

GLOSSARY: BUS RAPID TRANSIT TERMS AND ACRONYMS

TERM OR ACRONYM	DEFINITION
A	
Articulated Buses	Buses composed of two rigid sections linked by a pivoting joint (articulation). This joint enables the vehicle to turn corners despite its long length. These buses carry more passengers than a standard transit vehicle.
B	
Business Access & Transit (BAT)	Outside lanes that are reserved for right-turns and transit only.
Busway	A constructed roadway built exclusively for use by buses. Busways can be built adjacent to or in the center of existing roadways. They can also be built along their own separate alignment. (See also BAT lanes, bi-directional lanes, and designated lanes)
C	
CAC (Corridor Advisory Committee)	Acronym for the BRT Corridor Advisory Committees created by Montgomery County for each BRT corridor project under study. They are generally composed of community stakeholders along the corridor.
CAC Procedures	Developed in 2014 by MCDOT in collaboration with community stakeholders to guide the selection and operation of the planned BRT Corridor Advisory Committees.
CAC Program Plan – US 29 corridor	A document which set forth the expectations, near-term schedule, and planned discussion topics for the US 29 North, Central, and South BRT Corridor Advisory Committees for the preliminary design phase of the project.
Capital Improvements Program (CIP)/ Capital Budget	Within Montgomery County Government, the document containing descriptions of capital projects and associated budget needs for the upcoming six fiscal years. It is submitted by the County Executive annually (alternates between full submission one year and limited amendments the next year) to be modified and approved by the County Council.
Categorical Exclusion (CatEx or CE)	The lowest level of environmental analysis in the NEPA Process (see NEPA). A federal action (or project receiving federal funds) may be "categorically excluded" from a detailed environmental analysis if it does not, individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. Neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required for a project that receives a CatEx.

Center Loading Station

A BRT configuration where the station is located in the median of the road or running way and BRT passengers board or alight from buses in the center of the roadway. Passengers cross the street usually at a signalized intersection at the station, using well marked crosswalks.

Connectivity

Term given to the various connections to planned BRT service that allow passengers to transfer and reach destinations beyond the specific BRT corridor.

Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP)

Document containing transportation strategies and projects planned by member jurisdictions in the Washington metropolitan area, consolidated by MWCOG (see below). The plan covers the next 20 years and is updated every three years. "Constrained" refers to fiscal or budgetary constraints.

D

Designated Lanes

Lanes that are restricted to use by only certain transportation modes such as buses, BRT vehicles, carpools and other high occupancy vehicles (HOV), etc.

Dwell Time

Time that a bus spends at a scheduled stop without moving; ideally it should only include time spent for boarding and de-boarding passengers. BRT Elements such as off-board fare collection and level-boarding decrease dwell time by speeding up the boarding and alighting process, thus resulting in a faster trip.

E

Educational Website

getonboardbrt.com. The main website for Montgomery County's BRT outreach and education efforts. (See also Technical Website below)

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The highest level of environmental analysis in the NEPA Process (see NEPA). An EIS is only required for federal actions (or projects receiving federal funds) which are expected to result in significant environmental impacts.

F

FTA

Acronym for the Federal Transit Administration, an agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation

Flash

Brand name of Montgomery County's future BRT network.

H

Headways

Time between BRT vehicles at most stops on a given transit route. A 7-minute headway means a BRT vehicle will arrive at your station every 7 minutes.

I

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

A system of technology that uses advanced communication systems between vehicles, signals and other infrastructure to ensure safe, efficient operation.

Interlining

Use of the same vehicle or operator on more than one route without going back to the garage. Interlining can minimize vehicle requirements and provide transfer enhancement for passengers.

L

Level Boarding	Condition in which bus station platforms are high enough to be at the same level as the bus floor, facilitating quick boarding and easy access for wheelchairs, disabled passengers, and baby strollers. This design often also results in decreasing the time to load and unload passengers.
Local bus/ Neighborhood bus	Usually its vehicles stop at numerous bus stops along their routes, there are many stops to serve local residents, and the buses follow circuitous routes between two Metro stations to serve as many neighborhoods and employment or activity centers as possible. Local service in Montgomery County is provided by MCDOT—“Ride On”—and WMATA—MetroBus.

