Ride On Newsletter   February 2025

Presidents' Day Special: How American Presidents Have Contributed to Public Transportation

Public transportation has played a crucial role in shaping the U.S., and several presidents have funded and put policies in place to improve transit systems nationwide. Here's a look at some key presidential contributions:

Lyndon B. Johnson (1963-1969): Signed into law the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964 which established the federal transit program and helped fund public transportation systems in the United States. He also passed the 1964 Civil Rights Act that desegregated public transportation.

President Richard Nixon (1969-1974): Signed into law the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970. This law established the National Railroad Passenger Corporation which later became known as Amtrak.

Jimmy Carter (1977-1981): Signed the 1978 Surface Transportation Assistance Act. He advocated for energy efficient transit and expanded funding for Amtrak and bus services. He was the first president to speak at the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Annual Conference.

Ronald Reagan (1981-1989): Signed the 1982 Surface Transportation Assistance Act into law, which allocated gas tax revenues to public transit.

Bill Clinton (1993-2001): Signed the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) in 1998 which boosted funding for transit projects and also included strong protections for transportation workers.

Barack Obama (2009-2017): Signed the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act which funded public transit projects, including maintain and modernizing the nation's transportation system.

Joe Biden (2021-2024): Signed the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) which included historic levels of funding for public transit, supporting upgrades, electrification, and equity focused improvements, the largest investment in the nation's infrastructure in history.

Ride On Detours Due to Spring Street Bridge and Purple Line Construction Extended

Due to the closure and rebuilding of the Spring Street bridge in Silver Spring, Ride On routes 1, 5, 11, 18, and 28 are experiencing detours which will now last until late 2025. Detour maps and travel alternatives can be found below.

Note: Dashed lines represent detours and solid lines represent original routes.

Route 1:

Stop 25848 & 25850 Alternate Routes:

- Ride On Route 4 - serves these stops
- Metrobus Q & Y - nearby stops 2000204 & 2001247 on Georgia Avenue

Stop 25852 Alternate Routes:

- All bus and rail routes at Silver Spring Transit Center

Route 5:

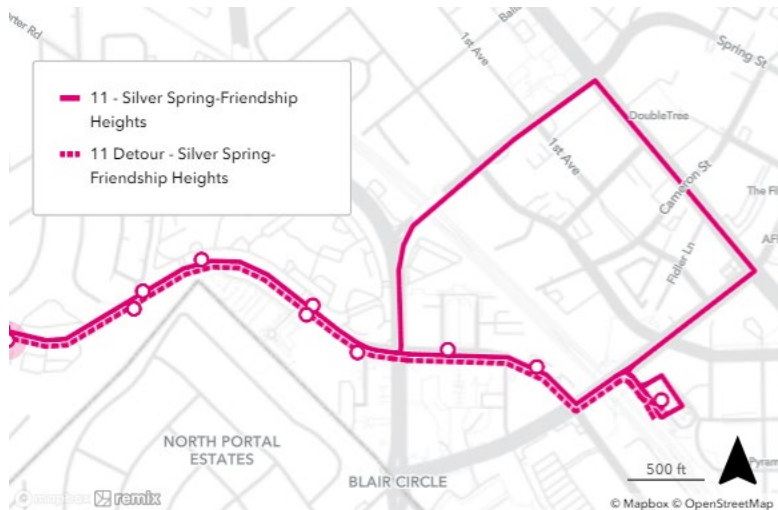**Stop 25848, 25850, 25816, 25817, and 14791 Alternate Routes:**

- Ride On Route 4 - serves these stops

- Metrobus Q & Y - nearby stops 2000204 & 2001247 on Georgia Avenue

Stop 25852 and 25814 Alternate Routes:

- All bus and rail routes at Silver Spring Transit Center

Route 11:

Note: Route 11 detour does not miss any regularly scheduled stops or make any additional stops along the detour route.

Route 18:


Stop 17213 & 17214 Alternate Routes

- Ride On Route 4 - serves 2nd Avenue
- Metrobus Q & Y - nearby stops 2000204 & 2001247 on Georgia Avenue

Route 28:

Note: Route 28 detour does not miss any regularly scheduled stops or make any additional stops along the detour route.

