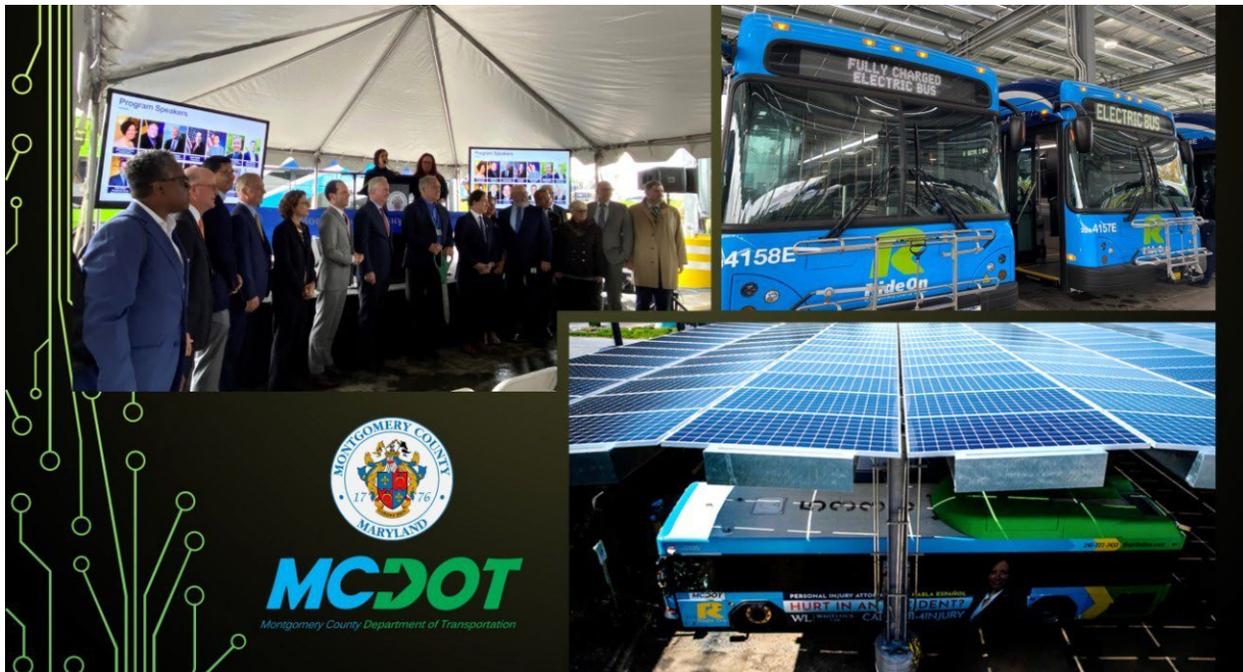


Ride On Newsletter

November 2022

Montgomery County Completes Nation's Largest Bus Microgrid and Charging Infrastructure Project in Silver Spring



Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich, U.S. Sen. Chris Van Hollen, Congressman Jamie Raskin, County Council President Gabe Alborno, Council Vice President Evan Glass, Federal, State and local officials and corporate partners including AlphaStruxure celebrated completion of the Brookville Smart Energy Depot in Silver Spring with a ribbon-cutting event on October 31, 2022. The nation's largest solar bus charging infrastructure project will supply clean energy to the County Department of Transportation's (MCDOT) growing Ride On electric bus fleet.

The project was completed through a partnership between the County's Department of General Services (DGS) and [AlphaStruxure](#), a leader in Energy as a Service (EaaS) solutions. It is the third microgrid in the U.S. that will use solar power to charge buses for public transportation.

The project was delivered at no upfront cost to the County through an EaaS contract, a long-term agreement ensuring predictable operating expenses and guaranteed performance without upfront capital expenditures.

“This project has been garnering attention nationally because it is innovative, groundbreaking, and will help us achieve our ambitious climate action plan to reduce all carbon emissions by 2035,” said County Executive Elrich. “Transportation is one of the largest contributors to greenhouse gas. We are leading by example by going emission-free. We are the third nationally to have solar-powered charging stations for our buses and we are the largest so far. We should be able to fill these charging stations with 70 electric buses by 2026. We have already got a good start of 14 and expect to order another 30 or so next year for a total of about 44 buses. We are well on our way to our goal of an emissions-free fleet by 2035 and improving the County’s resilience. I want to thank DGS, MCDOT, and AlphaStruxure, along with their parent companies Schneider Electric and Carlyle, for working together with us to make this project a reality for Montgomery County.”

