

Ride On Newsletter

September 2022

Montgomery County Ride On Bus Schedule Changes on 24 Routes Began Sunday, September 11



The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) will adjust 24 Ride On bus route schedules starting Sunday, September 11, to improve efficiency. Although service levels are staying relatively the same, the changes reflect a shift of resources to allow for more reliable service. The new schedules will be available at rideonbus.com and in print.

"Ridership data and on-time performance are monitored regularly, and this service change focuses on raising reliability," said MCDOT Director Chris Conklin. "Overall, service levels will remain within one percent of where we were. Most of our over 80 routes will not experience changes."

Route changes include:

- 21 routes have timetable changes: [4](#), [5](#), [9](#), [10](#), [15](#), [16](#), [20](#), [26](#), [34](#), [37](#), [38](#), [43](#), [46](#), [48](#), [55](#), [59](#), [61](#), [63](#), [79](#), [83](#), and [100](#).
- Three routes have slight route changes with no bus stop or time changes: [27](#), [45](#), [90](#).
- 11 routes have decreased frequency due to ridership, and seven routes have increased frequency due to ridership.
- 13 routes have time changes but no changes in frequency.
- Two routes have timing changes for accuracy and frequency: [63](#), [83](#).
- Three routes have a change in hours of operation: [4](#), [59](#), [79](#).

Riders can get trip planning information by downloading the free Ride On Real Time app on their mobile phone or visiting the website at RideOnBus.com.

Take the Ride On Reimagined Customer Satisfaction Survey for the Chance to Win a \$100 Gift Card



A Comprehensive Review of the Montgomery County Bus Network



The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) reminds all current, former and potential Ride On users that you are invited to take our Customer Satisfaction Survey, which will be available online through **Friday, October 7**. The survey is available in the following languages:

- English
- Spanish
- Amharic
- Chinese (Simplified)
- French
- Hindi
- Korean
- Vietnamese

[Take the Survey](#)

[The Ride On Reimagined study](#) is a comprehensive, forward-looking assessment of the bus network that may result in significant recommended changes to how bus transit (including Ride On and Metrobus) operates in Montgomery County based on current and future needs.

This survey is a vital part of the Ride On Reimagined study. It will provide MCDOT with a clearer understanding of our riders, where you're going and your impressions of your transit experience. MCDOT wants to learn what we are doing well, and what areas need improvement to help us decide how best to invest in Ride On's future.

MCDOT will also host four pop-up events around Montgomery County throughout the month of September. We've spoke to approximately 250 people at the Germantown Transit Center and Rockville Town Square. Please join us at the remaining pop-up events at the following locations to take the Customer Satisfaction Survey and learn more about the Ride On Reimagined study:

- **Silver Spring Transit Station**
Tuesday, September 20, 7-10 a.m.
- **Westfield Wheaton Mall**
Wednesday, September 28, 3-6 p.m.

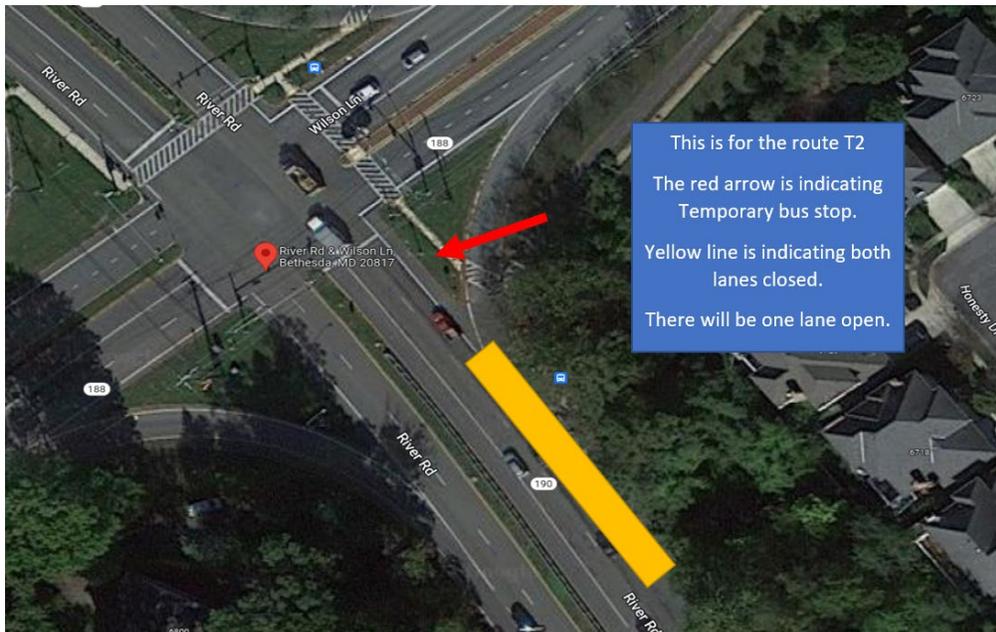
Pop-up events that are postponed as a result of inclement weather will be rescheduled for the next day at the same time and location.

