



# News Releases

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND



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## **MCDOT to Participate in County's First GreenFest; Exhibit Will Feature Department's Green and Sustainable Activities**

Attendees at the County's first GreenFest, to be held on Saturday, March 28, are encouraged to stop by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation's (MCDOT) exhibit and learn more about the department's green initiatives and activities. MCDOT's booth will be located in Jessup Blair Park next to one of Ride On's compressed natural gas buses, which will be open for tours.

"When people think of the Department of Transportation, they naturally think of our role in constructing and maintaining the transportation network, but they may not be aware of all the things we do to enhance the County's environmental quality," said MCDOT Acting Director Al Roshdieh. "MCDOT's mission is to move people – whether by transit, walking, biking, carpooling or driving. And our goal is to provide these services in an environmentally friendly and sensitive way that emphasizes sustainability and reduces the County's environmental footprint."

MCDOT's exhibit will provide information and giveaways.

The department's green initiatives include:

### **Director's Office**

- Planning has begun for the County's **Rapid Transit System** on Maryland routes 355 and 586 and US 29. Eventually, the network of buses, which operate like a light rail system with limited stops, could run on more than 100 miles of roadway throughout the County.
- Staff coordinates with Maryland state agencies and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority to plan and implement projects such as the **Purple Line, the Corridor Cities Transitway, transit centers and Metrobus and Metrorail improvements.**
- **More than 400 road segments have been adopted by Adopt a Road volunteers** who remove trash from roadways, keeping it out of the County's waterways.
- The Keep Montgomery County Beautiful Committee is supported by MCDOT and its **annual awards program recognizes landscaping projects that incorporate environmentally sensitive designs.**

### **Division of Transit Services**

- MCDOT operates the **Ride On bus system.** With 343 buses, it is the largest regional bus network outside of the District of Columbia. More than 75 percent of Ride On's **fleet uses alternative fuels** (hybrid electric, compressed natural gas or clean diesel).
- Ride On's **bus stop improvement program has improved safety and accessibility** at nearly 3,000 bus stops.
- Ride On's new Equipment Maintenance and Transit Operations Center is LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold certified.
- Commuter Services **encourages employees to use alternatives to driving alone** and **encourages developers to provide amenities** that promote these alternatives.
- The County's **Bikeshare network has 51 stations.** The innovative JARC program provides free Bikeshare membership to low income riders as well as free bike safety training, a helmet and route planning.

### **Division of Parking Management**

- Some County facilities **provide free parking spaces to car sharing services.**
- Many County garages provide **free bicycle parking.**
- **All on-street parking meters in Bethesda are solar powered.** Silver Spring's meters will be transitioned later this year.

- MCDOT is moving forward on **installing electric vehicle charging stations in parking garages.**
- All parking garages now have **energy efficient lighting.**
- The parking lot and garage **wayfinding system and parking space availability signs cut unnecessary driving, reducing fuel consumption and air pollution.**

### **Division of Transportation Engineering**

- The divisions of Transportation Engineering and Highway Services are partnering with the Department of Environmental Protection to **create “green streets” that improve water quality** by using rain gardens, permeable pavers and other methods to filter rainwater on-site.
- MCDOT is **enhancing mobility using transportation alternatives** by building bikeways, sidewalks and trails; transit centers; and ADA accessible bus stops.
- The department is working to **implement complete streets standards** to create more pedestrian and bicycle friendly urban environments.
- Intersection improvements that **improve traffic flow** also **reduce air pollution** resulting from idling cars.
- To ensure there is no net loss of natural areas resulting from projects, **MCDOT has an active remediation program to replant trees and create wetlands.**
- **The storm drain improvement program reduces flooding** in vulnerable neighborhoods, **decreasing harmful runoff** from impervious surfaces that can increase water pollution.

### **Division of Traffic Engineering**

- MCDOT has significantly **expanded pedestrian connections and improved pedestrian safety** to enhance walkability throughout the County.
- The Safe Routes to Schools program has made **pedestrian and traffic safety improvements near every County school** that have significantly reduced collisions and made it safer for children to walk and bike to school.
- The County’s Automated Transportation Management System **enhances traffic flow, improving air quality.**
- **MCDOT is evaluating every main road that is resurfaced to determine if striped bike lanes** or other bicycle accommodations can be provided where protected bike lanes cannot currently be installed.
- When the Department of Environmental Protection installs “green streets” water quality improvements, **the Division of Traffic Engineering partners with staff to install neighborhood traffic calming projects at the same time**, where appropriate.
- MCDOT has converted all County-owned traffic signals to **LED lights, which use less energy and reduce maintenance costs.**
- **MCDOT installed LED street lights** along New Hampshire Avenue and in Damascus under a pilot program to **reduce energy consumption.**

### **Division of Highway Services**

- In partnership with the Department of Environmental Protection, MCDOT’s **street sweeping program cleans about 4,000 lane miles of roads and annually removes 2,000 tons of debris** that could otherwise be washed into streams. Priority is given to sweeping in sensitive watersheds.
- MCDOT cares for the estimated 500,000 trees along public roadways. In 2014, **more than 1,100 trees were planted, more than 8,000 trees were pruned and more than 4,900 were inspected.**
- **MCDOT annually collects 130,000 to 150,000 cubic yards of leaves that are composted**, keeping this valuable organic material from being disposed.
- Highway Services enhances pedestrian access by **maintaining more than 1,000 miles of sidewalks, and in 2014, MCDOT repaired 32 miles of sidewalk.**
- In the spring and summer, MCDOT conducts the **‘Refresh Montgomery’ litter and debris clean up that removes about 20 tons of trash** from roadways in targeted corridors, benefitting water quality.
- **Highway Services recycles its asphalt pavement.** Over that last three years, 25 percent, 125,000 tons, of the asphalt used by Highway was derived from recycled pavement.

The GreenFest will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus of Montgomery College and Jesup Blair Local Park. The free festival will include family friendly activities, workshops, exhibits, environmental films and more. More information is available [online](#).

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