The project includes solar panels installed on tall canopies with charging stations, onsite battery storage and backup generation at an existing MCDOT Ride On bus depot. The project contributes significantly to expanding the needed infrastructure for the County’s growing zero-emission fleet, of which MCDOT Ride On transit buses are a major part.

The County currently has 14 electric buses and will be purchasing additional buses once a new procurement contract for up to 100 buses is complete early next year. Federal funds were used to purchase the first four electric buses. The depot will meet the full charging capacity, 70 electric buses, by 2026.

This resilient microgrid will provide uninterrupted power to MCDOT’s Ride On transit electric buses. Transitioning 70 buses from diesel to electric, powered by the on-site clean energy microgrid, will reduce lifetime emissions by 62 percent equivalent to more than 160,000 tons of greenhouse gas reduction over the next 25 years.

“The Brookville Solar Project ensures uninterrupted bus services during any long-term power outages caused by severe weather as well as any short-term disturbances of the utility grid,” said County Council President Albornoz. “With global warming and our increase in aggressive weather events, building for resiliency is so important. Many of our residents are dependent on our public transportation system for essential trips, and we’re helping to ensure its reliability.”

A megawatt (MW) is one million watts. For perspective, [one MW of electricity will power between 400 and 900 homes for a year](#). The 6.5 MW Brookville microgrid includes bus-height solar canopies, battery energy storage and more than 4.14 MW of charging capacity. The microgrid can operate on 100 percent renewable energy.

“The path toward a greener future is through a greener transportation fleet,” said Council Vice President Glass. “The Brookville microgrid will allow us to reduce our

carbon emissions, improve our air quality and take us one step closer to meeting our climate goals. This is a great moment for transit and our environment.”

“This project will provide the needed infrastructure for a good number of our electric buses, but we know we have a lot more to build to support our goal of a zero-emission fleet by 2035,” said Director Conklin. “We have a bus transition plan that we have developed as a living document so that it can adjust for new technology as it becomes available. We are anticipating that we will require a diversified fleet to meet our goals of replacing our current 400-bus fleet. To cover our longer routes, allow for charging, and the demands of increased service levels over time, we will need more than 400 zero-emission buses offering varied service benefits, but I am optimistic. We are off to a great start with Brookville, and we are ahead of the game nationally.”

Montgomery County leveraged its progressive energy purchasing regulations to create a public-private partnership with AlphaStruxure, which was [announced in May 2021](#). AlphaStruxure, a joint venture of Schneider Electric and the Carlyle Global Infrastructure Opportunity Fund, designed, built, financed and now owns and operates the project, providing a holistic solution for large-scale fleet electrification.

“This is the third microgrid project undertaken by Montgomery County, but the one that will have the greatest impact on County residents,” said DGS Director David Dise. “Reducing the County’s dependence on fossil fuels is vital to our future. Equally vital is ensuring that public facilities are resilient to the unpredictable impacts of climate and infrastructure degradation. This project is a model of successfully addressing both challenges and we did it through a public-private partnership at no upfront cost to taxpayers.”

The microgrid and charging infrastructure will be delivered at no upfront cost to the County through the EaaS contract, a long-term agreement ensuring predictable operating expenses and guaranteed performance for sustainability, resilience, and reliability.

“The transportation infrastructure of tomorrow is up and running today in Montgomery County,” said Juan Macias, CEO of AlphaStruxure. “We are thrilled to partner with Montgomery County on this holistic solution that delivers improved, cleaner services to County constituents. This benchmark project serves as a national model for municipalities and private fleet owners across the county.”

The Brookville Smart Energy Bus Depot ensures a ready supply of sustainable, resilient and cost-effective power for the County’s growing electric bus fleet. By charging from its own power supply, the County will avoid utility demand charges and will not have to set bus charging schedules around the utility’s time-of-use rates.