To assist those impacted by the bridge closure, a shuttle is serving Second Avenue, operating every 30 minutes in 2 shifts: midday (10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.) and evening (7:30 p.m. - 11:30 p.m.).
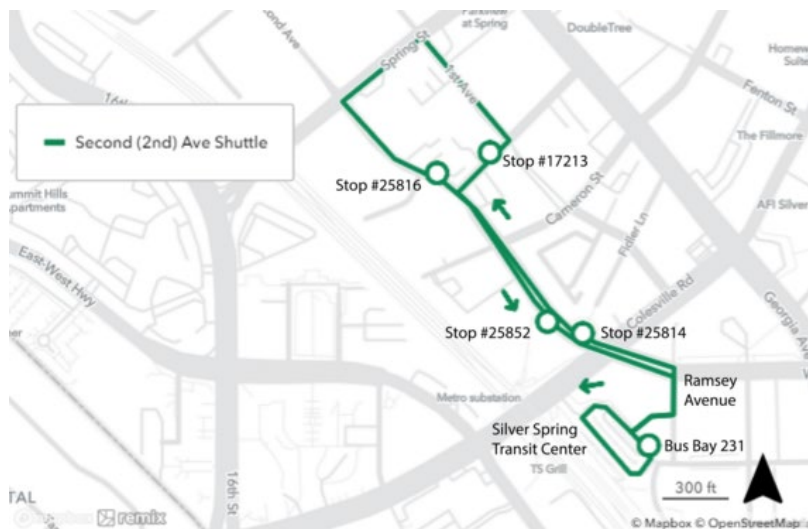
Beginning Tuesday, January 7, Purple Line Construction crews temporarily closed Manchester Road north of Wayne Avenue. This detour, originally projected for six weeks, has been extended through late February.

Affected Ride On Routes:
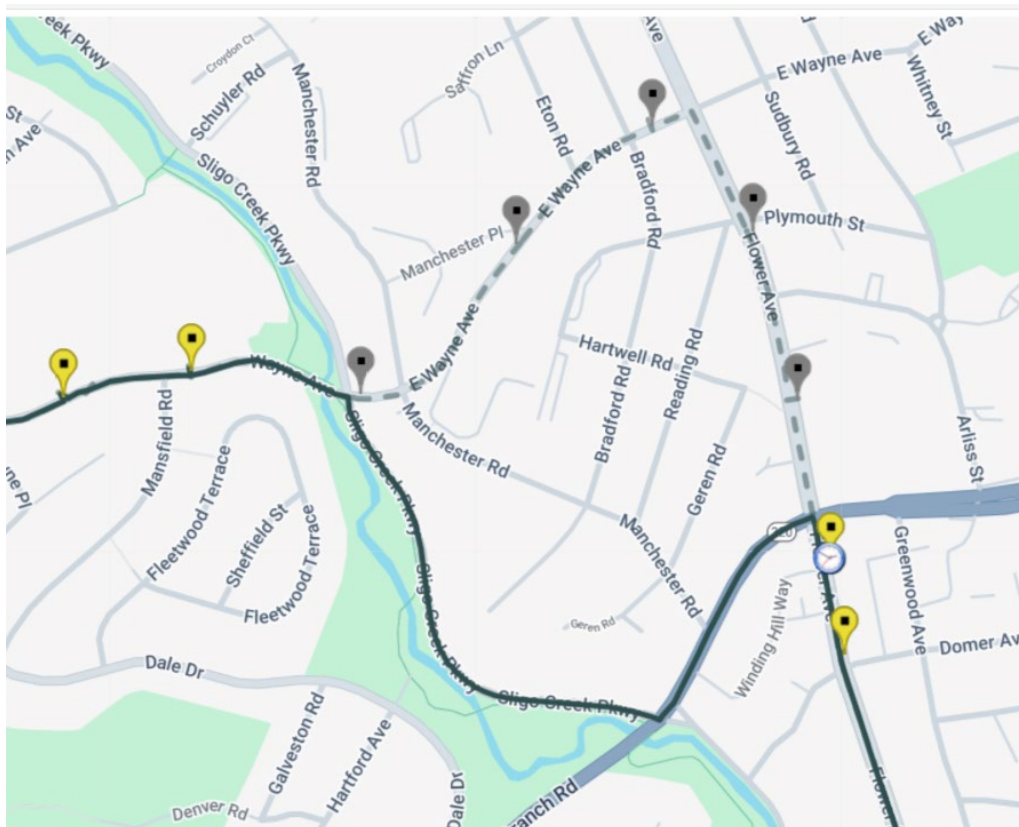
- Route 12
- Route 13
- Route 15
- Route 19

Impact:

These routes will experience detours due to the road closure. For detailed information on the detours, please refer to RideOnBus.com.

Stay informed and plan your commute accordingly!

Note: Dashed lines represent original routes and solid lines represent detours.

Route 12

To Takoma: From Wayne Avenue and Silgo Creek Parkway, turn right onto Sligo Creek Parkway, left onto Piney Branch Road, right onto Flower Avenue and back on route.

