

Riding Metrobus 16H from GHBC to Pentagon City (last update May-13-2019)

WMATA's Metrobus 16H is a very convenient, low-cost way for GHBC residents to get to/from Pentagon City for:

- o Shopping trips in the Pentagon City "Fashion Centre" Mall
- o Connecting to the Metro for trips to DC and beyond (such as Kennedy Center)

There's a bus stop right in front of GHBC, so it's perfect for any residents who can't (or prefer not to) navigate the steep hill on Jefferson St to bus stops on Columbia Pike for other routes near our location (Metrobus 16 A / C / E; 25B; 28A; Arlington 41 &45).

Learning About the Metrobus 16H: This document explains in some detail what you need to know to use this bus. From time to time, GHBC staff will escort groups on trips to/from Pentagon City via Metrobus, so that they can answer any questions first-time riders may have. The goal is to familiarize GHBC residents with the WMATA bus system, so that it's an option they know how to use for travel to other locations via other bus routes.

Red, White & Blue Buses & Stop

Signs: Most WMATA buses are red, white & blue, as are the signs at each bus stop, which show all the bus routes that stop there. All the signs on Jefferson St (like the one at the right, directly in front of



GHBC) show only "16H", because that's the only route that goes here.

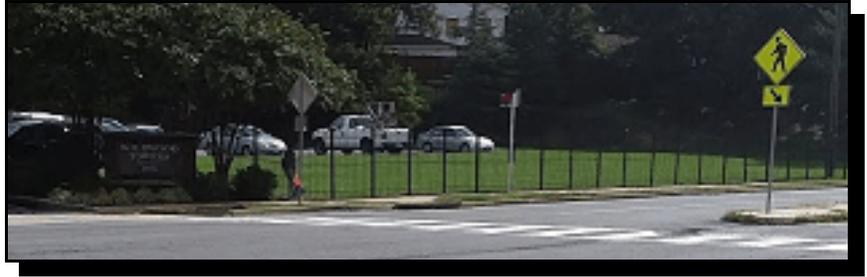
The sign also shows "Stop Id #" (a unique number that identifies each stop in the WMATA system), the phone number to call for information – (202) 637-7000 – and the web site where you can browse for information via smart phone: www.wmata.com.

A few of the "Pike Ride" buses that serve the routes on Columbia Pike (Metrobus 16A, 16C, 16E, 16G and 16H) have a different paint job that looks like this ==>>>>.



Bus Stops Near GHBC:

- o **Eastbound -->>**
Pentagon City: Across the street in front of Wildwood Towers apartments (1075 Jefferson St)



Although there's no traffic light, large yellow "pedestrian crossing" signs draw drivers' attention to the white-striped crossing lane.

If you check for traffic before you step into the street, you should be able to cross safely. (If you move slowly, you can cross one half of the street at a time, waiting at the median until there's no traffic coming or the driver(s) stop to let you cross.)

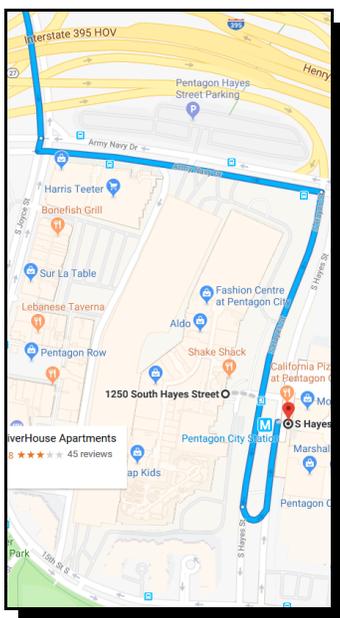
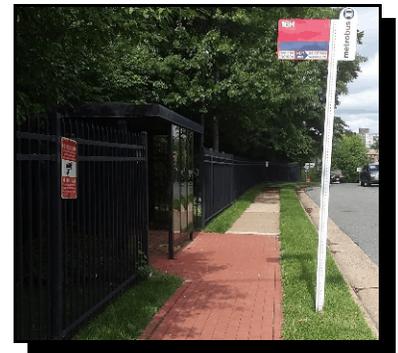
On the electronic display inside the bus, this stop is identified as

"Jefferson St & #1075"

- o **Westbound -->> Skyline City:** On the same side of Jefferson St as GHBC, just north (left) of front entrance.