Montgomery County Department of Transportation Calling for Applications for Targeted and Specialized Mobility Grant Program

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation is soliciting grant applications for the County's FY 2023 Targeted and Specialized Mobility (TSM) Grant Program from qualified nonprofit organizations providing direct transportation services in the County. The County Council approved \$800,000 for a joint capital and operating grant program with \$640,000 for capital projects and \$160,000 for operating projects. At present, the County Council has made this funding available for one year so all funded activities must be implemented within 12 months. The deadline for applications is Wednesday December 28, 2022 at Midnight.

The focus of the grant program is to provide direct services and/or support that improves the delivery of transportation related services for:

- Individuals who are disabled.
- Senior residents.
- Individuals with low or limited incomes.

Organizations are encouraged to consider and apply for support from both the FY23 TSM Capital and Operating Grant Programs:

- More information about the FY23 TSM Operating Grant Program is available by clicking on [FY23 Targeted and Specialized Mobility Operating Grant Program - Montgomery County Office of Grants Management - Grants Application Platform \(smapply.org\)](https://smapply.org).
- More information about the FY23 TSM Capital Program is available by clicking on [FY23 Targeted and Specialized Mobility Capital Grant Program - Montgomery County Office of Grants Management - Grants Application Platform \(smapply.org\)](https://smapply.org).
- Information for both programs can be found by visiting <https://mcmdgrants.smapply.org/>

Key dates for these programs are:

- Application Opens: Monday November 28, 2022 at 12:00 PM (noon)
- MS Teams Live Virtual Information Session: Monday December 5, 2022 from 1:30 to 3:00 PM (the hyperlink for the event and its recording will be posted on the program pages linked above)
- Application Closes: Wednesday December 28, 2022 at Midnight

Questions about the application process can be directed to Rafael Pumarejo Murphy, Director of the Office of Grants Management, by calling 240-777-2775 or emailing rafael.murphy@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Feature Interview with Chief of Central Communications - James DelaCruz



Tell us how long you have been with MCDOT and describe your career path within MCDOT.

My career path has always been with the Transportation Department. I have been with Ride On since October 2005, (17 years). I started as a bus operator in 2005, and I was promoted to the Transit Coordinator position in December of 2008. I was promoted to Transit Operations Supervisor in December 2013. I was promoted to Human Resources Liaison in August 2021. Lastly, I was recently promoted to Chief of Central Communications this year on September 25, 2022.

Please describe the day-to-day activities pertaining to your work.

My day-to-day activities consist of managing the Central Communications unit of the Division of Transit Services which consist of one Program Manager II, and twelve Communication Leaders.

Many organizations were forced to close or suspend operations due to the pandemic, but Ride On never shut down operations. What role did you and your team play to ensure that Ride On continued its services?

My team played a support role for all our hardworking bus operators and transit coordinators that reported to work during the pandemic. We were there to ensure citizens had a transportation system they could rely on to get to their destination. My team managed all the street operations during this challenging time.

Please provide some examples of the direct impact of your role on Ride On operations.

My direct impact on Ride On operations is exercising command and control of all on-street Ride On service. In addition, communicating important information to bus operators, transit managers, the public, as well as other agencies within and outside of the county.

What other organizations does your team interface with to ensure successful operations?

We interface with state and federal organizations, producing various operations reports used for analysis of system performance as well as to satisfy all state and federal requirements regarding public transportation.

What are the most challenging parts of your job?

The most challenging part of my job is making sure every route is on time and is covered. Sometimes we encounter detours and incidents on the roads that cause us to come up with an alternative solution to make sure our service stays operational. For example, we may have to switch buses, or activate a relief operator to pick up a trip. In addition, we must keep the public informed of any changes in real time.

What is the best part of your job?

The best part of my job is helping people. We are in the service business and providing good service to our residents is what they expect and what motivates me to do my best to provide the most effective and efficient transit system possible.

Ride On Reimagined Study - Call For Focus Group Members



The Ride On Reimagined Study is a comprehensive, forward-looking assessment of the bus network that will result in significant recommended changes to how transit operates in Montgomery County based on current and future needs. This study will take an in-depth look at Montgomery County’s existing and planned transit systems, including

Metrobus services that operate within the County limits and the future Purple Line. The study will also provide an opportunity to guide the future direction of Ride On through data analysis and community engagement. The study will have the primary goal of recommending system-wide changes that address the current and future needs of the community it serves for both Ride On and Metrobus services.

