus stop. | Trips must begin/end within 3/4 mile of a fixed route stop. | Trips must begin/end within a defined microtransit zone. |
| Do I need to book a ride in advance? | No advance booking is required. | Booking at least a day in advance is required. | Service can be booked the same day the trip is taken. |
| Who can ride? | Anyone can ride. | Pre-approved customers only. | Anyone can ride. |
| Is the service ADA-accessible? | Wheelchair Accessible | Wheelchair Accessible + Assistance Provided | Wheelchair Accessible |
| Will I share a ride with another passenger? | Yes | Sometimes | Sometimes |

Collaboration with SEPTA

ELECTED OFFICIALS

- Ensure elected officials and key stakeholders know about the project

LOCAL AND REGIONAL MEDIA

- Leverage SEPTA contacts with the media (earned media)
- Use SEPTA leaders, staff, and consultant team to participate in conversations

SEPTA ASSETS AND FACILITIES

- Signage on buses, at bus stops and transit centers
- Websites, trip planning apps and other rider information systems
- Internal town halls, employee communication channels
- Canvassing via traffic checkers

EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS AND STAKEHOLDERS

- Standing committees (CAC, YAC)
- Opt-in organization meetings / joining target existing community meetings

Fall engagement starts October 1, 2022



Tell us.....

- What excites you the most about either of the network options?
- What concerns you the most about either of the network options?
- Do you think Network Option 1 would impact the way you travel on SEPTA?
 - How?
 - Is anything easier? Is anything harder?
- Do you think Network Option 2 would impact the the way you travel on SEPTA?
 - How?
 - Is anything easier? Is anything harder?
- Do you think there is anything that is not represented here that would be critical for a successful bus network redesign?
- What do you think of microtransit? What are your hopes and concerns?
- What types of riders do you think benefit most from each scenario?