M

MCDOT	Acronym for the Montgomery County Department of Transportation.
MDOT	Acronym for the Maryland Department of Transportation, an organization which includes the State Highway Administration (SHA) and the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA).
MD 97	State of Maryland numeric designation for the road that is also known as Georgia Avenue.
MD 355	State of Maryland numeric designation for the road that is also known as Wisconsin Avenue, Rockville Pike, Frederick Road, South Frederick Avenue, and North Frederick Avenue.
MD 586	State of Maryland numeric designation for the road that is also known as Veirs Mill Road.
MD 650	State of Maryland numeric designation for the road that is also known as New Hampshire Avenue.
M-NCPPC	Acronym for the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, a bi-county agency with seven departments including the Montgomery County Department of Planning.
MTA	Acronym for the Maryland Transit Administration, the division within the Maryland Department of Transportation that focuses upon providing transit service.
MWCOG	Acronym for the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the Washington DC regional planning agency.
Managed Lanes	High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, bus lanes, reversible lanes, or any other types of lanes that have a special management scheme that restricts access for their operation.
Metro	Brand name of the metropolitan Washington’s regional subway system operated by WMATA. The name is also applied to the operating agency itself.
Metro Extra	Brand name of the express MetroBus service with limited stops. Operated by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.
Mixed Traffic Lanes	Lanes that are open for use by any vehicle and do not offer exclusivity to certain modes or types of vehicles.
Multiple Door Boarding	A system of boarding that allows passengers to board at any door of a vehicle. This boarding practice is typically associated with off-board fare collection.

N

NEPA

Acronym for the National Environmental Policy Act, a 1970 law that promotes the enhancement of the environment by requiring the assessment and possible mitigation of environmental effects of any project receiving federal funds.

NEPA Process

Steps, regulated by NEPA (see above) and related legislation, that projects receiving federal funding need to follow. If the proposed project is covered under NEPA, it is subject to one or more levels of analysis: Categorical Exclusion (CatEx), an environmental assessment (EA), and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

O

Open House - BRT

Opportunities for residents to stop in, learn about a particular BRT project, ask questions, and offer comments to the project's staff. They typically have a series of display boards and no set presentation, so attendees can come and go as they please.

Operating Budget

Within Montgomery County Government, the document containing descriptions of operational projects or services and associated budget needs for the upcoming fiscal year. It is submitted by the County Executive annually to be approved by the County Council.

P

Pay Before Boarding/Off Board Fare Collection

Feature of a transit system in which passengers pay the fare outside the vehicle, prior to boarding, and in this way avoid queues before entering or at the fare box within the vehicle. This queueing process can add significantly to the overall time a bus takes to complete its route. (see for example Dwell Time above) Off-board fare collection includes multi-ride passes purchased in advance or ticket vending machines typically located on station platforms.

Person Throughput

Number of people that pass by a certain point or segment on a road (regardless of the transportation mode used) during a period of time (it can be expressed by people/hour or people/day).

Preliminary Design

The initial engineering work that takes a project's design usually to about the 30 percent complete phase.

Public Involvement Plan (PIP) -BRT

A document which sets forth the BRT education and outreach strategy for Montgomery County, near term schedule of various outreach events, and reporting procedures for the preliminary design phase of the US 29 BRT project.

Purpose and Need Statement

Statement of what a transportation study intends to address based on quantifiable needs. This document is an important initial step in the planning process.

Q

Queue Jump Lanes

Any "short," additional lane added to a certain direction at a signalized traffic intersection. Such a lane is typically restricted to use by buses to allow them to move ahead of traffic when a special signal for the lane authorizes "green" movement ahead of the other lanes of that direction. This allows the bus to "jump" ahead of the queues of other traffic that are formed on the other lanes.

R

Rapid Transit System (RTS)

A generic term used internationally to describe certain types of transit, including bus rapid transit (BRT). It was the original term used in Montgomery County to refer to BRT and the Purple Line light rail project, but is now in disuse as the County has adopted the more familiar BRT nomenclature.

