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Board Report

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Agenda Number: 40.

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 21, 2021

SUBJECT: CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE UPDATE ORAL REPORT

ACTION: ORAL REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE oral report on Customer Experience (CX) Update.
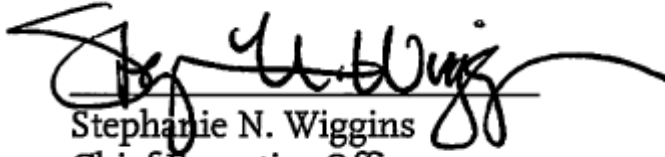
EQUITY PLATFORM

The Customer Experience Unit analyzes whether the investment addresses specific inequities for marginalized customers. Examples of bringing an equity focus to CX initiatives include funding of:

- Targeted marketing of the TransitWatch app and phone number/SMS text option on bus benches at bus stops that fall in EFCs, to reach riders without smartphones
- Testing better lighting at bus stops to improve personal security for women, girls, transgender and nonbinary people, as called for in *Understanding How Women Travel*
- Midday, layover cleaning at a high-volume terminal that directly benefits riders in EFCs on higher-ridership lines such as Line 70, 76, 92, 94, and 102.

Diverse riders have diverse needs, and the upcoming CX Plan will highlight the needs of various racial/ethnic groups, women, girls, people who are nonbinary and transgender, riders with a range of disabilities, and other categories.

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Stephanie N. Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer

Customer Experience Update

October 21, 2021

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Customer Experience Program Overview

- Annual Customer Experience (CX) Plan required by Board Motion 38.1 (2018)

- April 2020 – CX Department established

- Dec 2020 - First CX Plan adopted by Board
  - Available at **metro.net/plans/cx**

**How can NJ Transit improve customer service? Look to L.A., advocacy group says.**

Updated Feb 11, 2021
By Larry Higgs | NJ.com

...could service as a blueprint for NJ Transit and provide marching orders for the next customer advocate, said Janna Chernetz , Tri-State Transportation Campaign deputy executive director, who introduced the idea at Wednesday's NJ transit board meeting…

Customer Experience Definition

Customer Experience (CX) is the sum total of the experiences our customers have at every stage of their journey. The goal is to minimize pain points, maximize smooth, uneventful experiences, and find opportunities for occasional surprise and delight.

The Customer Journey:

Plan → Access → Wait → Pay → Ride → Connect → Egress
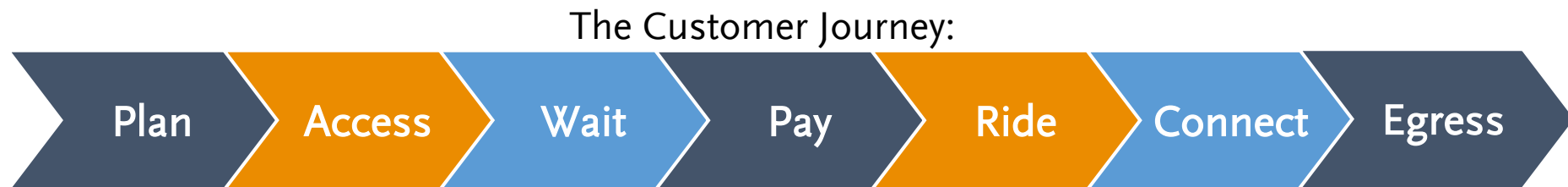
(CX is inclusive of NextGen, Better Bus, and Rail initiatives)

Early CX Wins: Bus Vinyl Seat Swapouts

- Fabric seats harbor odor, pests, grime, and absorb liquids
- Swapping out fabric seats to vinyl, which is easier to clean
- 50 buses completed
- Will complete 330 more buses in FY22
- On pace to complete entire in-service fleet over three years

"I'm always carrying newspapers or plastic or some kind of protection because many times I have seen seats dirty, either wet or smears with what seems is feces..." Latinx/Hispanic female, 45-54

Early CX Wins: B/D Line Train Cleaning

- In June 2021, began enhanced cleaning of trains (trash pickup, mopping, sweeping) on B/D (Red/Purple) at North Hollywood and Wilshire/Western stations, weekdays only (7-12:30AM & 2:30-8PM)

- Location moved to Union Station after Sept shakeup

- 48% decrease in litter/trash on the B (Red) Line. Impact not yet measured on D (Purple) Line.

