



Line 34 Route Proposal

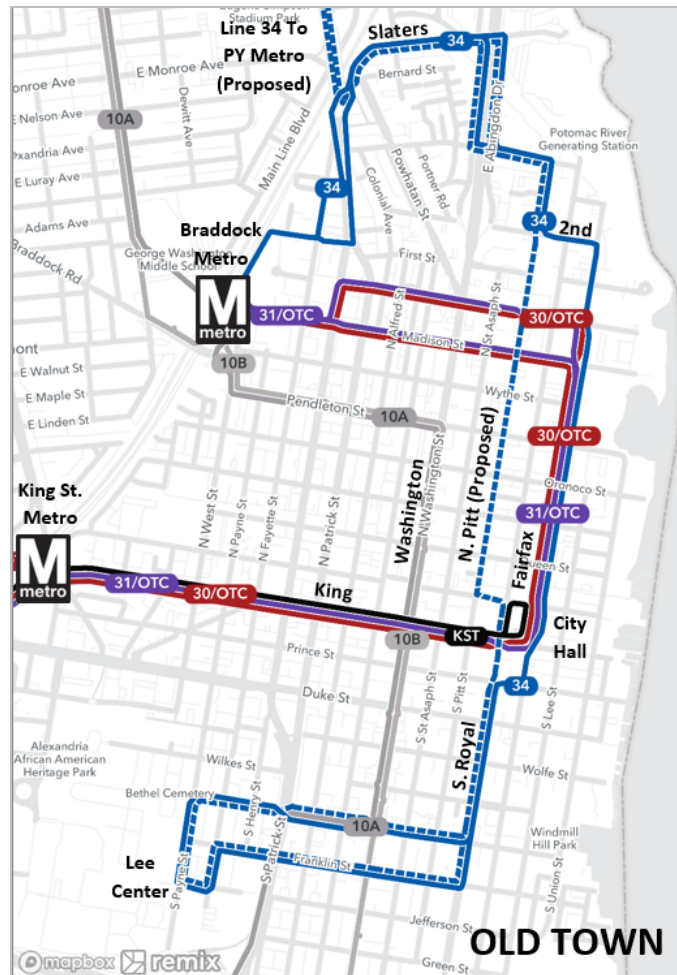
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1. What is DASH proposing to change on Line 34?

DASH is proposing two changes that would affect Line 34. The first change would realign the northernmost part of the route to the new Potomac Yard Metrorail Station via Slaters Lane, Richmond Highway, East Glebe Road and Potomac Avenue. As a result, Line 34 would no longer serve Braddock Road Metro and regional connections to Metrorail and Metroway would need to be made at Potomac Yard.

The second part of the proposal is to move Line 34 from its current alignment on North Fairfax Street to a new routing on North Pitt Street from Cameron Street to Second Street. Line 34 already travels on North Pitt Street for several blocks from Second Street to Bashford Lane, but this proposal would re-route the service onto North Pitt Street for nine additional blocks in Old Town North. Lines 30 and 31 (Old Town Circulator) are not affected by this change and would continue to provide frequent, all-day service on North Fairfax Street.



2. Why is DASH proposing to move Line 34 to North Pitt Street?

DASH is proposing this change to make bus service more convenient and useful for more residents, workers and visitors in Old Town. The reasons for this change are as follows:

- **More Bus Riders and Fewer Cars.** With this change, staff believes that more people will be able to use buses to complete trips in Old Town instead of driving their cars. Staff estimates that this change will allow an additional 50-100 additional daily passengers will be able to travel through Old Town North on buses instead of cars. This translates to an additional 30,000 additional bus passengers per year. Ridership is expected to increase further in future years as the North Pitt Street corridor develops further, and the Potomac Yard Metro emerges as a key regional transit hub and commercial activity center.

