Near- and Long-Term Transportation Challenges for DC:

- Population and job growth and congestion requires new transit investments
- Some Metrobus lines over 100 percent of capacity
- All Metrorail lines currently considered “highly congested”
- Metrorail crowding “unmanageable” by 2013

Why Streetcars?

- Streetcars provide added capacity to the District’s transit network
- Streetcars stimulate economic development and retail growth throughout the city
- Streetcars improve the quality of transportation by connecting District neighborhoods

Characteristics of Streetcars:

- Are air-conditioned and designed to run smoothly and quietly
- Share the road with other vehicles
- Stops are generally placed ¼-mile to ½-mile apart
- Vehicles: 66 feet long, 8 feet wide, and carry up to 168 passengers
BENEFITS OF STREETCARS

- Streetcars encourage high-density, mixed-use development within close proximity of streetcar lines.
- Streetcars represent a permanent commitment by the city and a positive investment opportunity for communities.

Streetcars Support Economic Development and Planning Initiatives:
- St. Elizabeth’s/Homeland Security (14,000 new Federal employees)
- Anacostia Waterfront Initiative
- Soldiers’ and Airmen’s Home Development
- H Street NE Redevelopment
- NoMa
- Mt Vernon Square Area Development
- Walter Reed Redevelopment
- and others
BENEFITS OF STREETCARS

Improves access and mobility of District residents and businesses

- Increases connections between neighborhoods and activity centers
- Accommodates population and employment growth
- Serves neighborhoods with limited or no Metrorail service: Historic Anacostia, H Street NE, Georgetown, Adams Morgan, Upper Georgia Avenue, and others

Enhances Transit System Performance

- Increases capacity of the transit network and improves transit efficiency and cost-effectiveness
- Improves transit travel times
- Reduces crowding on Metrorail and Metrobus

Protects Environmental Quality

- Supports environmental benefits including reduced greenhouse gas emissions
- Provides an alternative to auto use

Georgetown

NoMa (North of Massachusetts Avenue)

Anacostia River
TRANSFORMING A WASHINGTON TRADITION

1862 The first streetcar line begins operating in Washington under the Washington and Georgetown Railroad Company.

1875 Five companies run horse-drawn streetcars within the District.

1888 Expansion of Washington’s city limits beyond Florida Avenue prompts the need for vehicles that can climb the hills above the original L’Enfant city. Electric streetcars can easily climb steep roads.

1888 The first electric streetcar line, The Eckington and Soldiers’ Home Railway, begins operation.

1889 The District authorizes the switch to underground cable for all streetcar operators, eliminating the horse-drawn streetcar. Overhead wires are only allowed outside of the central city.

1895 Congress promotes consolidation as the most effective method to providing a seamless transit network in the city.

1916 The high point of streetcars in D.C. with a combined track length of over 200 miles in the city and its suburbs.

1921 The start of the first bus company in Washington.

1933 Washington Railway, Capital Traction, and Washington Rapid Transit merge to form the Capital Transit Company, marking the first time all streetcar lines in D.C. are managed by one company.

1941 World War II leads to an increase in government workers who depend on streetcars to commute.

1955 A seven-week strike leads to the transfer of the company to O. Roy Chalk in 1956. Capital Transit Company changes its name to DC Transit.

1956 As part of the transfer to Chalk, DC Transit is required to convert the entire system to buses by 1963.

1962 Streetcars in Washington put on hold for the next 45 years.

2009 The District begins laying tracks for modern Streetcars in Anacostia and the H Street/Benning Road corridor.

DC’s Transit Future
EXAMPLES OF STREETCARS

Systems with Modern Vehicles:

Portland, OR - Portland Streetcar
- Phase 1 opened in 2001, 3.9 miles, 1 Line
- Capital cost per mile: $25 m
- Eastside Line to open in 2012 (additional 3.3 miles)
- Funding sources: Local agency, fares, city parking revenue, “Local Improvement Districts,” sponsorship of vehicles/stations, others

Seattle - South Lake Union Streetcar
- Opened in 2007
- 1.3 miles, 1 line
- Capital cost per mile: $40 m
- Funding sources: 50% from adjacent property owners, 50% from federal and state grants and the sale of surplus city land

Systems with Heritage Vehicles:

Successful examples include:
- Tampa, FL (2002)
- Kenosha, WI (2000)
- Charlotte, NC (1996)
- San Francisco, CA (1995)
- Tucson, AZ (1993)

Many other cities in North America are currently planning new modern streetcar lines as key parts of their transit systems, such as:
- Tucson, AZ
- Cincinnati, OH
- Los Angeles, CA
- Over a dozen other cities
DC’S MODERN STREETCARS

- Modern technology allows for quieter operation and higher reliability
- Air conditioned and heated cabins increase rider comfort
- Multiple boarding areas increases speed by reducing time spent loading and unloading passengers
- Modern control systems allow for smooth acceleration and braking, increasing rider comfort
- Adaptable car length allows for larger streetcars during peak periods and smaller ones during non-peak periods
- Streetcars are slightly longer than an articulated bus