We are recruiting members for our five Focus Groups, and welcome your participation, both riders AND non-riders are welcome. Each Focus Group will be based on one of five geographies across the County, with meetings held in public spaces such as Regional Service Centers or local libraries and the format will encourage active discussion. All locations are accessible via bus. Participation will mean attending two (2), two-hour long Focus Group sessions in your community that will be held from 6 – 8 p.m. on a weeknight. If you are interested in participating, please send an email to rideon.reimagined@montgomerycountymd.gov, include “Focus Group” in the subject line, and in your message please provide your name, e-mail address, and telephone number where a member of our team can reach you. We will ask a few brief questions to determine the focus group location you should participate in and ensure your ability to participate in both sessions.

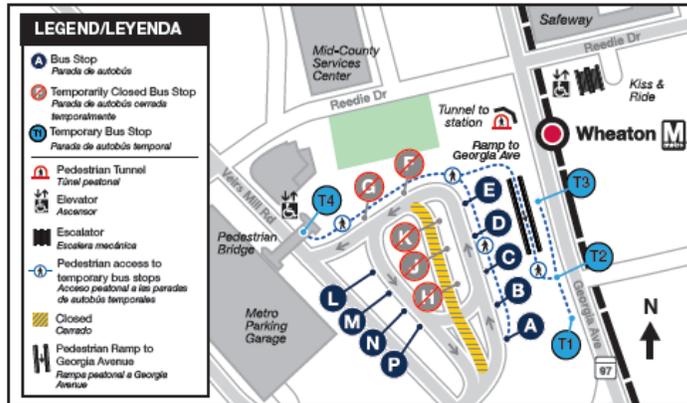
Wheaton and Glenmont Metro Stations Experience Bus Bay Relocations

Starting Nov. 28, 2022, and lasting for approximately five weeks, sections of the bus loop at the Wheaton Metro Station will be closed for Phase 2 of pavement rehabilitation. Bus Bays F, G, H, J, and K will be closed. Temporary bus boarding locations can be found in the map below.

EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 28, 2022
 for approximately five weeks
A partir del 28 de noviembre de 2022
durante aproximadamente cinco semanas

Temporary Bus Boarding Locations

Lugares temporales de abordaje para autobús



Route <i>Ruta</i>	Destination <i>Destino</i>	Bus Stop <i>Parada de autobús</i>
7 <i>Ride On</i>	Forest Glen	T4
8	Silver Spring	T3
9	Silver Spring	T2
31	Glenmont	P
34	Aspen Hill, Friendship Heights	T4
48	Rockville	T1
Flex	Glenmont-Wheaton Zone	T4

All other routes will continue to board at their existing stops. *Todas las demás rutas se abordarán en sus paradas de autobús regulares.*

Questions? · ¿Tiene preguntas?

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202-637-1328



On Sept. 12, 2022, Metro began replacing the glass canopies at Glenmont Station. During glass canopy construction, some bays will be closed in phases and the associated bus routes will be temporarily relocated. Phase 2 of construction, which was previously scheduled to begin on November 21, is now projected to begin mid-December, and last through early February 2023.

Glenmont Canopy Replacement

New roof system, skylights, and escalator canopy coming to Glenmont!
Learn more at wmata.com/Glenmont

