



ROUND 3 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

August, 2023

The goals for the third round of engagement were to present the final Downtown bus network and changes to the stops in the project area. The final scenario presented to the public was built using both input from the public during the first and second rounds of engagement as well as professional expertise and data analyses.

Engagement Summary

Three different engagement methods were used to reach those interested in the changes, including an online survey through the project website (NEXTransit.network/Downtown), printed materials and comment cards available at the Downtown Service Center, and virtual meetings.

- Virtual public meetings (via Zoom) were held on June 28 at 5:30 PM and June 29 at 12 PM. Meetings were advertised via PRT social media, the project website, and shared with all of the Stakeholder Advisory Group members for sharing with their networks.
- Online materials and a public survey were available on the project website from June 20 to July 16.
- Printed materials were available for viewing and comment cards/return box available at the Downtown Service Center from June 20 to July 16.
- Posters advertising the outreach efforts were posted at bus stops in Downtown from June 23 to July 6

Virtual public meetings



CHANGES TO BUS ROUTES DOWNTOWN!

Join PRT at one of our final public meetings to learn about the recommended network, bus stop changes, and next steps.

June 28th

5:30 pm - 7 pm

Meeting will be held online via Zoom.
Registration is required.
Or join by phone by calling 646-558-8656
enter meeting code: 88205862824
and passcode: 870773

OR

June 29th

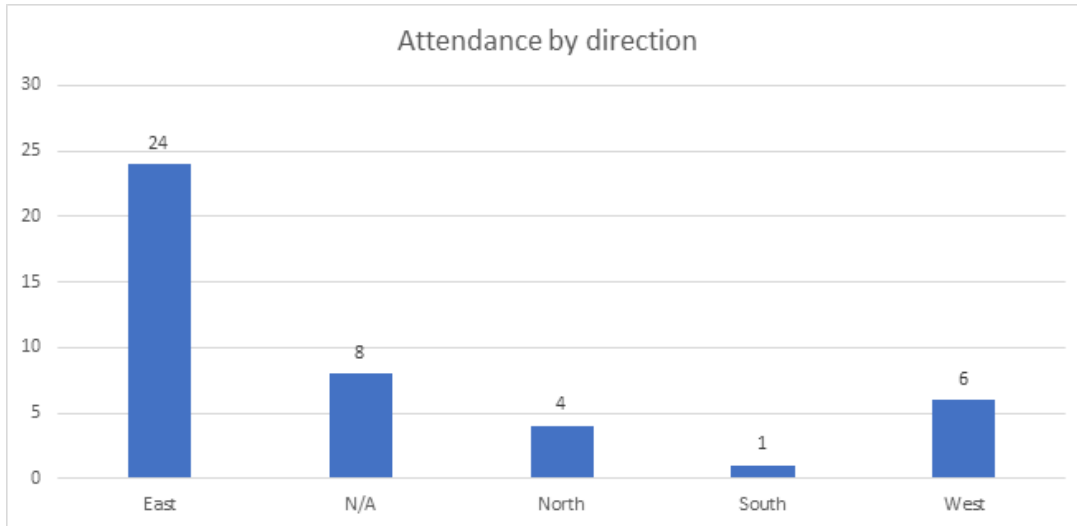
12 pm - 1:30 pm

Meeting will be held online via Zoom.
Registration is required.
Or join by phone by calling 646-558-8656
enter meeting code: 84270529541
and passcode: 243350

Learn more and register at
nexttransit.network/downtown

Two virtual public meetings were held during the final round of public engagement for NEXTransit Downtown. They were held on Wednesday, June 28 at 5:30 PM and on Thursday, June 29 at 12:00 PM. Meetings were advertised via email announcements sent to all project stakeholders, posting on PRT social media and key bus stops Downtown, and at the Downtown Service Center.

The project team presented the final routing proposal for Downtown and the proposed infrastructure improvements and changes to bus stops. After a presentation, attendees were moved into smaller breakout groups to allow for more detailed discussion and questions. The breakout groups were organized around geographical routes attendees take into/out of Downtown most often, but all routes and bus stops were open for review and discussion. In total, 43 people attended the two meetings.



The following is a summary of the questions and comments collected during the online meetings:

- P1 and G2:
 - Interlining of the P1 and the G2 onto the BRT loop:
 - Will there be all door boarding? – Yes
 - Will I be able to transfer easily? – Yes
 - Will this be quicker or slower? – Expected to take about the same time Will the G2 become the P1? – That idea was put on hold for now but will be revisited during a later study.
- BRT:
 - Which buses will go Downtown, and what will happen to buses that no longer go Downtown? – The 61A, B, and C, and the 71B will continue to travel Downtown. The 61D and 71A, C, and D will travel into Oakland then reverse their routes.
 - The route changes will go into effect in October.
- 28X:
 - Any changes? – No, there are no proposed changes to the Downtown routing of the 28X
 - Could the 28X go onto the BRT loop? – PRT could evaluate that in our next project
- Highway East Route Grouping
 - Has PRT talked to UPMC Mercy to coordinate any route changes from the Highway East grouping with their shuttle routes? – Not yet, but will consider
- North Route Grouping