- **Mitigate Traffic/Parking Impact of New Developments.** North Pitt Street has seen an influx of new residential and commercial development that has been constructed in recent years or will be constructed in the near future. Without more useful, convenient bus service, the existing traffic and parking issues in this corridor are likely to continue to get worse.
- **Route Spacing & Walking Distances.** DASH is proposing to use North Pitt Street because it is equidistant between Washington Street two blocks to the west and North Fairfax Street two blocks to the east. This provides additional bus route coverage in Old Town North, reduces walking distances to bus stops, and makes buses a relevant option for more members of the community, including those with limited mobility. Staff had also reviewed Royal Street and St. Asaph Street (See Question #9 Below), but determined that North Pitt Street was the best routing option for safety, route usefulness and operating efficiency.
- **North Fairfax Street.** Line 34 currently runs on North Fairfax Street, which features significant density and multiple senior housing facilities, however, Line 34 ridership along this segment is very low because two other DASH routes – Lines 30 and 31 – already run on that part of North Fairfax Street and are a better option for most riders. Instead of continuing to provide redundant service that is not well-utilized, DASH is proposing to shift the route to North Pitt Street where it can be used by more people and benefit the overall community with fewer cars on the road.
- **Bus Stop Locations.** DASH operations and safety team members have evaluated North Pitt Street and believe that new bus stops can be established with a relatively minor impact on parking. Most locations were identified based on pre-existing parking restrictions to minimize the number of additional spaces that are needed. See Question #12 for more details on parking impacts.

3. If approved, when would these changes be implemented?

If approved, the two proposed changes to Line 34 would be implemented upon the opening of the new Potomac Yard Metro infill station. The current estimate for the opening of the new station is November 2022, but additional track work and system testing must be completed before trains can begin serving the station.

4. How many buses would be running on North Pitt Street per day?

Line 34 is scheduled to run every 30 minutes, all-day, on weekdays and Saturdays. On Sundays, Line 34 only runs once every hour in each direction. This translates to roughly 30-34 daily trips in each direction on weekdays and Saturdays, and 16 daily trips in each direction on Sundays.

5. What public outreach has been done for this proposed change?

DASH has conducted extensive outreach activities for proposed service changes in the FY 2023 ATC Transit Development Plan (TDP) over the last two months, including but not limited to

community meetings, public hearings, community group meetings and pop-up events at key transit centers. Staff have also reached out to key stakeholders and civic associations, posted flyers at more than 40 bus stop and on-street locations, installed posters onboard DASH buses, and utilized the DASH website, e-mail subscription list, and social media channels to provide information about the proposed changes and how to submit feedback. A full summary of public outreach activities is provided in the TDP document (www.dashbus.com/tdp) and the Board Memorandum that is included in the Board Packet for the May 4, 2022 meeting.

6. Would Line 34 still connect to Braddock Road Metro?

No, it would not. With the proposed changes, Line 34 would no longer connect directly to the Braddock Road Metro and would instead serve the new Potomac Yard Metro via Slaters Lane, Richmond Highway, East Glebe Road and Potomac Avenue. Connections to Metrorail and Metroway that were previously made at Braddock Road Metro would now need to be made at Potomac Yard. Connections to the Braddock Road Metro would still be possible using alternate routes such as Lines 30 and 31 and the Metrobus 10A/B, if needed.

7. Would this change lead to increased traffic congestion on North Pitt Street?

No. The additional bus riders that would be able to use the new Line 34 instead of driving their cars are projected to significantly exceed the number of additional bus trips that would be traveling through the North Pitt Street corridor. DASH projects that at least 100 additional passenger trips will be made on Line 34 on a typical weekday – or 30,000 annual bus passengers –once the new alignment is implemented. This includes both passengers boarding on North Pitt Street and those that are riding the bus through North Pitt Street. This proposed change would therefore remove a higher number of personal vehicles from North Pitt Street than the 30-34 buses per day that would be traveling through the corridor in each direction so there would be fewer total vehicles. DASH expects that this ridership projection would increase over the next 2-3 years with additional development activity along North Pitt Street, Old Town North, and Potomac Yard.

The bus service is also expected to help offset the future traffic impact from new developments on North Pitt Street. The traffic studies for these developments have all assumed that a percentage of trips to/from the new developments will be made using public transportation. If the nearby bus service is not actually useful, the traffic generated by the development could be worse than anticipated.