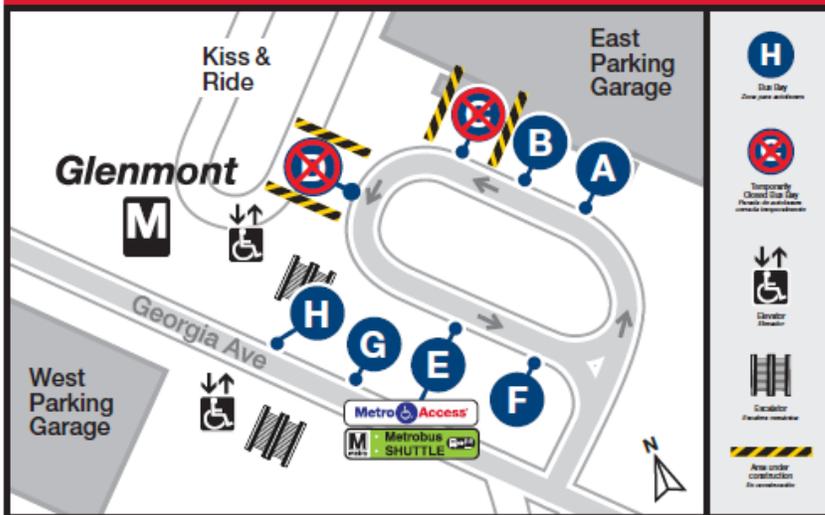
Sustitución de la marquesina de Glenmont

¡Se instalará un nuevo sistema de techo, tragaluces y marquesina de escaleras mecánicas en Glenmont! Más información en wmata.com/Glenmont

EFFECTIVE: MID DECEMBER 2022 – EARLY FEBRUARY 2023
A PARTIR MEDIADOS DE DICIEMBRE 2022 – PRINCIPIOS DE FEBRERO DE 2023

Temporary Bus Boarding Locations

Lugares temporales de parada de autobuses



Route	Destination	Board at
METROBUS FREQUENT SERVICE		
Y2 Y7	Georgia Ave & Connecticut Ave	H
Y2 Y7	Silver Spring	E
METROBUS		
CB	College Park-U of Md	H
CB	North Bethesda	H
Y2 Y8	Medstar Montgomery Medical Center	H

Route	Destination	Board at
Y7	ICC Park & Ride via Leisure World	H
Y8	Medstar Montgomery Medical Ctr via Leisure World	H
RIDE ON - MONTGOMERY COUNTY		
10	Hillandale	E
10	Twinbrook	E
26	Montgomery Mall Transit Center	B
31	Wheaton	F
33	Medical Center	A

Route	Destination	Board at
30	Briggs Chaney Park & Ride	B
41	Aspen Hill	B
40	Rockville	F
51	Norback Park & Ride	G
53	Shady Grove	A
FLEX	Glenmont-Wheaton Zone	F
FDA Shuttle (White Oak)		



Scan for more information

wmata.com/alerts
202-637-1328



Ride On extRa and Flash Celebrate Anniversaries in October

Montgomery County's Ride On extRa limited-stop service celebrated five years of helping riders get around MD Route 355 quickly and efficiently on October 2, 2022. The simple and convenient bus service is hailed for its speed and reliability.

Using *extRa* is straightforward and has proven to be a convenient option for Montgomery County residents. The service, which launched in 2017, is an interim step to the Bus Rapid Transit system that MCDOT envisions for MD 355.

Ride On *extRa* makes just 13 stops and operates every 20 minutes Monday through Friday, 5:25 – 9:30 a.m. and 3:25 – 7:30 p.m. between the Lakeforest Transit Center in Gaithersburg and the Medical Center Metro Station in Bethesda. Ride On *extRa* connects to half of the County’s transit services, including Metrobus, Metrorail, MARC train, MTA Commuter buses and 44 Ride On routes.



MCDOT also celebrated the two-year anniversary of the County’s first rapid transit service—the Flash—on October 14, 2022. More than 500,000 riders have used the frequent and reliable Flash service.

The Flash currently operates on Colesville Road/Columbia Pike (US 29) and connects downtown Silver Spring Transit Center, White Oak, Briggs Chaney and Burtonsville with stops along the way. Flash buses feature bike racks inside, free WiFi service and USB ports.

The Flash has two routes that each start at the Silver Spring Transit Center. The Orange route makes 10 stops from the Transit Center to Briggs Chaney. The Blue route makes five stops from the Transit Center, ending at the Park and Ride in Burtonsville.

The service—which uses 60-foot-long articulated buses—carries more than 1,800 riders per day. Buses run every 15 minutes from 5:30 a.m. until midnight seven days a week and twice as often during peak (rush) hours. At full capacity, the buses can transport up to 80 passengers and are more time-efficient than traditional buses.



Happy Anniversary to these two of our beloved Ride On services!