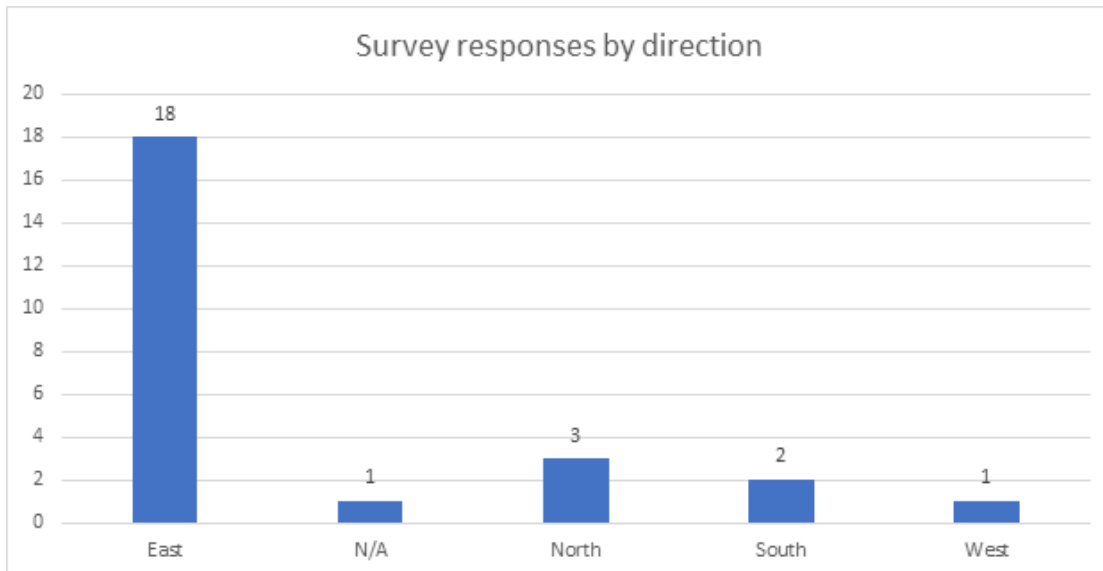
- There are very few substantial changes happening to the North routes. – Correct, the northern routes have remained very similar to their current routes, only slight changes to help streamline operations.
- Layovers:
 - What buses would be using the new layover stop? – The 77 will be using the new layover stop, and additional routes may be added in the future.
 - Layover stops will be guaranteed stops along the route
- Routes Outside of Downtown:
 - There were several questions regarding route changes outside of Downtown. The project team reminded attendees that while this project is focusing on Downtown routing only, PRT will begin a full network redesign this summer.
 - The 28X should stop at Ikea.
 - The P13 should be renamed. It's confusing since it does not go on the busway.
 - Increased connections between the Hill District and Uptown.
 - Related, attendees asked how the full network redesign will impact the proposed changes to the Downtown routes. The changes incoming with the BRT are going to impact buses Downtown sooner than the whole network redesign will. Hopefully, the network reroute will not have large implications for Downtown routes.

Online Survey

The online survey was open from June 20th to July 16th (2023) and included a few questions to be answered after visitors reviewed the changes to the routes using an interactive map. There were 25 responses to the online survey.

The survey included the following questions:

1. What bus routes do you primarily use Downtown?
2. Do you have any comments on the proposed changes to these routes?
3. Do you have any comments on the proposed changes to the stops along these routes?



Summary of comments from the survey:

Changes to routes

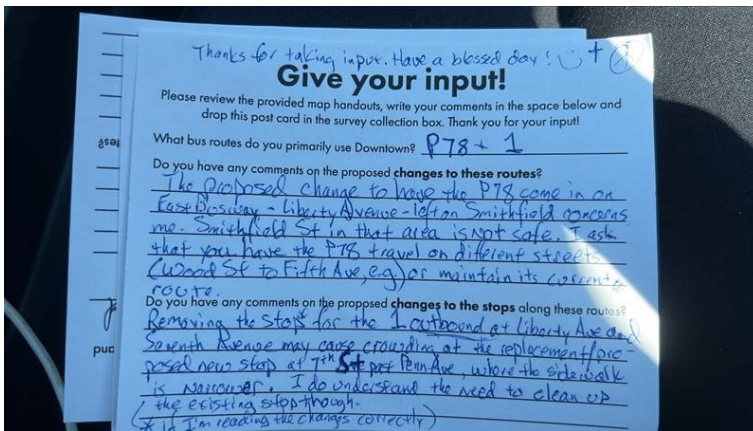
- Several people appreciated the changes made to the routes and saw substantial improvements from the first round of routing proposals
- Concerns about consolidation of buses onto Liberty Ave and congestion
- Many people are concerned about the changes to the Highway East routes, and the changes to both Downtown and Uptown were not well liked, specifically the added distance for walking to Grant St and to UPMC Mercy
- Proposal to have all buses run straight through Downtown and outbound in a different direction rather than looping

Changes to bus stops

- Several people appreciated the consolidation and streamlining of bus stops
- Concerns about accessibility for those who cannot walk long distances
- Concerns about increased commuting times due to removed bus stops
- Concerns about adequate bus infrastructure on Grant St for the increased bus usage
- Concerns about removal of bus stops along 5th for non-BRT buses
- Concerns about crowding at bus stops

PRT Service Center

To ensure that everyone had an equal opportunity to understand the proposed routing changes and provide their input, printed materials were also available at the PRT Downtown Service Center. A large map of the proposed Downtown rerouting plan was on display, along with handouts for each of the route groupings, with information explaining the proposed changes to routes and stops. Comments cards and a collection box were also available for people to provide written comments. The comment cards asked for the same feedback as the online survey.



There were only a handful of comment cards returned and they reflected the same sentiment as other comments heard through the website and virtual meetings. Additional questions and comments included:

- The increased distance between stops will be difficult for those with mobility issues. Can a shuttle be introduced for those with difficulties?
- The Smithfield Street stop is unsafe. Can the East Busway Flyers go somewhere else?
- A slim majority of the comment cards supported the project overall.