On the electronic display inside the bus, this stop is identified as

"3440 Jefferson".



Bus Stop at Pentagon City = East side of Hayes St, just south of 12th St. From Columbia Pike, bus goes south on Joyce St; east on Army/Navy Dr and then south on Hayes St. It passes the *west* entrance to Pentagon City Metro, where it does *not* stop, and then does a U-turn to head north on Hayes St and stop directly in front of the east entrance to Pentagon City Metro, shown at the right (currently under construction).



This is what the bus-stop sign at the Pentagon City Metro on Hayes St & S 12th St looks like. Because so many buses stop here, on your return trip you need to be careful that you don't board the wrong bus.



<<<=== All Metrobus 16 buses that travel along Columbia Pike will display this "Pike Ride" sign. But *only the 16H* turns up Jefferson St.



(Sometimes from Pentagon City it might be faster to take the 16E or 16G, but only if you're willing/able to walk up the hill from Columbia Pike.)

On the front and side of the bus, electronic signs show the route number (in this case 16H) followed by a message that alternates between "Pike Ride" and the destination (which is "Skyline City" for the 16H).



Sometimes while the bus is waiting at the stop, the signs may say "Not In Service". Normally, you'll be allowed to board the bus at this time, pay your fare and sit down while you wait for the bus to depart. In those cases, be sure to double-check with the driver that it's the route you want.

Boarding the Bus: Most WMATA buses have the capability to "kneel" (bring the surface down near the street surface), so that it's easier to step up from the curb or so that a wheelchair can roll up a ramp.

SmarTrip Card to Pay Your Fare: Although it's possible to travel by Metrobus and pay your fare in cash, it's easier, faster, and cheaper to use a SmarTrip card issued by WMATA, which is valid on Metrorail and Metrobus and a great many other local bus lines (including Arlington, Alexandria, Fairfax County, Montgomery County and Baltimore).



Anyone 65 or older with a valid ID can purchase a Senior SmarTrip card for \$2, which entitles you to a 50% discount on all fares. For seniors, the discounted bus fare is \$1. Within two hours of whatever time you pay that first fare, all SmarTrip users can transfer to one or more other buses at no charge. (There are no transfers if you pay in cash.)

You can add value to your SmarTrip card on any Metrobus using cash or at any Metro Station using cash or credit card, and then pay fares by touching your card to the fare box. (If you lose your card, once you notify WMATA, the card will be disabled, and you can transfer any remaining \$ value to a new card.)

You can purchase a SmarTrip card at any Metro station. Please phone Transportation Coordinator Christy Clark-Bolden at x7651 or by E-mail at cclarkbolden@goodwinhouse.org if you need help with your purchase.

Using the Fare Box: The fare box is located at the front of the bus, right next to the driver. You pay your fare by touching your SmarTrip card to the blue SmarTrip card image on the box.



When your card is accepted, you'll hear a beep and the little window above where you touched your card will show the amount of your fare and the remaining balance on your card. You can also set up an account on line so that you can check your balance at any time from a computer or smart phone.

Finding A Seat: Unless you're traveling at rush hour, there should be plenty of seats, including about 8 seats at the front reserved for Senior Citizens and disabled. These reserved seats can be folded up by the bus driver to make room for wheelchair passengers.

Getting Off At the Right Stop: Buses don't stop unless there are passengers waiting to board or a passenger on the bus has pulled the "Stop Requested" cord. Going to Pentagon City, the bus will automatically stop at the end of the line, so it's hard to miss your stop.