Provide Metro with Feedback, Too!

Metro will be conducting a separate survey for its regionwide Bus Network Redesign. We hope you will take time to complete it, too.

Thank you for your participation and assistance! Please email us with any further questions or comments at rideon.reimagined@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Washington Gas Construction on River Road Will Affect WMATA Route T2



Washington Gas will be planning construction on a mainline valve replacement starting Saturday September 17, 2022. Construction will affect the northwest lanes of River Road south of the intersection with Wilson Lane. This will last 4-5 weeks, and the RIGHT Lane and Right Turn Merger Lane will be permanently closed. However, the actual turn lane at the intersection will remain open for traffic to turn right onto Wilson Lane.

During construction, access to bus stop #2001327 for the [T2](#) will be blocked. A temporary bus stop will be located on the traffic island, as indicated in the photo above.

Ride On is Hiring Bus Operators

MCDOT is currently recruiting full-time bus operators to fill positions in all three depots – Silver Spring, Kensington, and Gaithersburg. Experience is not necessary and applicants without commercial driver's licenses (CDL) are encouraged to apply. The benefits package is very competitive, we offer paid CDL training, opportunities for

advancement, and with the recently increased salary schedule for Ride On bus operators and transit coordinators the starting salary is \$45,000.

Transportation is one of the County's most important resources. MCDOT's Ride On bus service achieves an essential mission of the County by connecting people, communities, workplaces, educational institutions, and many other essential destinations. MCDOT operates over 80 bus routes and owns nearly 400 buses.

Looking for a meaningful career in public service? Consider being a bus operator. Our bus operators play an integral part in the communities they serve. They are committed to safety, customer service and a genuine care for the community. Does this sound like you? Then we want to hear from you. To learn more and to apply go to <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dot-transit/jobs.html>.



Wonder what it's like to work for Ride On?



Hear from one of our current operators, Melba Chavarria, who's been with the county since 2002.

Describe your position with Ride On.

I am a Bus Operator.

What is the best part of your job?

The best part of my job is that its a stable job and a good long-term career.

What are the advantages and the disadvantages of being a bus operator?

The biggest advantage is the independence that the operator has while driving his/her shift. A disadvantage for me is dealing with adverse weather conditions, especially when driving in a snow storm.

What advice would you give future operators?

My advice to future operators is for them to see the job as a stable career.

What do you like about working for MCDOT?

I really like the benefits the county offers to its employees.

Glenmont Metro Station Temporary Bus Bay Relocations Started September 12, 2022

The Glenmont bus canopy rehabilitation project started on Monday, September 12th. The project will be closing two bus bays at a time to replace the skylights and do structural work. The project will be completed in 4 phases of bay closures, and is scheduled to be completed July 5, 2023. Bus bay relocations for phase 1 are in the legend underneath the graphic. Please follow signs at the station.

For more information, visit <https://www.wmata.com/service/status/details/Temporary-Bus-Stop-Relocation-Glenmont-Station.cfm>.

