

The New S9 “Metro Express” Route: FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions about the 16th Street Line Improvements

Effective 3/30/09

Q1. Why did Metro change the 16th Street Line routes?

A1. Several reasons: The S1, S2, and S4 routes (also known as the 16th Street Line) have the third largest ridership of any line in the Metrobus system – about 16,000 people every weekday. Metro needed to respond to rider concerns about bus bunching, crowding, and schedule adherence on the 16th Street Line. To create a higher quality service, Metro did a study of the line in 2008 to consider what kind of changes should be made. The result of the rider input and the technical analysis resulted in a series of improvements to be phased in over several years. The first phase of improvements to the 16th Street Line takes effect on March 30, 2009.

Q2. What is the S9 and how is it different than the S1, S2, and S4?

A2. The S9 is a new limited-stop route. It runs from Silver Spring Metro to 13th & I Streets NW in Downtown DC along the same route as the S2, except instead of stopping every block or two, it stops about every quarter-mile. The limited-stop format means that riders of the S9 can get to their destinations more quickly than before, and was created in response to riders who said they'd like a faster trip to Downtown DC and Silver Spring. The S9 stops are indicated by special signs with the “Express Limited Stop Service” logo. The S9 will run every 10 minutes in peak periods on weekdays, from 6:30 am to 10:00 am and 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm. See Page 3 for a map of the S9 stops and Page 4 for a summary of all improvements coming on March 30.

Q3. What's happening to the S1, S2, and S4 routes?

A3. The S1 will continue to serve all local stops on weekdays, every 5 minutes, from 5:50 am to 10:30 am and 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The S1 will also make two additional trips southbound in the am peak and two additional trips northbound in the pm peak. The S2 and S4 will continue to serve all local stops, seven days a week, for approximately 21 to 23 hours a day. Thus, the new S9 Route is in addition to already existing service; it is not taking any local service away.

Q4. What other improvements are being made to the 16th Street Line?

A4. Metro is putting more supervisors on the street whose sole job is to manage the 16th Street Line. Supervisors and bus drivers will be in close communication with one another via laptop computers and hand-held devices. Through greater communication, Metro staff can more easily have illegally parked cars and trucks removed; keep riders posted about detours, delays, and other information; and put more buses into service when necessary. Furthermore:

- Updated, easy-to-read schedules are being posted at stops.
- Information cases, flags, and poles are being added or repaired as needed.
- Bus drivers are receiving training specific to the 16th Street Line.
- Supervisors will have a “playbook” that gives instruction on how to deal with delays, detours, when and how to put strategic buses into service, etc.
- Articulated (“accordion”) buses will be added to the S2 and S4 in the late evening hours, to provide more room and make crowding on buses less of a problem.

These enhancements are expected to produce a better, more reliable trip for 16th Street riders.

Q5. The first phase of improvements will take place on March 30. What will happen in future phases, and when will those occur?

A5. At this time, only Phase 1 has been given approval by the Metro Board. Future phases have not yet been approved, but may include a “short-turn” service that would serve all local stops between Downtown and the mid-point of the corridor, thus adding capacity to the most heavily used portion of the line. Future improvements may also focus on improving traffic flow and intersection operations, such as the potential addition of bus-only lanes at key points of the corridor, queue jump lanes at several major intersections, and signal timing changes. Methods of speeding up fare collection may be explored. And the S9 limited-stop service may go from a peak-period only service to an all-day service. No timetable has been set for the implementation of these potential enhancements to the 16th Street Line.

Q6. Will there be a fare increase to fund the 16th Street Line improvements?

A6. No. The 16th Street Line improvements are not being funded through fare increases.

Q7. Will a trip on the S9 limited-stop route cost more than a trip on the S1, S2, or S4?

A7. No. All Metrobus trips on the 16th Street Line will cost the same, including for the new S9.

Q8. When will improvements be coming to bus corridors in other parts of the region?

A8. Currently, Metro is studying the Q2 Route in Montgomery County and the 28 Route in Fairfax County. There are also plans to study and improve bus service on H Street/Benning Road and the K6 on New Hampshire Avenue in the near future. The order of the studies is determined in part by ridership and the kinds of problems that are perceived by riders of those lines and how they are reported to Metro.