To Silver Spring: From Flower Avenue and Piney Branch Road, left onto Piney Branch Road, right onto Sligo Creek Parkway, left onto Wayne Avenue and back on route.
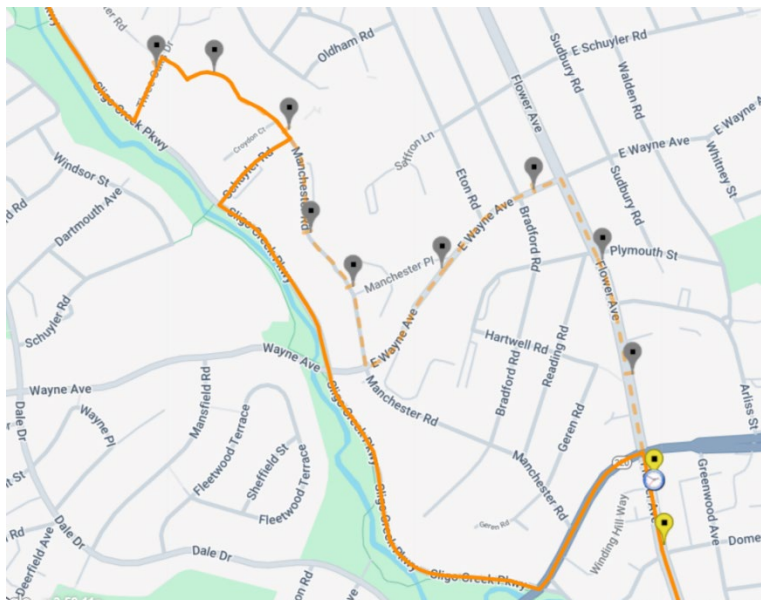
Stops Bypassed:

- 27076 East Wayne Avenue & Manchester Road
- 27078 East Wayne Avenue & Manchester Place
- 27080 East Wayne Avenue & Flower Avenue
- 22312 Flower Avenue & Plymouth Street
- 22314 Flower Avenue & Hartwell Road

Alternate Stops:

- 23828 Manchester Road & Wayne Avenue
- 22290 Flower Avenue & Piney Branch Road
- 27088 Wayne Avenue & Mansfield Road
- 22316 Flower Avenue & Piney Branch Road
- 27070 Wayne Avenue & Mansfield Road

Route 13

To Takoma: From Sligo Creek Parkway, left onto Three Oaks Drive, through Parkside, right onto Manchester Road, right onto Schuyler Road, left onto Sligo

Creek Parkway, left onto Piney Branch Road, left onto Flower Avenue and back on route.

To Silver Spring: From Flower Avenue and Piney Branch Road, turn left onto Piney Branch Road, right onto Sligo Creek Parkway, right onto Schuyler Road, left onto Manchester Road, through Parkside, left onto Three Oaks Drive, right onto Sligo Creek Parkway, left onto Colesville Road and back on route.

Stops Bypassed:

- 27076 East Wayne Avenue & Manchester Road
- 27078 East Wayne Avenue & Manchester Place
- 27080 East Wayne Avenue & Flower Avenue
- 22312 Flower Avenue & Plymouth Street
- 22314 Flower Avenue & Hartwell Road

Alternate Stops:

- 23828 Manchester Road & Wayne Avenue
- 22290 Flower Avenue & Piney Branch Road
- 23820 Manchester Road & Schuyler Road
- 23833 Manchester Road & Schuyler Road
- 22316 Flower Avenue & Piney Branch Road

Route 15
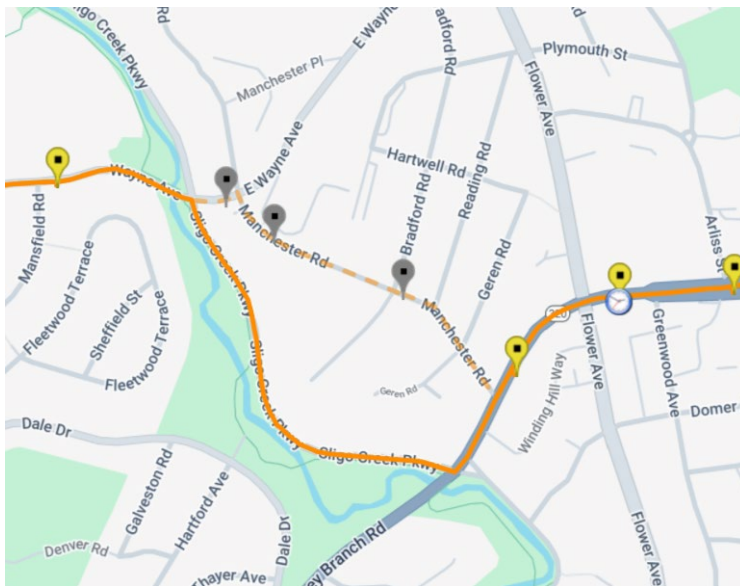
To Takoma Langley: From Wayne Avenue and Sligo Creek Parkway, right onto Sligo Creek Parkway, left onto Piney Branch Road and continue on Piney Branch Road until back on route.

To Silver Spring: From Piney Branch Road and Sligo Creek Parkway, right onto Sligo Creek Parkway, left onto Wayne Avenue and back on route.