Glenmont Canopy Replacement

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

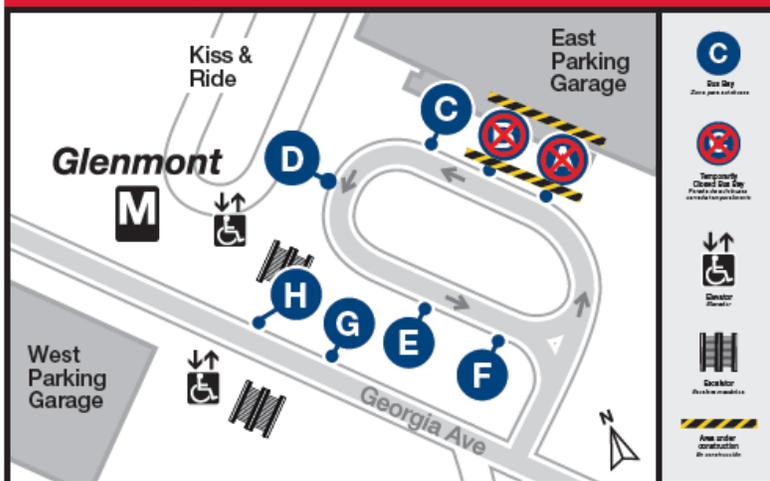
Sustitución de la marquesina de Glenmont

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

EFFECTIVE: SEPTEMBER 12 – EARLY NOVEMBER 2022
A PARTIR 12 DE SEPTIEMBRE – PRINCIPIOS DE NOVIEMBRE 2022

Temporary Bus Boarding Locations

Lugares temporales de parada de autobuses



| Route | Destination | Board at | Route | Destination | Board at | Route | Destination | Board at |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|------------------------------------|--|----------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|----------|
| METROBUS FREQUENT SERVICE | | | Y7 | ICC Park & Ride via Leisure World | H | 39 | Briggs Chaney Park & Ride | E |
| Y2 Y7 | Georgia Ave & Connecticut Ave | H | Y8 | Medstar Montgomery Medical Ctr via Leisure World | H | 41 | Aspen Hill | E |
| Y2 Y7 | Silver Spring | D | RIDE ON - MONTGOMERY COUNTY | | | 49 | Rockville | C |
| Y8 | | | 10 | Hilandsale | D | 81 | Norbeck Park & Ride | G |
| METROBUS | | | 10 | Twinbrook | D | 83 | Shady Grove | F |
| C9 | College Park-U of Md | D | 26 | Montgomery Mall Transit Center | C | FLEX Glenmont-Wheaton Zone | | |
| C9 | White Flint | D | 31 | Wheaton | C | FDA Shuttle (White Oak) | | D |
| Y2 Y8 | Medstar Montgomery Medical Center | H | 33 | Medical Center | F | | | |



Scan for more information

wmata.com/alerts
202-637-1328



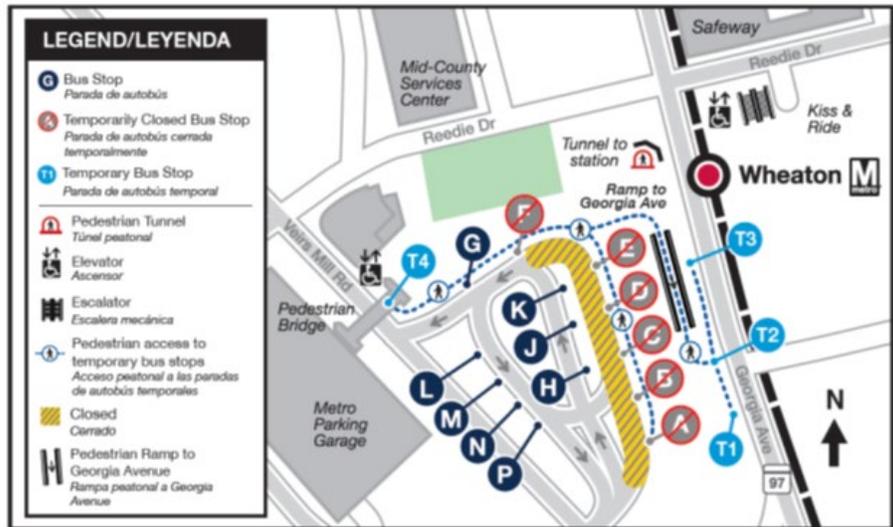
Wheaton Metro Station Temporary Bus Bay Relocations Started August 22, 2022

Starting August 22, 2022, and lasting for approximately five months, sections of the bus loop at the Wheaton Metro Station were closed for pavement rehabilitation. During each phase of the work, a different set of bus bays will be closed, and bus routes will be served by temporary bus stops or alternative bus bays. The first phase will last six weeks from August 22 through October 3.

This project will result in smoother bus rides and an improved experience for Metro and Ride On customer.