- Opportunities/Challenges:

  o Program will be extended to additional lines as resources allow

  o Staff shortages, currently hiring/backfilling positions

"The red line especially is very dirty and musty, it smells all the time. Not a fun experience" Asian Pacific Islander female, 18-24

Early CX Wins: Bus Interior Cleaning Pilot

- To prevent trash from building up on buses throughout the day, Operations is piloting weekday cleaning at layover points (10-6:30pm)

- Launched August 23rd at Terminal 28:
  - In first month, service attendants removed over 5,000 pieces or piles of trash* on 2,200 buses, cleaned up over 150 spills, removed over 400 incidences of graffiti

- Opportunities/Challenges:
  - Serves high ridership lines, around 8% of total bus trips

*A trash pile is counted as one item if the pile is contained within a 1-foot radius

"Most of the time the bus is clean in the morning but by time other people ride...they leave the trash on the bus" – Black/African American female with disability, 55-64

Early CX Wins: TransitWatch Campaign

- To help customers feel safer on buses and trains, Communications is running ads to promote the TransitWatch app.

- Results: 12,000 new app downloads from Spring campaign (Apr-Jun 2021), FY22 campaign underway with total goal of 25,000 app downloads

- Opportunities/Challenges:
  - Will include more bus bench ads in Equity Focus Communities (EFCs) in future campaigns to promote text message number

"Signs on platforms tell us to "see something say something" but who do we say these things to if no one is on the train or platform when we get off?" –Latinx/Hispanic female, 25-34
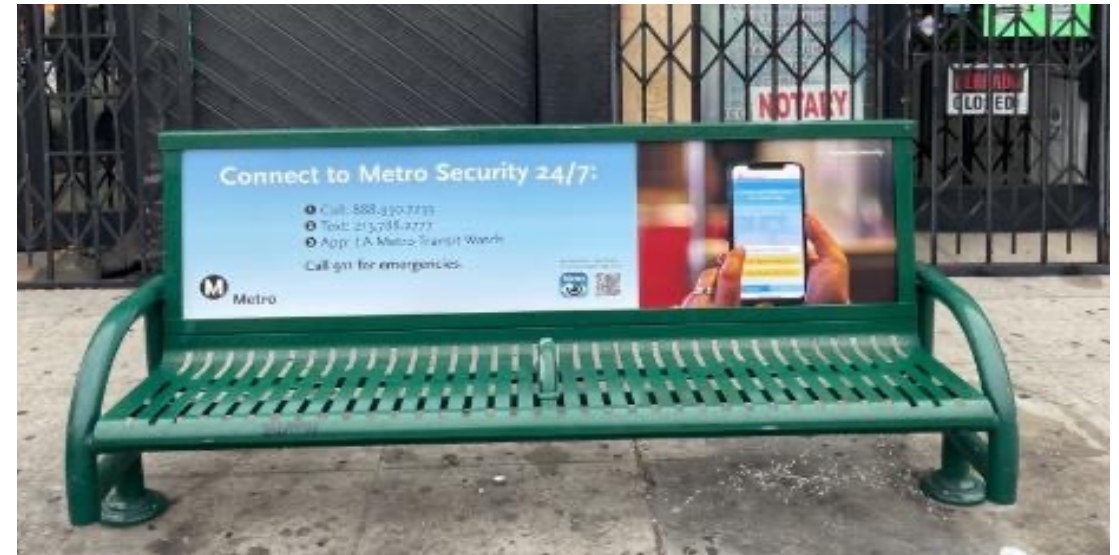
TransitWatch Ad Posted on Bus Bench in City of LA

Early CX Wins: Solar Lighting Tests

- Less than 1% of bus stops have dedicated lighting to help customers feel safe while waiting for their bus at night

- Solar lighting provides a possible, lower cost solution

  o Tests underway at five bus stops, three vendors provided free proof of concept units

  o Looking to test other products with higher illuminance

- Customer survey planned for Nov

- Seeking funding for larger scale pilot

"Metro bus stops can be pretty dark at night...you can't really protect yourself from others/watch your surroundings." –Black/African American female with disability, 18-24, below poverty line

Early CX Wins: Homelessness Outreach

- Temporary Shelter Vouchers: 80 beds provided for People Experiencing Homelessness by PATH workers from March-July 2021

- Results: 161 individuals housed Mar – Jul 2021
    - 19% transitioned to family reunification, housing and/or social services
    - 33% still residents
    - 47% decided to leave or were asked to leave