8. Why would DASH bring bus service onto North Pitt Street when North Fairfax Street has already been established as the street that buses operate on in Old Town North?

North Fairfax Street is a productive route segment for Lines 30 and 31, which run every 8-15 minutes, all-day, seven days per week with direct connections to the Braddock Road Metro and the King Street Metro. Line 34 is underutilized on this segment due to the presence of these other more useful routes with only a handful of boardings each day. On North Pitt Street, Line

34 would be expected to draw significantly more boardings than it does on North Fairfax Street, which would be beneficial to the entire Old Town North community and would be a more cost-efficient use of DASH resources and city funding.

9. Why is the service proposed on North Fairfax Street instead of North Royal Street?

The Old Town North Small Area Plan that was adopted by City Council in 2017 and the Alexandria Transit Vision Plan that was adopted by the DASH Board of Directors in 2019 show North Royal Street as a potential north-south transit corridor. Although these plans are meant to generally inform and guide future service planning decisions, final route alignments may vary based on more recent staff assessments and other external factors and must be identified through the annual Transit Development Plan (TDP) process prior to implementation.

In the last two years, staff has examined the operating conditions and potential transit demand of the streets in Old Town North and determined that a transit route on North Pitt Street would be safer and more useful than one on North Royal Street. This decision was largely based on: (1) the presence of bicycle lanes on North Royal Street that would create safety conflicts with buses; (2) the route spacing that would be created with Pitt Street marking the halfway point between the two closest parallel bus routes on Washington Street and North Fairfax Street; (3) the prospects for bus stop locations on North Pitt Street that are able to minimize parking impact; and (4) the additional residential/commercial development that has been constructed on North Pitt Street in the immediate vicinity of the proposed routing. One commenter also asked about St. Asaph Street, but that would require the route to deviate further out of its way after it serves City Hall, and St. Asaph Street does not extend all the way up to Bashford Street so the route would be required to make additional deviations to return to North Pitt Street.

10. How many additional bus riders is DASH projecting that this change would generate?

Based on an evaluation of existing Line 34 ridership and future ridership demand in (and through) the North Pitt Street corridor, DASH projects that the proposed realignments to Line 34 will generate at least 100 additional bus passengers on a typical weekday that would be passing through the North Pitt Street corridor. Staff also estimates that it will draw 50-60 additional passengers on Saturdays and Sundays, which adds up to over 30,000 additional annual bus passenger trips on North Pitt Street, many of whom would be opting for the buses instead of driving a car. These projections include passengers who would be boarding at new bus stops on North Pitt Street as well as those who would be boarding in different parts of the route but still riding through the North Pitt Street corridor. DASH expects that this ridership projection would increase over the next 2-3 years with additional development activity along North Pitt Street, Old Town North, and Potomac Yard.

11. How much would this change cost to be implemented?

The proposed changes to Line 34 are budget-neutral in terms of operating costs and would not require any additional buses. The establishment of bus stops along the corridor would

potentially require one-time expenditures for bus stop poles, signage, and small concrete pads, which could be installed by on-call city contractors for \$2,000 - \$3,000. Final bus stop installation costs may vary based on final bus stop locations.

12. How would this affect parking availability on North Pitt Street?

Staff have identified potential, preliminary stop locations at Second, Montgomery, Wythe, Oronoco and Queen Streets that would minimize the amount of parking spaces that would need to be removed. To ensure that the new bus stops are accessible, the City would need to remove approximately 7-9 total parking space removals along a nine-block stretch, or roughly one parking space per block. Any proposed changes to parking spaces would be subject to additional public notice, outreach, and consideration for approval by the City of Alexandria's Traffic and Parking Board.

Although the proposal would require the removal of some parking spaces, DASH projects that the increase in the number of residents, workers and visitors who use the bus will result in an overall net improvement in parking availability.

13. Where would the bus stops be located?

If the Line 34 realignment is approved, DASH will be working closely with City staff to identify final bus stop locations. Staff have identified potential stop locations at Second, Montgomery, Wythe, Oronoco and Queen Streets that would minimize the amount of parking spaces that would need to be removed.