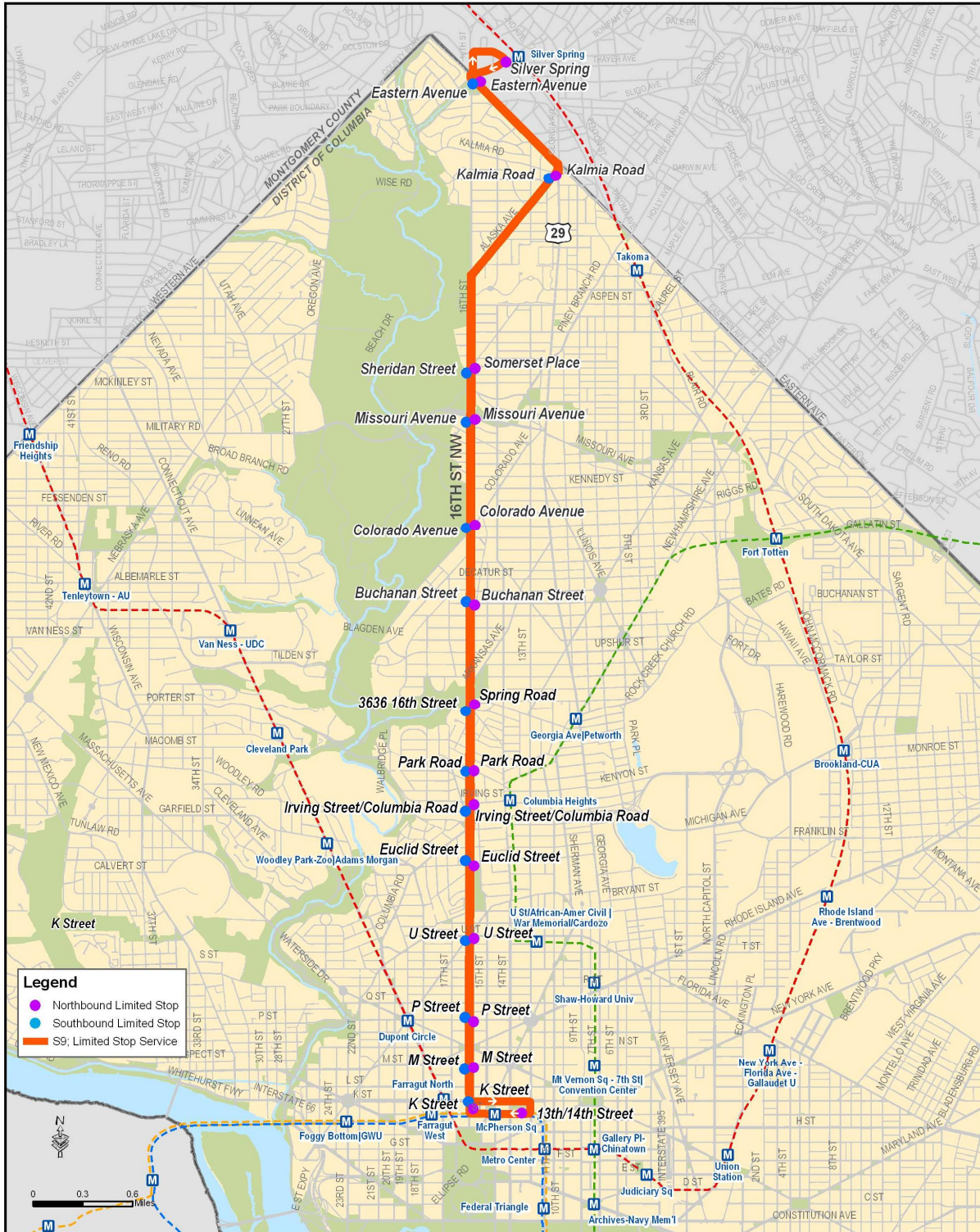
Q9. The study is done, and the first phase of improvements is being implemented, but I would still like to comment. How can I make my views known about the 16th Street Line?

A9. Riders are always welcome to be advocates for further changes to the Metro system in general and the 16th Street Line in particular. The Riders Advisory Council (RAC) meets monthly; you can contact Metro’s RAC liaison, John Pasek, at jpasek@wmata.com. You may also contact Metro’s board of directors at boardofdirectors@wmata.com. And you can participate in evaluations of 16th Street Line service; look for information on 16th Street Line buses or call the hotline at 703-682-5060.

Q10. Where can I get more information about the 16th Street Line?

A10. www.metrobus-16th-dc.com.

S9 Limited-Stop Service:



Summary of Changes to 16th Street Line Service, Effective March 30, 2009:

- New Route S9: limited-stop service
- Expanded hours of Route S1 service
- Maintain local routes S2 and S4, use articulated buses and tripper service in late pm periods
- Updated schedules and information case repair or replacement
- 16th Street Line-specific training for drivers
- Enhanced service supervision, including two additional supervisor positions
- Better enforcement of parking restrictions

Service Improvements:

Route	Terminals	Weekday Peak Headways	Off-Peak Headways	Span of Service		
				Weekdays	Saturdays	Sundays
Local Routes, All Stops						
S1	Missouri Avenue to Foggy Bottom	5 minutes	N/A	5:50 am to 10:30 am and 3:58 pm to 8:00 pm	N/A	N/A
S2	Silver Spring to Federal Triangle (via Eastern and Alaska Avenues)	15 minutes	20 minutes	4:09 am to 3:45 am	4:17 am to 3:44 am	4:33 am to 2:16 am
S4	Silver Spring to Federal Triangle	15 minutes	20 minutes	4:26 am to 2:02 am	4:37 am to 2:13 am	4:51 am to 1:40 am
Limited-Stop Route						
S9	Silver Spring Metro to McPherson Square	10 minutes	N/A	6:30 am to 10:00 am; 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm	N/A	N/A

Operations Improvements:

- The 16th Street Line will have supervisors that are dedicated to monitoring and responding to service issues in their portion of the 16th Street Line. One will be stationed at McPherson Square, while the other will be roving in the central portion of the corridor. The 16th Street Line supervisors will have:
 - The ability to directly communicate with bus drivers along the route, central dispatch, line manager, line operations center, and each other.
 - The ability to track vehicles operating along the route via a laptop computer or other device.
 - A “play book” that describes actions to take when certain situations arise that impact on-time performance, vehicle spacing along the route, and vehicle crowding.
 - Access to a “strategic” bus and driver to add to the system when needed to maintain schedule, proper spacing of vehicles, and acceptable vehicle loads.
 - The ability to hold back and turn back buses to maintain schedule and vehicle spacing.
 - A supervisor vehicle to monitor operations in the portion of the 16th Street Line that has been assigned to them.
 - A program to monitor and measure the performance of the system would be established.
 - Direct contact with persons responsible for the enforcement of parking restrictions.
- In addition, operators of the 16th Street Line will have special training specific to problems that are typical on the line, as well as transfer points, intersecting routes, and points of interest.