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> |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| metrobus | | |
| C2 | Greenbelt | T3 |
| C4 | Prince George's Plaza | T3 |
| C4 | Twinbrook | T1 |
| Q1, Q2, Q5, Q6 | Shady Grove | T4 |
| Q1, Q2, Q4 | Silver Spring | T2 |
| Q4 | Rockville | T4 |
| Y2, Y7, Y8 | Silver Spring | T2 |
| Y2, Y8 | Montgomery Medical Center | T4 |
| Y7 | ICC Park & Ride | T4 |
| Ride On | | |
| 34 | Aspen Hill, Friendship Heights | P |

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

Feature Interview with Chief of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Equipment and Systems - Cyrus M. Behrooz

Please explain your role as the Chief of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Equipment and Systems, as well as the responsibilities of your team.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) are the use of information and communication technology to improve bus transportation performance. It includes a set of tools, facilities, and specialties such as traffic engineering concepts, software, hardware, and

telecommunications technologies that are used in a coordinated and integrated manner to improve efficiency and safety in the transportation system.

In a nutshell, my team and I are to make sure all of the above are working properly, as planned, and in tandem. The existence of efficient and safe transportation is one of the most basic requirements of the community. At Montgomery County DOT Transit, we strive to provide the best service to our patrons.



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

I joined MCDOT in July 2022. I am still very new to transit and am still learning. However, I have been working at the County for the past 15 years as a senior IT Project Manager in the Department of Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions (TEBS), managing many projects for various departments, including several DOT projects.

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

Even before heading to the office, I start by looking at my calendar, which I keep up to date, to know what my day looks like and how many meetings I have ahead of me. I also review my to do list. By the time to get to the office, I know what my day's priorities are with the caveat that I may have to adjust my schedule as events occur that need immediate attention.

I utilize our tools such as MS-Teams to conduct meetings or to contact various people, internal or external to the organization, about a myriad of work-related subjects.

Our Transit system resumed fare collection on August 1, after having been fare free for 28 months due to the pandemic. What role did you and your team play to ensure all fareboxes and other fare collection equipment were ready and functioning?

This was right when I joined the transit team. I had to not only learn the business processes fast, but also manage and coordinate the work to be performed in order to meet deadlines.

The fareboxes, ticket vending machines, validators, and many other pieces of necessary equipment such as communication equipment and power lines had been left untouched and were generally not maintained throughout the pandemic. All of that had to be repaired in a coordinated manner with the minimal staff and technicians we had

available. I owe a debt of gratitude to the team who are knowledgeable and helped me get the job done.

The technicians had to literally re-build many of the fareboxes, change their motherboards, use their soldering skills to get the parts working, while we were facing the supply chain delays everyone was facing to acquire parts.

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

Ride On operations and Ride On Real Time performance are a major part of our responsibilities. The system was developed in-house and provides real-time information to riders with respect to bus schedules, arrivals, and departures, as well as any schedule changes or missed schedules. We are very cognizant of delays buses may encounter due to various causes and are striving to improve and mitigate any such situations as it impacts riders.

What new technologies are planned over the next 24 months?

We are in the process of migrating our current backend ORBCad system to a new one from Clever Devices called CleverCad. "Cad" is short for "computer aided dispatch" for our buses. That includes migration of the operating system as well as the data and several sub-systems and modules. All of that has to be tested thoroughly. We must also conduct training at various levels and roles, and we must familiarize ourselves with the new system and how we navigate it to get what we want when we want it.

The new system and several other possible systems we may purchase are all about streamlining business processes and providing the most current information to our staff and customers who expect a first-class transit system.

Why MC311 is Our Best Partner

MC311 Customer Service Center is Montgomery County's source for nonemergency government information and services. It quickly and easily connects customers with representatives of the county (or the corresponding web interface) in order to answer questions, give information, hear and document comments, complaints and compliments about Montgomery County government services.

At Ride On, MC311 is a main artery of connection to our riders. We review and respond to service requests daily in order to provide the best customer service experience possible. Through MC311, members of the Ride On team receive vital and specific information that allows us to address customer service requests accurately. We ensure that complaints are addressed and are used to improve Ride On service in the future.

MC311 also allows our operations team to receive feedback on the service that our bus operators provide on a daily basis. While issues are addressed, compliments are also shared and serve to encourage and uplift our wonderful operators. We love hearing from you, and MC311 is the most efficient way to get your message to us!