"[At] some stops you can't even sit down on the benches because there's homeless people living on [them] or they have their stuff on [them]." Latinx/Hispanic female, age 18-24, below poverty line

FY22 Budget CX Initiatives - $61.9M

Pie chart:
- Public Safety $38.2
- Homelessness $11.7
- Cleanliness $1.9
- Bus Improvements $8.3
- Other $1.8
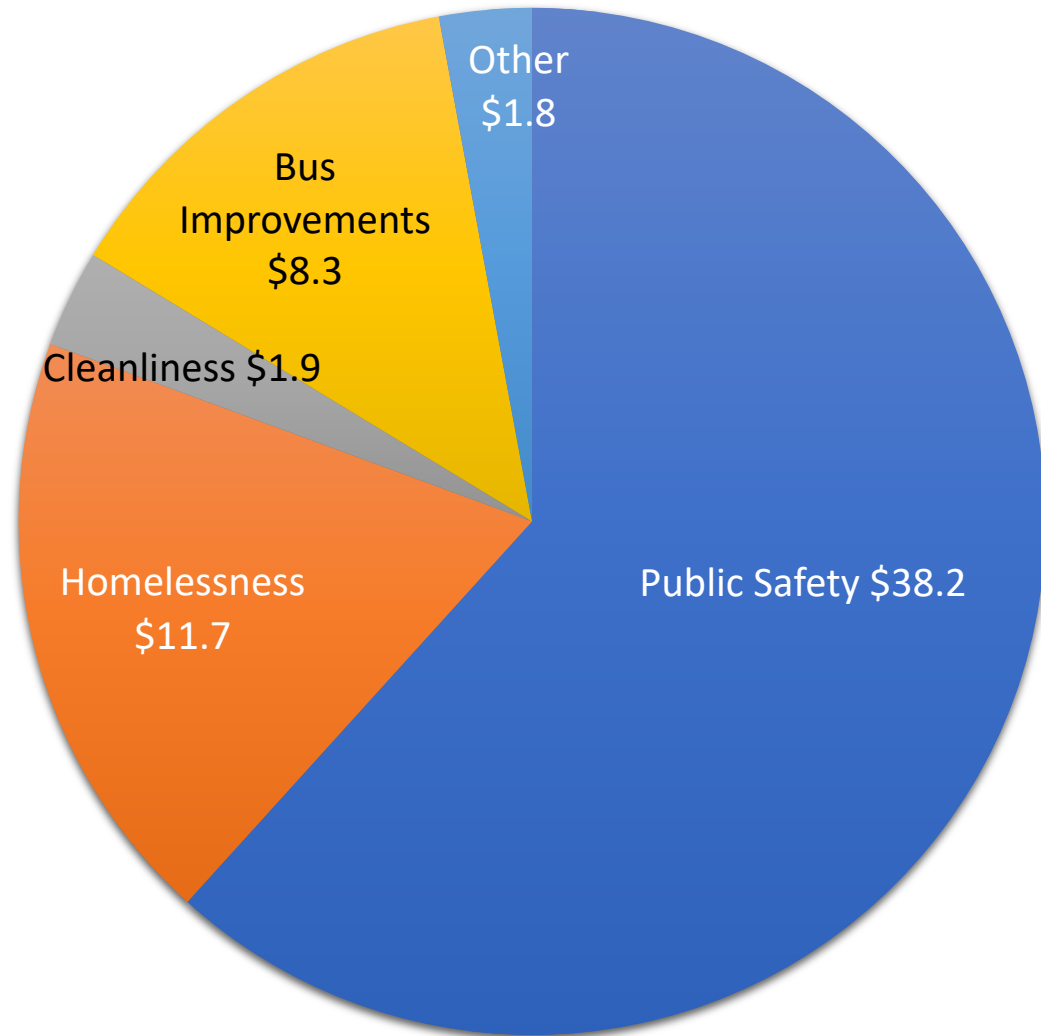
- Staff is evaluating shift of unobligated funds from CX initiatives that do not yet need funding to CX Plan items that are ready to proceed.