City Post Smart Kiosks Enhance Experience at Flash Stations



Have you noticed the unique kiosks along the Flash route? These kiosks represent a new era of smart media in Montgomery County. MCDOT has partnered with Smart City Media to provide these interactive digital screens - known as City Post - that mix curated local posters and city apps for enhanced street level communications.

Each kiosk includes public information available in nine languages, real-time bus information, local content, an interactive map, USB ports and a free WiFi hotspot (coming soon). They also include in interactive "selfie mode" which allows riders to take a photo and send it to themselves via email.

These kiosks will be installed at each Flash Station, except the Silver Spring Transit Center and FDA locations. Currently, there are kiosks installed at the Fenton Street, White Oak and Briggs Chaney Stations.

Did You Know: Top Ten Statistics of Riding Public Transportation



Every segment of American society—individuals, families, communities, and businesses—benefits from public transportation. It is a lifeline for millions of Americans connecting them to people, places and possibilities. It also builds thriving communities, creates jobs, eases traffic congestion and promotes a cleaner environment. Investment in public transportation spurs both local and the national economy.

Below is a top ten list of statistics of riding public transportation:

1. Every \$1 invested in public transportation generates \$5 in economic returns.
2. Home values were up to 24% higher near public transportation than in other areas. Hotels in cities with direct rail access to airports raise 11% more revenue per room than hotels in those cities without.
3. A person can reduce his or her chance of being in an accident by more than 90% simply by taking public transit as opposed to commuting by car.
4. A household can save nearly \$10,000 by taking public transportation and living with one less car.
5. Public transportation's overall effects save the United States 6 billion gallons of gasoline annually.
6. Communities that invest in public transit reduce the nation's carbon emissions by 63 million metric tons annually.
7. 87% of trips on public transit have a direct impact on the local economy.
8. Of all riders, 71% are employed and 7% are students.
9. 34 million times each weekday, people board public transportation.
10. Millennials consider public transportation as the best option for digital socializing and among the best for connecting with communities.

MCDOT and MCFRS Teams Visit Select Bus Stops Near Local High Schools Following Daylight Savings Time Change For The "Be Seen" Campaign



To ensure students' safety while walking to bus stops and traveling to and from schools, outreach teams from Ride On, Safe Routes to School and Fire and Rescue Services visited select bus stops near Gaithersburg, JFK, Blair, Northwest, Wheaton, Northwood, Seneca Valley, and Springbrook high schools in the week following the Daylight Savings Time Change on November 6 for the "Be Seen" campaign. Outreach teams had free glow stick giveaways for students so they can be seen by our bus operators and other drivers when it's dark. There were also additional prizes for those who followed Ride On [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) pages.

Duwan Morris, of MCDOT Pedestrian Safety said, "The MCDOT 'Be Seen' campaign was very important to encourage young people to make adjustments and be visible during the daylight savings change. Students were excited to receive some tips on how to travel more safely and glow sticks to be seen in the dark. MCDOT plans to continue safety education in schools around the county."

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services also took part in the outreach event. Beth Anne Nesselt of MCFRS said, "Student safety is a top priority. When our Fire Chief heard about the 2-day campaign, he was the first one on location at John F. Kennedy High School to participate. The students were enthusiastic, engaged and extremely receptive to hearing from the Chief, firefighters, DOT and the Ride On team about the dangers of distractions and importance of being 'high-vis.'

On behalf of Montgomery County Department of Transportation, Ride On, Pedestrian Safety, and Fire and Rescue Services, we'd like to thank everyone who stopped by one of the "Be Seen" events. Remember to stay safe and be vigilant while traveling in newly dark hours.

Operator Training Graduation Held, New Class to Begin



The latest class of Ride On bus operators graduated and will join the ranks of those driving Ride On buses. On October 28, a class of eight operators participated in graduation ceremonies at the Driver Training Facility. Notable speakers included Dan Hibbert (Division Chief), Mike Nesselt (Chief of Operations), James Ryan (Chief,

Nicholson Court Depot & Safety and Training), Andre Lucas (Chief, Silver Spring Depot), Alan Watts (Chief, Gaithersburg Depot) and Raymond Lee (Union Representative).