Stops Bypassed:

- 27074 East Wayne Avenue & Manchester Road
- 23812 Manchester Road & Bradford Road
- 23814 Manchester Road & Wayne Avenue
- 23812 Manchester Road & Bradford Road
- 23830 Manchester Road & Bradford Road

Alternate Stops:

- 27088 Wayne Avenue & Mansfield Road
- 24940 Piney Branch Road & Manchester Road
- 27070 Wayne Avenue & Mansfield Road
- 24902 Piney Branch Road & Manchester Road

Route 19
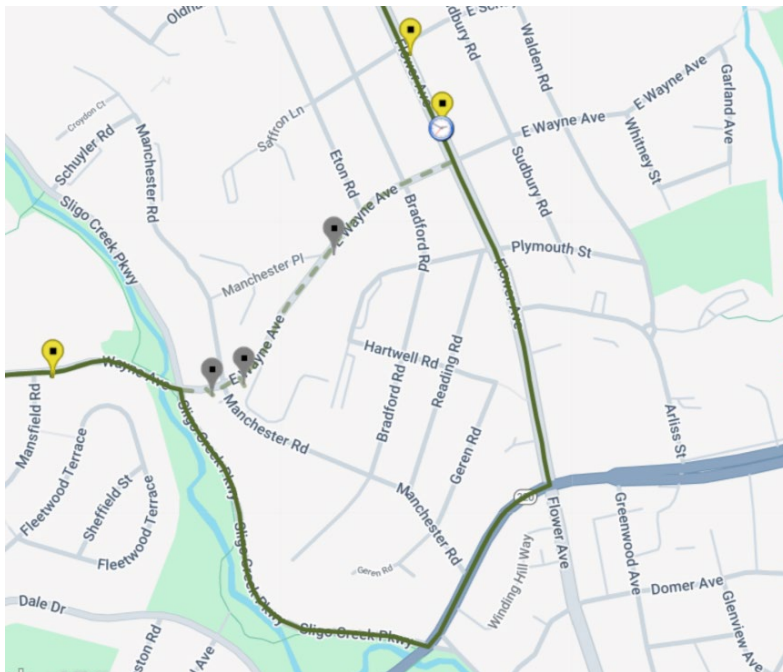
To Northwood: From Wayne Avenue and Sligo Creek Parkway, right onto Sligo Creek Parkway, left onto Piney Branch Road, left onto Flower Avenue and back on route. **Note:** The last two PM trips will not service Three Oaks.

To Silver Spring: From Flower Avenue and Wayne Avenue, continue on Flower Avenue, right on Piney Branch Road, right onto Sligo Creek Parkway, left onto Wayne Avenue and back on route.

Stops Bypassed:

- 23826 Manchester Road & Manchester Place
- 23816 Manchester Road & Manchester Place
- 23818 Manchester Road @8904
- 23824 Manchester Road @8904
- 24822 Manchester Road & Parkside Plaza Parking Lot

Alternate Stops:

- 27088 Wayne Avenue & Mansfield Road
- 27070 Wayne Avenue & Mansfield Road
- 22310 Flower Avenue & Schuyler Road
- 22296 Wayne Avenue & Flower Avenue

Ride On Senior Corner: Ride On Trip Planner

The Ride On Trip Planner is a free, easy-to-use app that allows riders to plan trips, track buses, and even monitor bus crowdedness. Using a current location and destination, riders can pick the route that works best for them and their needs. The mobile version of the Ride On Trip Planner App has accessibility features that allow riders to choose maximum walk times and adjust walking pace for accurate walk time estimates. It also allows users to customize preferences and filters to only include modes of transportation that are accessible to them. To learn more about the Ride On Trip Planner's accessibility features and how to use them, read our guide below. To download the Ride On Trip Planner App or use the desktop version, click here.
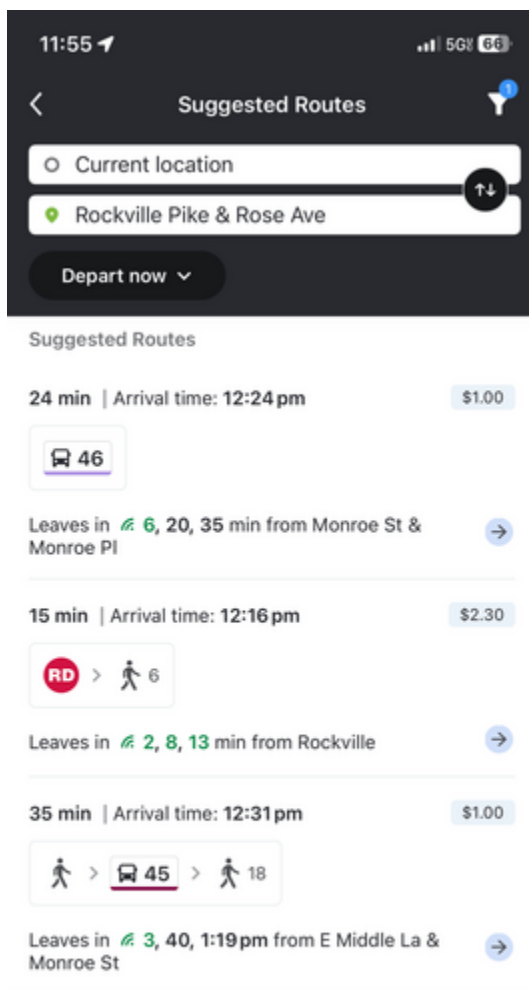
Planning A Trip