Bus Quadrant Chart – 2020 Customer Experience Survey

Target Issues

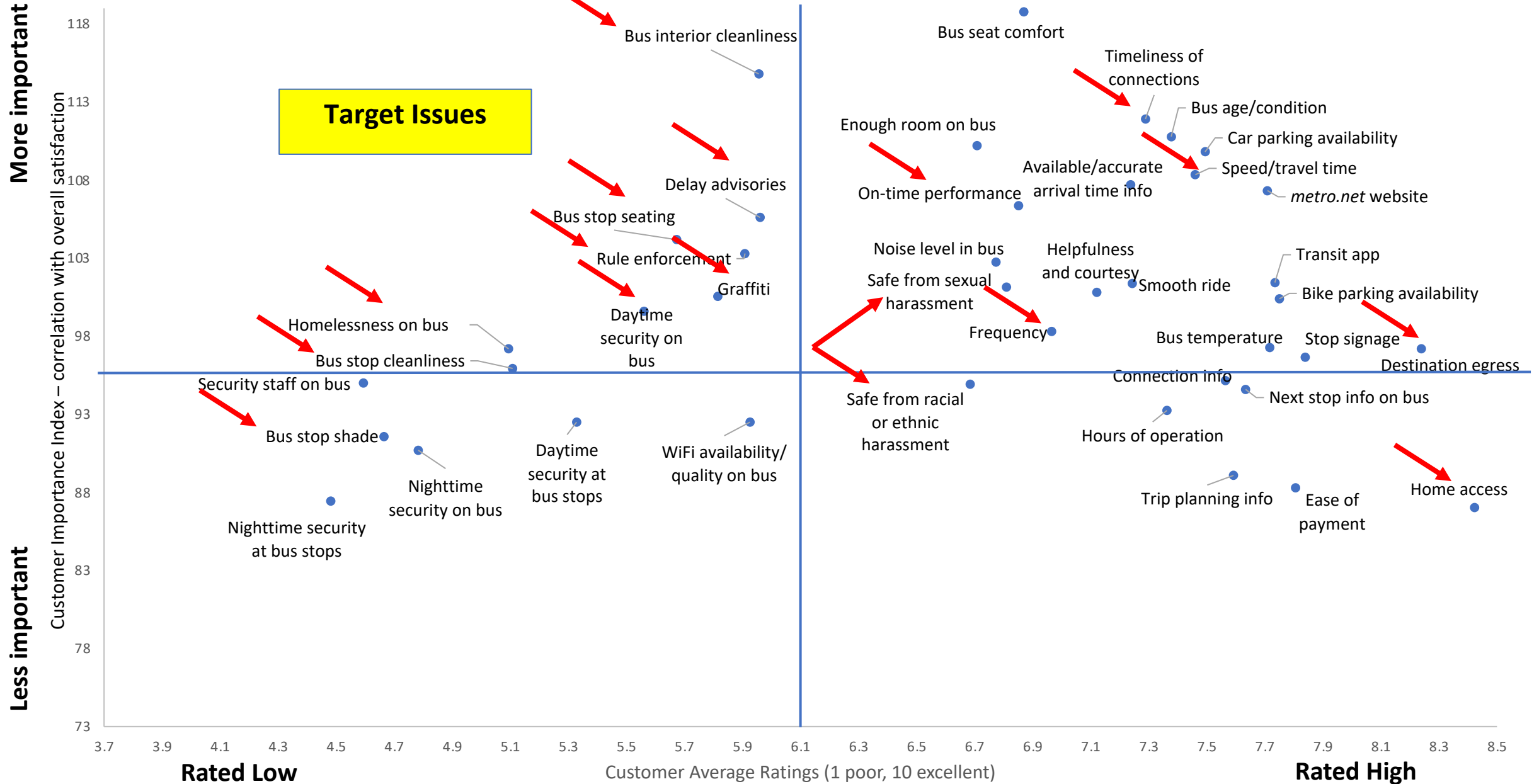**More important** / **Less important** (y-axis: Customer Importance Index – correlation with overall satisfaction)

Rated Low / **Rated High** (x-axis: Customer Average Ratings (1 poor, 10 excellent))

- Bus interior cleanliness
- Bus seat comfort
- Timeliness of connections
- Bus age/condition
- Car parking availability
- Enough room on bus
- Delay advisories
- Available/accurate arrival time info
- Speed/travel time
- On-time performance
- *metro.net* website
- Bus stop seating
- Noise level in bus
- Helpfulness and courtesy
- Transit app
- Rule enforcement
- Safe from sexual harassment
- Smooth ride
- Bike parking availability
- Graffiti
- Daytime security on bus
- Frequency
- Bus temperature
- Stop signage
- Homelessness on bus
- Bus stop cleanliness
- Safe from racial or ethnic harassment
- Destination egress
- Security staff on bus
- Connection info
- Next stop info on bus
- Bus stop shade
- Hours of operation
- Nighttime security on bus
- Daytime security at bus stops
- WiFi availability/ quality on bus
- Trip planning info
- Ease of payment
- Home access
- Nighttime security at bus stops