Operator training is a 6-week course that covers a variety of topics such as transit safety, defensive driving, customer service and Americans with Disability Act coverage, and road driving skills, among others. In order to pass the course, aspiring operators must achieve a passing grade in the course curriculum, driving and maneuvering on the "Skills Pad" driving course, and customer service skills.

Congratulations to the recent graduates, and good luck to the current class of students, who are working towards a December 9th graduation. Ride On is so appreciative of the work that all of our operators, both new and experienced, do to provide the best service possible to our riders.

Fare collection resumed on all Montgomery County buses on August 1. The one-way pre-pandemic fare, which was \$2 per ride, is now \$1. Monthly passes, which were \$45 per rider, are now \$22.50

Riders using Montgomery County's Ride On buses are encouraged to wear a mask but are no longer required to wear them. Masks are available on all buses for riders who need them.

Bus interiors will continue to be cleaned by the County's Department of General Services with hospital-grade disinfectant. Bus filter and ventilation systems are also treated with a disinfectant.

Riders can plan trips online with [Ride On Real Time](#).

For the most up-to-date service information, riders should follow @RideOnMCT on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and [Instagram](#). Additional information is available at [RideOnBus.com](#), by subscribing to receive email alerts at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/govdelivery, or texting MONTGOMERY RIDEON to 468311 to receive text alerts.

For information on MCDOT programs and services visit montgomerycountymd.gov/mcdot, follow @MCDOTNow on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#) and [subscribe](#) to MCDOT's "Go Montgomery!" newsletter.

Of Note

Call-n-Ride Program Serves Seniors and Those With Disabilities

The Montgomery County Call-n-Ride program provides subsidized taxi trips for low-income older adults and individuals with disabilities. The service helps transport participants to medical and/or personal appointments. To be eligible for the Call-n-Ride Program, you must be low income and at least 63 years of age, or low income and 18-62 years of age with a disability.

This program is designed as a supplement to Montgomery County's local transportation service. All trips must begin and end in Montgomery County. Special exceptions have been made to allow transportation to approved medical facilities in Designated Service Areas. To learn more, visit <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-transit/seniors.html>.

Medical Assistance Transportation Program Serves those on Medicaid

The Medical Assistance Transportation grant program provides transportation services for Medical Assistance recipients who reside in Montgomery County, and need transportation to access medically necessary services. This program provides "last resort" transportation for ambulatory, wheelchair and stretcher-bound recipients who have no other means of transportation available to get to and from medical appointments, or whose medical or physical needs prevent them from using such available transportation.

This service is available to transport Montgomery County residents with eligible, non-restrictive Medical Assistance (Medicaid) to medical services that are covered by Medical Assistance, and for which there is no other means of transportation.

The Maryland State Department of Health requires medical certification for all recipients. The recipient must demonstrate that they have no other available transportation, or that they are physically unable to utilize other existing transportation services. To be certified for participation in the program, each recipient must also have their physician complete a Provider Certification form.

For more information, visit <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-transit/seniors.html>.

Free COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing Taxi Service

MCDOT is providing FREE Taxi service to COVID-19 vaccination and testing sites to pick up N95 masks and at-home testing kits, for residents 65+ and residents with disabilities. To schedule a trip, call Connect-A-Ride at 301-738-3252 to get your free taxi code. Then call one of the following taxi services: Action Taxi 301 840-1000, Anytime Taxi: 301-637-9292 or Regency Taxi 301-990-9000 to schedule your trip.

Seniors, Disabled, and Kids Still Ride Free

As of August 1, 2022 Montgomery County Ride On has resumed fare collection on all buses. The one-way pre-pandemic fare, which was \$2 per ride, is now \$1. Monthly passes, which were \$45 per rider, are now \$22.50. Persons with Disabilities ride free; Seniors over 65 will continue to ride for free with the [Senior SmarTrip Card](#). Children under 19 also ride free with the [Youth Cruiser SmarTrip Card](#). Both can be acquired at any Montgomery County Library or the Montgomery County Division of Treasury. Students may also get their SmarTrip card through their school if the school has an agreement with MCDOT. Seniors, Disabled, and Children are asked to tap their card upon boarding a Ride On bus, as to help generate an accurate rider count.