You can reach MC311 by calling 311 in the County, or 240-777-0311 from anywhere, Monday - Friday 7AM - 7PM. You can also use MC311 online by visiting <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/mc311/> 24 hours a day.



Montgomery County Residents are Encouraged to Participate in Car Free Day on Wednesday, September 22

Car Free Day is a worldwide event that encourages traveling in ways that are greener than driving alone, such as walking, riding a bicycle, rail, bus, in a carpool or teleworking.

MCDOT's Commuter Services team will be at the following locations on Sept. 22 with free giveaways and pledge cards that can be filled out to enter in a raffle drawing for gift cards, Capital Bikeshare annual membership or a \$200 SmarTrip card.

- Bethesda at the Metro Bus Bays 7 a.m. - 9 a.m.
- Friendship Heights at Wisconsin Place 6:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.
- Germantown Transit Center 6:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.
- North Bethesda Metro Station 6:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.

- Shady Grove Metro Station 6:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.
- Silver Spring Metro Station 6:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.
- White Oak – Lockwood Drive and New Hampshire Avenue Transit Center 7 a.m. - 9 a.m.

Additionally, residents are invited to take a national pledge to participate in Car Free Day on Wednesday, Sept. 22. Each entry will be entered into a raffle for some great prizes. Duplicate entries will be disqualified. Participants can take the pledge [here](#).

Residents who do not own a bike can use the Capitol Bikeshare system. Thousands of bikes are provided throughout the region, including Montgomery County. Check out a bike and return it to any station near your destination. Single trip, daily and yearly [memberships](#) are available. The first 30 minutes of each trip is free. Visit the Bikeshare location map at [here](#).

Go Car Free - Use Ride On, extRa, Flex or Flash services!



Brookville Smart Energy Bus Depot Project Reaches Completion



MCDOT is nearing completion on its first micro-grid solar energy project to power its expanding fleet of electric buses. The Brookville Smart Energy Bus Depot will service 44 new electric buses within MCDOT's Ride On fleet by 2023. MCDOT's goal is to transition its fleet of buses to all electric by 2035. MCDOT currently replaces an average of 10% of the buses per year, per Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) guidelines.

"The Brookville Smart Energy Bus Depot project falls in line with our ambitious climate action plan to reduce all carbon emissions by 2035," said County Executive Marc Elrich. "This bus depot is one component of many County projects that is making a difference for our environment such as converting our fleets to electric and reducing harmful emissions. This infrastructure project will improve the County's resilience and we are proud to be at the forefront amongst local governments when it comes to projects like this."

"MCDOT has committed to a zero-emissions fleet by 2035," said MCDOT Director Chris Conklin. "We've started the transition with the purchase of fourteen electric buses so far."

The Brookville microgrid project will charge these and future buses allowing us to provide great service in an environmentally responsible way.”

Electric bus charging, incorporating clean energy production technologies will enable the County to provide sustainable, resilient, and reliable energy supply for bus charging and site operations. The project will include the following:

- 2 Megawatts (MW) of solar photovoltaic canopies that will provide electrical power to the buses and to the battery storage systems
- 4.3 Megawatt Hours (MWH) battery storage
- 2 MW of natural gas generation
- Microgrid controller

This program is a public-private-partnership or P3, an agreement with AlphaStruxure, a leader in Energy as a Service (EaaS) solutions. The project will enable at least 44 buses in the Ride On Montgomery County’s transit fleet to transition from diesel to electric power. This advances the County’s goal to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2035, reducing lifetime emissions by over 155,000 tons, while delivering resilience to climate events and power outages.

The [Brookville Smart Energy Bus Depot](#) is a first-of-its-kind integration of microgrid and EV charging infrastructure, delivering sustainability, reliability and resilience for the County’s public transportation system. AlphaStruxure, a joint venture of Schneider Electric and the Carlyle Global Infrastructure Opportunity Fund, designed, built, financed, and has owned and operated the project to enable Ride On’s growing electric bus fleet. The project is scheduled to be completed in late October 2022 and is designed to deliver the following benefits and outcomes:

Bus Electrification: Enabling the County’s transition from fossil fuel buses to electric buses with a customized energy and infrastructure solution

Environmental Sustainability: 62 percent carbon emissions reduction with electric buses powered by the microgrid and lifetime greenhouse gas benefit of over 155,000 tons