Real-time Information

Refers to information about the actual bus expected arrival times at a particular location, as opposed to schedule information. The information is typically presented on electronic signs located on vehicles and at stations indicating the arrival of the next bus or stop. Or it is made available to patrons' mobile devices.

Repurposed Lane/ Lane Repurposing

Conversion of the function of a lane. Lanes that that were previously open to all traffic (see Mixed Traffic Lanes above) are restricted to use by only certain transportation modes such as buses, BRT vehicles, or carpools and other high occupancy vehicles (HOV).

Reversible Lane - BRT

A type of lane that allows it to be used by BRT vehicles in one direction during certain periods of the day and then switch to the opposite direction during the rest of the day or another designated period. For example, a typical reversible lane for BRT would allow the buses to travel to an urban area in the morning, and out of the urban area in the evening, mirroring the peak travel flows of mixed traffic.

Ride On

Local bus system operated MCDOT's Division of Transit Services.

Ride On Extra

Ride On's (see above) limited stop service, which provides frequent and faster service during peak hours along a particular route. Ride On Extra will debut in October 2017 on MD 355 with 12 stops between the Lakeforest Transit Center and Medical Center Metro.

Right-of-Way (ROW)

An established horizontal width which is not privately owned. ROW may not be fully developed by the construction of a roadway.

Running Way

Lanes that are expected to be used by a particular transportation mode, e.g., if the system has bus lanes, then those lanes constitute the running way of those buses.

S

Service Plan/Service Operations

The way in which BRT or bus operates including the service frequency, hours of service, routing and connecting services.

SHA/MSHA

Acronym for the State Highway Administration or Maryland State Highway Administration, the division within the Maryland Department of Transportation that focuses upon road construction and maintenance of State roads.

Side Loading Station

A BRT configuration where the station is located along the curb side of the road or running way and BRT passengers board or alight from buses at the curb side of the roadway as is common with most local bus service. For one end of the trip, patrons will not have to cross any lanes to board the bus. However, for the other end of the trip they will, so BRT stations are typically situated to allow crossing the street at a nearby signalized intersection using well marked crosswalks.

Span of Service

Span of hours over which bus service is operated, e.g., 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. or 24 hr. (late hours are sometimes called "night owl" service). Service span often varies by weekday, Saturday, or Sunday.

Stations - BRT

Bus stops enhanced with BRT amenities. Amenities typically include a raised platform to allow level boarding of buses, shelter from the elements, WiFi and USB connections, fare payment kiosks to allow pre-board payments, real time service information, and seating accommodations.

T

Technical website

montgomerycountymd.gov/BRT. Montgomery County's website contains technical documentation related to the BRT and resources for CAC members, and recording of CAC meetings. (See also Educational Website above)

TIGER Grant

TIGER is the acronym for Transportation Investment Generating Economy Recovery. This is USDOT's highly-competitive federal program which selected MCDOT to receive 10 million dollars to support the implementation of BRT service on the US 29 corridor.

Transit Signal Priority (TSP)

Technology to expedite travel time through traffic signals for transit vehicles by holding green lights longer if a particular bus is running behind schedule and if the overall signal cycle operation can accommodate the slight green hold. In some jurisdictions the technology may also allow for an early green for transit vehicles.

Transportation System Management (TSM)

A system of traffic treatments that uses existing resources to improve transit reliability and performance. **These are typically operational enhancements (usually relatively low-cost) to the capacity of an existing road, e.g., signal timing optimization, controller/cabinet and signal head upgrades, pavement striping, vehicle detectors repair/replacement, bottleneck removal programs, intersection improvements (queue jumps), ridesharing programs, enhanced local bus service, etc.

U

US 29

State of Maryland numeric designation for the road that is also known as Colesville Road and Columbia Pike.

W

WMATA

Acronym for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

[https://mcgov-my.sharepoint.com/personal/poguet_montgomerycountymd_gov/Documents/CAC Related/TermsDefined-BRT_Glossary_Final051817.doc](https://mcgov-my.sharepoint.com/personal/poguet_montgomerycountymd_gov/Documents/CAC%20Related/TermsDefined-BRT_Glossary_Final051817.doc)