

OTHER WAYS TO GET THE COUNTY MOVING

Our traffic congestion and mobility problems will only partly be solved by building new roads, transit lines, bikeways, and sidewalks. Other supportive programs and policies in the new County Transportation Plan are just as important in addressing these problems.

EXPANDED BUS AND METRORAIL SERVICE

Bus Service. The plan calls for the expansion of Metrobus and Ride On bus service by 50% in the next decade. There are three ways the bus service will expand:

More routes. The County will add many more bus routes connecting various points in the Upcounty to the Downcounty and to Virginia via the continuous I-270 HOV lanes and their extension to Tyson’s Corner and Dulles Airport. Traveling on these separate lanes, buses will travel at the posted speed limit and not be slowed by congestion. In addition, new local routes will be added in the still-growing areas of Gaithersburg, Germantown, Clarksburg, and the Eastern County.

More frequent service. Many bus routes run only every 30 minutes in the rush hours, leaving little schedule flexibility for potential riders. Within the next decade bus service on most routes will run as frequently as every 15 minutes on most routes, and even as often as every 10 minutes on the routes with the heaviest ridership.

Earlier and later service. Most routes start after 6 AM in the morning and run only until 10 PM at night on weekdays, and have more limited hours on weekends and holidays. The new plan will start many more routes before 6 AM and extend them until at least midnight on Monday-through-Thursday nights, and until the early morning on Friday and Saturday nights. Weekend hours will also be extended substantially.

The County will also improve the bus service in the following ways:

All bus stops on major roads will have shelters outfitted with benches, lighting, and real-time schedule information that will display when the next buses will arrive.

All bus stops will be connected by sidewalks. Some bus stops may be moved to maximize pedestrian access and safety.

Several intersections on Randolph Road, University Boulevard, US 29, and Veirs Mill Road will be re-designed and traffic signals will be installed and synchronized to allow buses on these highways to bypass points of congestion and speed up their service.

A discounted rate for two-week and 20-ride Ride On passes will be continued, and the County will press for the same discount for Metrobus service in Montgomery County as well. Seniors will continue to enjoy their traditional discount, and kids will ride free on any Ride On and Metrobus between 2 PM and 7 PM. The County will continue to experiment with providing free and reduced-fare service on selected routes where traffic congestion is particularly acute.

Metrorail service. The plan calls for expanding the number of cars in the Metrorail fleet to provide 8-car trains on the Red Line. The plan also calls for running all trains between Shady Grove and Glenmont through Downtown Washington. Currently, only half the trains during rush hours operate over the entire line; the other half only run between Grosvenor and Silver Spring.

During the next decade access to Metrorail stations will be greatly eased. The County will add more frequent bus service to the stations, and enhanced connections to Metrorail via the Inner Purple Line (at Bethesda and Silver Spring), the Corridor Cities Transitway (at Shady Grove), and the Georgia Avenue Busway (at Glenmont). A second parking garage at Shady Grove is open, a garage at Grosvenor is open, and a second garage at Glenmont will be built within the next couple of years.

MAXIMIZING THE EFFICIENCY AND SAFETY OF THE ROAD NETWORK

The County's traffic management system is the most advanced of its type in the nation. The Advanced Transportation Management System of interconnected and centrally controlled traffic signals and traffic cameras has allowed the County to carry more traffic efficiently than comparable road networks elsewhere. The system will further improve by such means as establishing a roving incident response team that will respond to calls from the Transportation Management Center to tow stalled vehicles from the roadway, and by installing pedestrian “count-down” signals, alerting pedestrians precisely as to how long they will have to cross an intersection safely.

LAND USE

As part of the plan, the Council also gave the green light to an alternative land use policy put forward by the County Planning Board that will use land use decisions to locate more jobs in the White Oak area and more housing and fewer additional jobs in the I-270 corridor. In this way more persons will have greater opportunities live closer to where they work. It will also plan for a series of transit-oriented communities near Metro stations and bolster activity in Langley Park in conjunction with planning for the Purple Line.

Projections show that this land use change, together with expanded transit service and promoting transit-oriented design practices, will reduce cross-county afternoon work trips by 18 percent and increase transit use by as much as 45 percent. It will increase jobs within a half mile of rail stations from 40 percent in 1998 to 60 percent in 2050 and housing within a half mile of transit from 12 percent in 1998 to 33 percent in 2050.