Coming back to GHBC, you need to pull the yellow cord above your seat (against the window) before you get to GHBC to alert the driver that you want to stop. An *electronic sign with orange letters just behind the driver* shows the name of the next stop, and a recorded voice speaks whatever appears on the sign. The last stop before you get to GHBC is "Jefferson St @ Columbia" (at the lower end of Jefferson St, just after the bus turns south from Columbia Pike).

After you pass that stop, pull the cord. When you do that, "Stop Requested" will appear on the electronic sign and the voice will say that. The next stop will be "3440 Jefferson".

If you do miss your stop, not to worry. Route 16H operates as a loop in Skyline City and passengers may remain on the bus ride along the loop on Leesburg Pike, George Mason Dr, and Seminary Rd until the bus turns back onto Jefferson St, where you can get off at the stop opposite GHBC at Wildwood Towers without paying an extra fare.

When In Doubt, Ask the Driver: With a few exceptions, WMATA bus drivers are very helpful, especially to Senior Citizens. If you need help or have a question, let them know so that they can assist you.

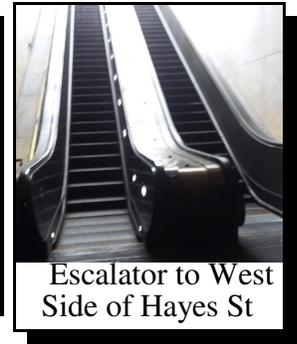
Getting to the Fashion Centre Mall from the Bus Stop at Hayes St & 12th St:



Escalator from Bus Stop (East Side)



Entrance to Metro / SmarTrip Value-Add Machines



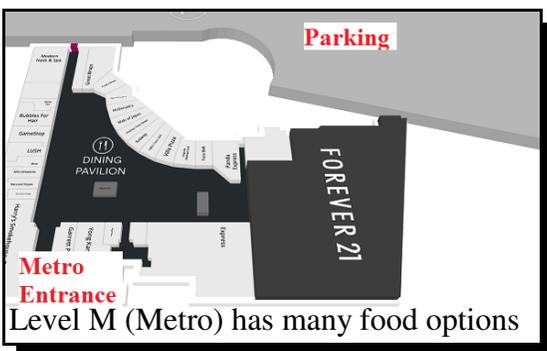
Escalator to West Side of Hayes St

From the bus stop on Hayes street, go inside (currently under construction) and take the escalator down. At the bottom is an east-west corridor that passes under Hayes St. Turn left (west) and go past the entrance to Metro (on your left) and the escalator up to west side of Hayes St (also on your left).

Directly ahead, go through glass doors and up a short escalator to Level M of the Fashion Centre Mall.

The “anchors” of the mall (which appear on levels 1, 2 & 3) are Macy’s on the north (towards Army/Navy Drive) and Nordstrom and the Ritz Carlton on the south (towards 15th St). The middle is filled with smaller shops that mostly appear on just one level.

Depending on where you want to go, it might be faster to take the escalator up to the west side of Hayes St, and enter the mall from there.

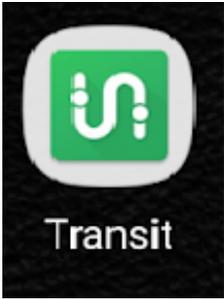


Level M (Metro) has many food options



Levels 1,2 &3 = Street Level and Above

Smart Phone: Residents with smart phones can get current real-time information on bus schedules from an excellent free app called “Transit”, that’s available for download from the Apple or Google Play Store. The icon looks like this:



The phone’s GPS tells where you are located, so that the app can display all upcoming bus departures near that location. It gets real-time information from the WMATA web site, so what it shows are not theoretical times from the published schedule, but when each bus is estimated to arrive, taking into account traffic delays.

The sample screen at the right is what the Transit app displayed when used from an apartment at GHBC, with GH_WIFI as the Internet connection.