When planning a trip in the Ride On Trip Planner, riders can use their current location or choose a starting point for their trip. Riders must then enter their destination and choose a departure time before being given a list of suggested routes that includes bus route number or train name, walking time, and trip cost. Riders are also given a list of departure times as well as an estimated arrival time for their trip.
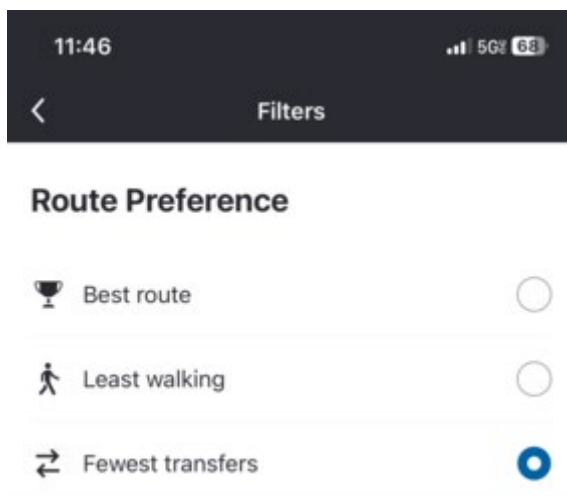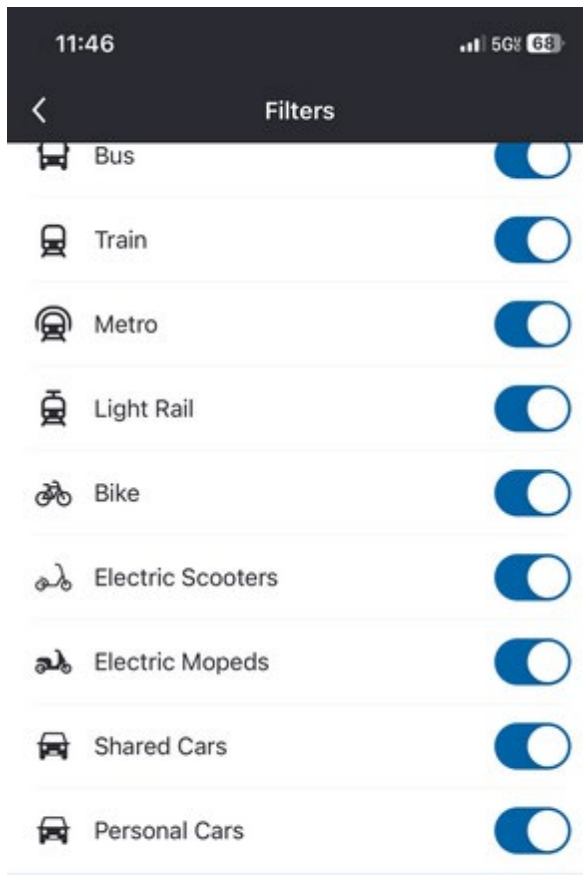
Accessibility Preferences

In the 'hamburger' menu located in the top right-hand corner of the Ride On Trip Planner app's home screen, users can find the Accessibility menu. Riders can adjust their accessibility preferences to only include accessible public transit routes. Riders can also choose to hide shared mobility options like bikes and scooters from being shown in their route options.

Route Preferences

In the Settings menu (found in the 'hamburger' menu located in the top right-hand corner of the Ride On Trip Planner app's home screen), riders can select "Trip Plan" to select their route preferences. Riders can choose to have routes with the least amount of walking or fewest transfers be shown first when given their list of trip options.
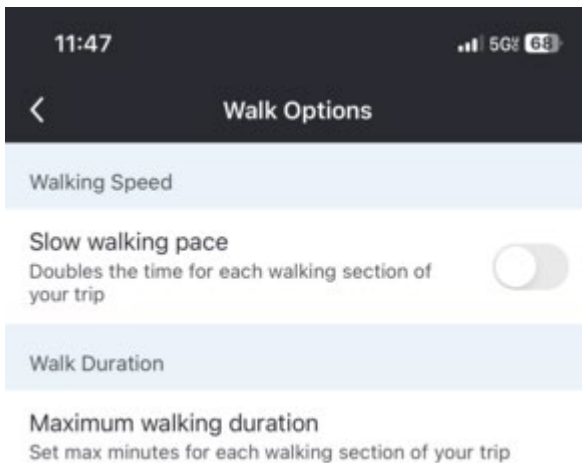
Personal Preferences

In the "Trip Plan" section of the Settings menu riders can also adjust their Personal Preferences, which include walk options (discussed further below). Riders can also access the Accessibility menu also found on the main 'hamburger' menu page.

Walk Options

When a rider selects "Walk Options" in the Personal Preferences menu, they're given the option to choose a slower walking pace, which doubles the time estimated for each walking section of a trip. They can also set a maximum walking duration which will limit the amount of minutes spent walking for each section of a trip.