Climate Resilience and Operational Reliability: Ensures uninterrupted bus services during any long-term power outages caused by severe weather as well as any short-term disturbances or perturbations of the utility grid

Flexible Fleet Operations: Avoidance of utility demand charges and time-of-use tariffs provides fleet operations with ultimate dispatch flexibility

Financial Benefits: Energy as a Service approach eliminates upfront cost to the County for the project including all microgrid and charging infrastructure, and provides long-term cost predictability for energy supply

Economic Development: Created more than 50 construction jobs

A ribbon cutting will be held upon completion of the project, and is currently scheduled for October 31, 2022 at 11am.

The Upcoming Five-Year Anniversary of MCDOT's Ride On extRa Bus Service



On October 2, 2017, Ride On extRa bus service officially started operations. The extRa provides limited stop, faster service between Lakeforest Transit Center and the Medical Center Metro Station, allowing riders to experience "Less stops, more go" during rush traffic hours.

Some of the features of the extRa include:

- A limited stop (13 stops versus 80 along the route) faster service along state Route 355.
- 20 minute frequency of service during peak rush hour periods
- Specially designed buses with low floor boarding
- No loading of fare cards on buses

- Buses feature free WiFi access, USB charging ports, information displays, and extra padding on seats
- Runs only during peak periods - Monday-Friday, 5:25-9:30am and 3:25-7:30pm
- Regular Ride On fare
- Connection to 50% of the transit services network including the MARC rail, MTA buses, Metrobus, Metrorail, and 44 Ride On routes

Thanks to all who have taken rides on Ride On extRa. For more information, visit [Ride On extRa](#).

Ride On 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.

All passengers are encouraged to wear face coverings when traveling by public transportation. All MCDOT buses have a supply of face coverings for those who cannot provide their own.

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.

For the most up-to-date service information, riders should follow @RideOnMCT on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) and [Instagram](#). In addition, information is available at [RideOnBus.com](#), by subscribing to receive email alerts at [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

Long-Term Ride On Detours

Since June 6, 2022, Ride On Route 23 has experienced the following detours from 5:30 AM to 10:30 PM Weekdays, and 6:20 AM to 8:40 PM Saturday (no Sunday). When heading to Friendship Heights from Massachusetts Ave, the route will take a left on Little Falls Pkwy, a right on River Rd, and then proceed back on route. When going towards Sibley Hospital from Willard Ave, the route will head right on River Rd, take a left on Little Falls Pwy, and a right on Massachusetts Ave, and then proceed back on route. Shuttle buses will run from Westwood Shopping Center, Westbard Rd to Fort

Summer Dr. to connect with Route 23 on Massachusetts Ave. Bus stops have been added for the Westbard Ave Shuttle (north/south bound) at Westbard & Massachusetts Ave. on opposite sides of the road. Stops for Route 23 were also added on Massachusetts Ave; to Sibley at Massachusetts Ave & Westbard, and to Friendship Heights at Massachusetts Ave & 5600 Massachusetts Ave.

Bus Stops closed on River Rd. from Little Falls Parkway to Ridgefield Rd. include River Rd & Little Falls Parkway, River Rd. & Butler Rd., River Rd. & Landy Ln., Ridgefield Rd. & River Rd., Westbard Ave. & Westbard Circle, Westbard Ave. & Ridgefield Rd., River Rd. & Ridgefield Rd., River Rd. & Dorsey Ln., and River Rd. Little Falls Parkway.

Ride On's Partnership With Glenstone Museum

Ride On has partnered with Glenstone Museum to give our riders daily access to this cultural haven. Glenstone tickets are reserved within hours of release, or you can ride with us on the Route 301 and visit anytime during normal hours. Remember: there is no public parking at Tobytown. Please park at the Nancy Dacek Community Center or Rockville Metro Station.

Coming Soon - New Ride On Moovit app

MCDOT is currently developing a new application for Ride On customers in partnership with the Moovit app. The solution is to provide real-time bus loading and crowdedness information via a smartphone application available to the public to increase public safety and confidence in public transit. In addition to the Montgomery County Ride On service, the vendor will integrate with publicly available route schedules and service alert information.

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. Seniors, Disabled, and

Children are asked to tap their card upon boarding a Ride On bus, as to help generate an accurate rider count.