14. What would the bus stops look like? Will there be shelters or benches?

Most bus stops would be placed in locations with existing parking restrictions and sidewalk space for safe passenger boarding. These locations are typically immediately adjacent to intersections. Bus stop amenities such as shelters or benches would not be provided due to space constraints, but trash cans could be installed, if warranted. Future bus shelters or benches could be installed as part of redevelopments at the bus stops in the commercial areas north of Pendleton Street.

15. Would this create additional noise on North Pitt Street?

Many comments referenced the additional noise that would potentially be created by buses and the impact this would have on a quiet, residential area like North Pitt Street. While older diesel buses can be quite loud (80-90 decibels), DASH has retired the last of its traditional diesel buses in the last two years so that these louder, high-emission buses would not be used.

The current DASH fleet of 101 buses is comprised of 14 100% electric buses and 55 low-emission, hybrid electric buses. These buses make up more than two-thirds of the existing DASH fleet and are exponentially quieter than the older diesel buses. Electric buses register at 45

decibels, which is said to be quieter than a conversation, and hybrid electric buses are only slightly louder. Over the next decade, the entire DASH fleet will be transitioned to 100% electric buses so that in the future, only electric buses would be used.

16. Do buses violate the City of Alexandria's Noise Ordinance?

No, buses do not violate the City of Alexandria's Noise Ordinance. The decibel levels of the buses in the current DASH bus fleet are within acceptable levels and DASH buses adhere to all relevant bus idling policies.

17. Would this create additional pollution on North Pitt Street?

No. The proposed change to Line 34 is expected to allow more people to use the bus, which reduces carbon emissions and air pollution by reducing automobile trips made on city streets. With the introduction of more 100% electric buses to the DASH bus fleet, more and more passengers will be able to move around Old Town with electric buses that have zero tailpipe emissions.

18. Would the buses that run on North Pitt Street be 100% electric?

The DASH fleet currently features 14 electric buses and 55 hybrid electric buses, both of which are relatively quiet with low- or zero-emission propulsion. Since these two bus types account for more than two-thirds of the total DASH bus fleet, the majority of bus trips on Line 34 would be expected to be completed with either 100% electric or hybrid electric buses, both of which are quieter and have low or zero tailpipe emissions. The remaining third of the fleet are clean diesel buses which are also quieter and cleaner than the older diesel buses that were recently retired.

As the DASH fleet continues to transition to 100% electric buses over the next decade, more and more Line 34 trips would be made with 100% electric buses until the entire DASH bus fleet is 100% electric.

19. Would this create additional trash problems on North Pitt Street?

All city bus stops are maintained and cleaned by city staff in the Transportation & Environmental Services (T&ES) Department. If Line 34 is re-routed, the new bus stops would be regularly monitored, cleaned and maintained by city staff. Bus stops with recurring trash issues are also eligible for trash receptacles at the discretion of DASH and City staff. Staff could work with North Pitt Street residents to determine if trash receptacles would be needed at any of the new bus stops.

20. How will the decision to approve or reject the Line 34 proposal be made?

The DASH Board of Directors will review staff analyses and recommendations as well as all public comments to determine if the proposed changes to Line 34 will be adopted as part of the FY 2023 ATC Transit Development Plan (TDP) Process. The DASH Board of Directors is expected to take the Final FY 2023 ATC Transit Development Plan under consideration for adoption at the May 4, 2022 meeting of the DASH Board of Directors.

For more information about the Board of Directors meetings and how to participate, please visit <https://www.dashbus.com/events/atc-board-directors-meetings>.

21. If the proposed change is adopted by the DASH Board of Directors, what additional steps must be completed before the change can be implemented?

If the proposed changes to Line 34 are approved by the DASH Board of Directors, staff will be working with the City of Alexandria's T&ES staff and the Traffic and Parking Board to identify final bus stop locations and potential impact on parking spaces. Staff would be working to minimize any parking impacts to the greatest extent possible. Any parking space removals would be subject to public notice and would require approval by the Traffic and Parking Board.