Beyond Rosa Parks: Transit Activists in Black History

Rosa Parks is a revered figurehead in transit equity and Black History, but she was far from the only African American activist making waves in public transportation. In honor of Black History Month, we've put together stories of some lesser-known black transit activists and breakthroughs in the pursuit of transit equity.

1. **From Boycott to Breakthrough: The Baton Rouge Bus Boycott of 1953**
Before Montgomery, there was Baton Rouge. In 1953, Black residents in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, launched the first large-scale bus boycott against segregation. Led by **Reverend T.J. Jemison**, they fought for fair transit access, inspiring future

movements. Their success set the stage for the Civil Rights Act, proving that collective action drives real change.

2. **Riding Toward Justice: The Laws That Changed Transit Forever!**
For decades, Black passengers were forced to the back of buses and denied equal access to transportation. That changed with key legal victories like the Interstate Commerce Commission's 1955 ruling against segregated seating and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited discrimination in public transit. These laws didn't just desegregate buses, they helped fuel the broader movement for racial justice.

3. Morgan v. Virginia (1946): The Case That Paved the Road to Justice
Before the sit-ins and boycotts, **Irene Morgan** refused to give up her seat on a Greyhound bus in 1944. Her case, Morgan v. Virginia, reached the Supreme Court and struck down segregation on interstate buses. This ruling laid the groundwork for future legal victories in the fight for transit equity.

Public transportation was once a battleground for racial justice. From the Montgomery Bus Boycott to federal rulings outlawing segregation, the fight for transit equity helped redefine civil rights in America. Today, we ride on the progress made by those who refused to accept injustice, reminding us that equitable transit is a right, not a privilege.

How to Navigate the Ride On Reimagined Final Report

The Ride On Reimagined final report is Montgomery County's visionary plan to transform and expand public transit, making it more accessible, equitable, and

sustainable. This guide will help you understand the report and how to use it to stay informed about upcoming changes and improvements.

How to Use the Report

Whether you're a daily commuter or a transit advocate, this report serves as a valuable tool for understanding the future of Ride On. Use it to:

- Explore route maps and schedules to see how your travel options will improve.
- Review timelines to prepare for upcoming changes and expansions.
- Learn about equity-focused initiatives designed to make transit accessible to all.

What's Inside the Report

The report offers a detailed roadmap for the future of Ride On, with these key sections:

- **Executive Summary:** Provides a high-level overview of the plan's goals, key takeaways, and how it addresses community needs such as accessibility, equity, and sustainability.
- **Drafting of the Final Network:** Describes the comprehensive process of shaping the final service network, including community and bus operator feedback, data analysis, and alignment with County priorities.
- **Vision Network**: Outlines plans for new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lines, new Ride On ext*R*a routes, and expanded service coverage through Ride On Flex on-demand zones.
- **Year-by-Year Implementation:** Breaks down the phased rollout of improvements, showing what riders can expect in Year 1, Year 5, and beyond depending on proposed budget, as well as expanding on transit equity and accessibility.
- **Marketing and Outreach:** Covers strategies for keeping riders informed, such as targeted communication, and community engagement efforts.

What This Means for Riders

Ride On is committed to building a system that meets the needs of Montgomery County's diverse community. The report emphasizes enhanced service quality, including shorter travel times, improved weekend options, and expanded coverage in lower-density areas. Riders can look forward to increased frequency on over 30 routes and the introduction of new services to neighborhoods that currently lack transit options. Visit the Ride On Reimagined webpage to read the report and stay updated on upcoming changes.

How Ride On is Making Transit Equitable in Montgomery County

Public transit is a vital service that connects communities, provides economic opportunities, and ensures mobility for all residents. Montgomery County's Ride On bus system is leading the way in making public transportation more equitable and accessible, ensuring that all residents—regardless of income, ability, or location—have the transit options they need.

Affordable and Accessible Fares

One of Ride On's key commitments to equity is affordability. Programs like the Ride On Free program for seniors, people with disabilities, and youth under 18 help reduce

the financial burden of transportation for vulnerable populations. The Youth Cruiser SmarTrip Card provides free fares for kids ensuring young riders can access school, jobs, and activities without added expenses. Additionally, the Senior SmarTrip Card allows adults age 65+ to ride any Ride On bus and most Metrobuses for free within Montgomery County, plus half price on Metrorail.

Expanding Service to Underserved Communities

To ensure that transit access is not limited to high-density areas, Ride On has expanded service to historically underserved neighborhoods. The bus system has redesigned routes to better serve low-income communities, senior living centers, and job hubs. Additionally, the county has added Flex on-demand transit options to supplement fixed-route services in areas where traditional buses are less frequent.

Investing in Eco-Friendly and Modern Fleet

Equity in transit is also about sustainability. Ride On is committed to reducing emissions and improving air quality, especially in areas disproportionately affected by pollution. Introducing electric and hybrid buses lowers the environmental impact while improving the rider experience. These clean-energy vehicles are part of Montgomery County's broader commitment to combat climate change and promote environmental justice.