BENEFITS FROM THE NEW COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PLAN

By building the projects identified in the new County Transportation Plan, traffic congestion will be reduced and mobility will be improved by Year 2015. The following points compare the results from the new plan compared to merely completing the projects already scheduled for construction.

Travel speeds will be higher and travel time will be lower. Cars will travel at an average speed of 24.0 mph, compared to only 22.1 mph if there were no plan. Travel times for certain trips would be dramatically better. Here are forecasted evening rush hour travel times in Year 2015 for selected trips:

| | WITHOUT THE PLAN | UNDER THE PLAN |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Bethesda - Silver Spring (by transit)</i> | <i>33 minutes</i> | <i>17 minutes</i> |
| <i>Bethesda - Germantown (by transit)</i> | <i>79 minutes</i> | <i>51 minutes</i> |
| <i>Silver Spring - Burtonsville (by transit)</i> | <i>76 minutes</i> | <i>60 minutes</i> |
| <i>Silver Spring - Olney (by transit)</i> | <i>73 minutes</i> | <i>39 minutes</i> |
| <i>Silver Spring - Olney (by car)</i> | <i>45 minutes</i> | <i>39 minutes</i> |
| <i>Burtonsville - Shady Grove West (by car)</i> | <i>40 minutes</i> | <i>29 minutes</i> |
| <i>Gaithersburg - Norbeck (by car)</i> | <i>29 minutes</i> | <i>22 minutes</i> |
| <i>Rockville - Clarksburg (by car)</i> | <i>43 minutes</i> | <i>35 minutes</i> |

Congestion will be less prominent. Without the plan 39.6% of all rush hour traffic will be traveling in congested conditions, but upon completion of the plan this will be reduced to 32.6%. It is projected that 23.5% of all traffic lanes will be congested in Year 2015, but under the plan only 19.1% will be congested.

Transit ridership will increase. Under the plan transit ridership will increase by more than 75% in the rush hour, from nearly 34,000 to nearly 60,000. The share of rush hour trips by transit would increase from 15.2% to 17.4%.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S 10 - YEAR TRANSPORTATION PLAN



A blueprint to make a real difference now for Montgomery families...

Dear Neighbor,

Traffic congestion is the number one threat to the quality of life in our Community.

This brochure describes the projects, programs, and policies that the Montgomery County Council intends to implement over the next ten years to address our transportation crisis. It is the largest transportation initiative adopted by a county in the Metro Washington region. This ambitious and wide-ranging \$7 billion plan is designed to relieve traffic congestion with new roads, road improvements, intersection upgrades, more buses, rail, and a new land use policy. Our plan will:

- ❑ build 345 lane miles of additional roadway capacity
- ❑ build 18 grade-separated interchanges and 20 intersection improvements
- ❑ add HOV lanes on I-270 from the I-270 West Spur south to Virginia and on I-270 north from Shady Grove to Frederick County.
- ❑ add express bus service
- ❑ add 144 new buses and increase bus operations by 50 percent
- ❑ add six new transit centers



The Montgomery County Council. Standing (from left to right): George Leventhal, Phil Andrews, Michael Knapp, Thomas Perez, Howard Denis. Sitting (left to right): Marilyn Praisner, Steven Silverman, Michael Subin, Nancy Floreen.

We will tackle east-west congestion by building the Intercounty Connector and by widening MD 28 and MD 198 to four lanes between Norbeck and Burtonsville. Montrose Parkway will relieve congestion in North Bethesda. The Inner Purple Line will link Bethesda and Silver Spring with Langley Park, the University of Maryland at College Park, and the Amtrak Station at New Carrollton. The Corridor Cities Transitway, a busway or light rail line, will connect Clarksburg, Germantown, and Gaithersburg to Shady Grove through our high-tech corridor.

We also gave the green light to an alternative land use policy that would promote greater opportunities for residents to live closer to where they work. We plan for a series of transit-oriented communities near Metro stations.

Relief from traffic congestion does not come cheaply, though. We need more County money and we need much more money from the State. We will work closely with the County Executive to identify more local revenue and with our Annapolis delegation to generate more State funding for transportation.

There is no easy answer to our traffic congestion problem. We have to do more of everything more and better roads, more mass transit, creative land use, and improved traffic demand management strategies. This ambitious, yet realistic, blueprint can make a difference now. It's time to get Montgomery moving.

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