2022 CX Plan Outline
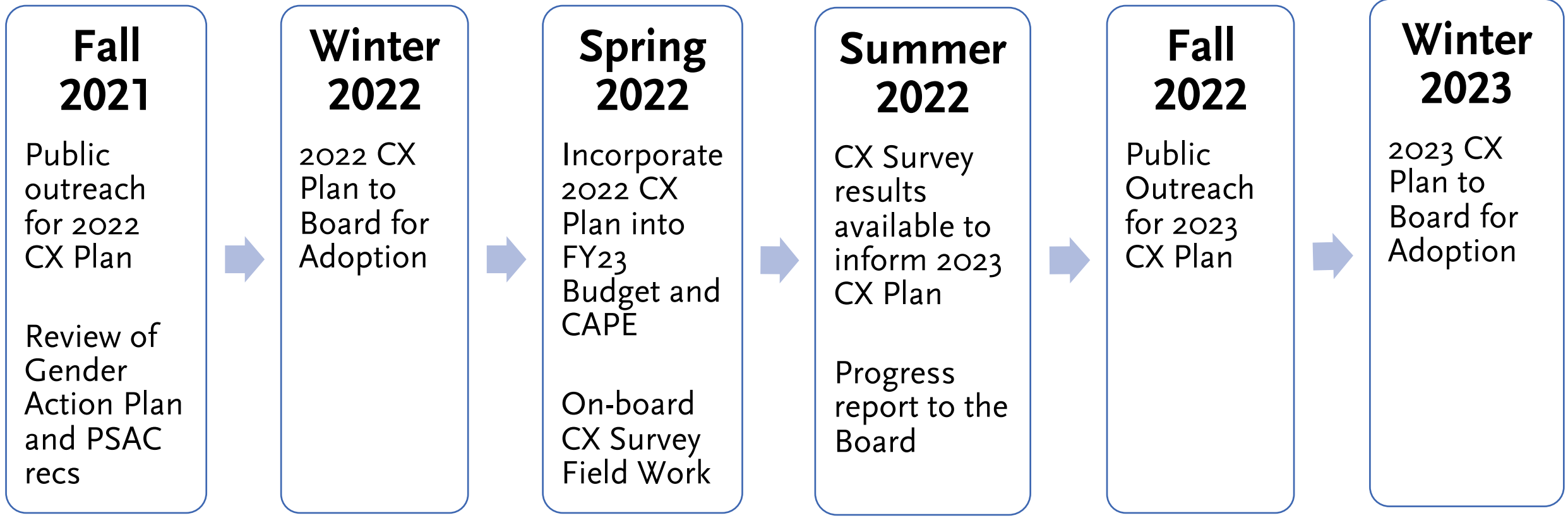
1. Top customer pain points from research
   a. Cleanliness
   b. Public safety
   c. Bus Stop Shade and Seating
   d. Time Competitiveness and Connectivity
   e. Customer Info

2. Initiatives to address pain points
   a. Completed
   b. In the pipeline
   c. Are initiatives adequate?
   d. Barriers to improvement?
   e. New opportunities?

3. Diverse Riders, Diverse Needs

4. Status of 70 CX and Better Bus Action Items

5. Institutionalizing CX
   a. CX Culture
   b. UX Testing Policy
   c. Bus Shakeup Protocols
   d. KPI's
   e. Planning, budgeting, and performance systems

CX Culture Change

- CEO is committed to building a strong customer experience culture at all levels:
  - Metro leadership
  - Front-line employees
  - Admin and professional staff

- New CX Culture Committee:
  - Meets monthly
  - Defines beliefs and behaviors we want Metro employees to have and integrates them into hiring, training, coaching, and recognition programs.

18 Month Look Ahead

Fall 2021	Winter 2022	Spring 2022	Summer 2022	Fall 2022	Winter 2023
Public outreach for 2022 CX Plan Review of Gender Action Plan and PSAC recs	2022 CX Plan to Board for Adoption	Incorporate 2022 CX Plan into FY23 Budget and CAPE On-board CX Survey Field Work	CX Survey results available to inform 2023 CX Plan Progress report to the Board	Public Outreach for 2023 CX Plan	2023 CX Plan to Board for Adoption

Web page where the public can read about Customer Experience at Metro and provide comments:

metro.net/plans/cx