Improving Accessibility for All Riders

Ride On ensures that buses are accessible to all passengers, including those with disabilities. The entire fleet is ADA-compliant and equipped with features such as low-floor entry, wheelchair ramps, and audiovisual announcements. Ride On's partnership with MetroAccess and other paratransit services further ensures that residents with mobility challenges can travel freely and independently.

Community Engagement and Rider Input

An equitable transit system must reflect the needs of its riders. Ride On actively engages the community through public hearings, online surveys, its Transit Advisory Group, and multilingual outreach. Residents' feedback helps shape service improvements, route changes, and initiatives that enhance the rider experience.

Looking Ahead

Montgomery County's Ride On bus system continues to evolve, focusing on fairness, accessibility, and sustainability. Through fare relief programs, service expansions, eco-friendly initiatives, and community engagement, Ride On is setting a high standard for equitable public transportation in the region. By prioritizing the needs of all residents, Ride On ensures that public transit remains a reliable and inclusive resource for the entire community.

For more information about Ride On routes, schedules, and programs, visit RideOnBus.com.

Take Ride On to Montgomery County African American Historic Sites

African American history is central to the story of Montgomery County from its origins to the present day. Historic sites around the county reflect this long history and memorialize the people, places, and cultural institutions central to the growth of Montgomery County's African American communities.

Montgomery County's Historic Preservation Office has put together a story map to help residents explore park sites, trails, museums, and historic places that reflect the County's rich African American heritage. For a list of locations that can be reached by Ride On bus, read below.

- **Hawkins Lane Historic District**: This enclave of free Black people was established in the late 1800s and its modest houses along a narrow rustic lane reflect the heritage of a close knit, self-reliant community. After the Civil War, an emancipated slave named James Hawkins bought three acres of land and built a two-story house, later destroyed by fire, in the area. Hawkins made a living as a truck farmer, likely growing produce that he sold on the grounds of the Washington Monument. He was an itinerant Methodist minister, traveling by horseback to preach at churches from Gaithersburg to Tenleytown. To visit, take Ride On Route 33.

- **Good Hope Methodist Episcopal Church and Cemetery:** This church became the focal point of an African American community that began with the emancipation of slaves who lived and worked on farms in the area. By 1872, the Good Hope community was large enough to support its own church and

serve residents of neighboring Holly Grove and Smithville. The current church was built in 1913 as a Gothic Revival building that was later remodeled into its current appearance. The cemetery has about 100 plots with the earliest grave markers dating from the 1880s. To visit, take Ride On [Route 39](#).

- **Norbeck Rosenwald School**: This segregated school was built in 1927 for Black children from the local African American community known as Mount Pleasant. Its construction was made possible through the philanthropy of Julius Rosenwald, president of Sears, Roebuck and Company, who established a fund to build new schools for Black students across the South. Norbeck's two-teacher, two-room plan was the most common Rosenwald-funded school design found in Maryland. Located in Norbeck Local Park, the school operated until 1951 and maintains public access. To visit, take Ride On [Route 52](#).

- **Tobytown Cemetery**: This cemetery is significant as the only remaining historical evidence of the Black settlement of Tobytown. Historically, this community included 15 detached houses and a church for residents who worked on surrounding farms during the 19th and early 20th century. The cemetery contains the remains of these settlers and their families. Approximately two dozen red sandstone markers are scattered through the site. Typical of many early African American cemeteries, stones for the most part are unmarked. To visit, take Ride On [Route 301.](#)

Making Transit Easy: A Step-by-Step Guide to Riding Ride On

Navigating public transit should be simple and stress-free. Whether you're a first-time rider or a daily commuter, Montgomery County's Ride On buses offer a convenient, affordable, and accessible way to get around. To make your experience even smoother, we've put together a visual guide to show you how to travel with Ride On with ease! By using photos and step-by-step instructions, we aim to make riding Ride On simple and accessible for everyone. Whether you're commuting to work, heading to a shopping center, or exploring Montgomery County, Ride On is here to get you where you need to go.

Haven't downloaded the Ride On Trip Planner App yet? Now's the perfect time! Get real-time arrivals, plan your route, and take control of your commute. Download the trip planner or access the desktop version [here](#).
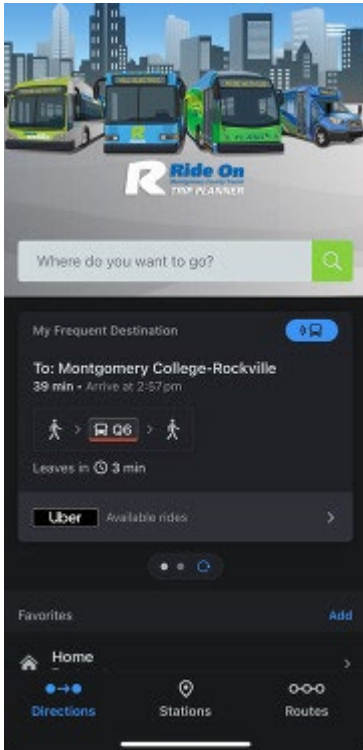
Step 1: Plan Your Trip with the Ride On Trip Planner App

Before heading to your stop, use the Ride On Trip Planner App to map out your route. The app allows you to:

- Enter your starting location and destination
- View available Ride On routes and schedules
- Get real-time bus arrival information
- Track your bus in real time so you never miss a ride

The app is available for download on both iOS and Android, making transit planning easier than ever.

Step 2: Locate Your Bus Stop

Each Ride On bus stop is marked with a blue and white Ride On sign that displays the route numbers that serve that stop. Be sure to arrive a few minutes early so you don't miss your bus!

Step 3: Board and Pay Your Fare

As the bus arrives, wait for it to come to a complete stop before boarding. You can pay your fare using:

- A SmarTrip Card (tap at the farebox)
- Mobile SmarTrip Card
- Cash

Step 4: Enjoy Your Ride & Know When to Exit

Once you're on board, find a seat and relax. Digital screens and audio announcements will inform you of upcoming stops. If you're unfamiliar with the route, use the Ride On Trip Planner App to follow along in real-time. To request a stop, simply pull the yellow cord near the windows.

Step 5: Exit & Connect to Your Next Destination

When the bus stops, exit through the rear doors if possible to allow others to board efficiently. If you need to transfer to another Ride On bus or Metrobus, check your app for the best transfer points.

<u>Of Note</u>

Save the Date for Ride On's 50th

Ride On will mark 50 years of service in 2025, and we want to celebrate with you! Mark your calendars for the week of May 12, 2025, and be on the lookout for how you can participate. We promise the festivities will be worth the wait!

VanGo & Bethesda Free Circulators and Free Shuttles

Did you know that Montgomery County has two free circulators? The VanGo Circulator, or Ride On Route 28, makes traveling through Downtown Silver Spring easy and convenient. Buses run every 30 minutes and serve Silver Spring's art district as well as community and health centers, lodging, shopping, and transportation connections. Visit [here](#) for more details.

The Bethesda Circulator connects riders to 8 public parking garages, the Bethesda Metro Station and 20 convenient stops along the way that get you to and from your favorite Bethesda destination - all for free! Three circulators on the route arrive at each stop every 10-15 minutes. Visit here for more details.

MCDOT also provides free shuttles to recreation centers, shopping, and medical appointments for some senior populations. Shuttles provide point to point service while circulators travel a specific route with multiple bus stops.

US 29 BRT Phase 2 Corridor Advisory Committee Meeting

MCDOT was delighted that many of you were able to join in-person at the January 30, 2025, US 29 Flash BRT CAC meeting. At the meeting, the project team provided an update on the preliminary design (35% design). The meeting presentation was revised for clarity and is now available on our project website. Please take time to review it.

Your feedback is critical and will help shape the project. Thank you for your ongoing dedication to this project.

Share Your Ride On Story in the What Drives You Contest

Ride On wants to know, What Drives You? In our 49 years of service, Ride On has touched the lives of millions of riders. People have used the service to help them earn degrees, provide for their family, and go on countless adventures across Montgomery County. We'd love to hear the story of how Ride On has impacted your life for the better! Visit our submission page here to share your story with the Ride On team by entering the What Drives You contest. One story will be chosen monthly to win a Ride On prize package!

Sign Up for Email and Text Alerts

Ride On communicates with customers directly through our email and text subscription service. Subscribing to these alerts means you'll get the latest Ride On service and program information sent straight to your inbox. To subscribe, visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/govdelivery, or text MONTGOMERY RIDEON to 468311 to receive text alerts.

Ride On is on Bluesky

Are you on Bluesky? Follow Ride On's Bluesky account at @rideonmct.bsky.social for the latest Ride On news, info, and more!

Transit Trivia!

Test your familiarity with Ride On's routes, services, and more with our transit trivia! The answer will be in next month's edition of our newsletter so make sure you tune in next month to see if you answered correctly!

Question:

Ride On began service in 1975. 11 years prior, which president signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that banned segregation on public transportation?

1. John F. Kennedy
2. Lyndon B. Johnson
3. Richard Nixon
4. Harry S. Truman

Last month's question:

The [Ride On Reimagined Study final report](#) has been published. How many Ride On routes will have new weekend service as part of the Vision Network?

1. 12 routes
2. 26 routes
3. 19 routes
4. 31 routes

Answer: (2.) 26 Routes

For the most up-to-date service information, riders should follow @RideOnMCT on [X](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), [Bluesky](#), and [Instagram](#). In addition, 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 [X](#), [Facebook](#) [Bluesky](#) and [Instagram](#) and [subscribe](#) to MCDOT's "Go Montgomery!" newsletter.

If you need an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) reasonable accommodation to access Ride On bus service, contact MC311 by voice at 240-777-0311, by email [RideOn.CustomerService@montgomerycountymd.gov](#) or TTY 711.

Title VI: Montgomery County assures that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Civil Rights Act of 1987, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity.