



Climate Change

LINKAGE TO COUNTY RESULTS AREAS

- A Greener County
- A Growing Economy
- Thriving Youth and Families
- Effective, Sustainable Government

PROGRAM CONTACTS

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Program Overview

Montgomery County is undertaking a climate planning process to combat the climate emergency and meet our goal of 100 percent reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2035 and 80 percent reduction by 2027. The Administration is actively seeking public input on strategies through which the government, the business sector, and County residents can help reduce GHG emissions. Everybody can be good stewards of the energy we consume, the products we use, and the waste we produce.

In FY21, the Montgomery County will continue to transition the County fleet to electric vehicles (EVs), with plans to procure more electric buses and electric administrative and motor pool vehicles. The County will continue to install solar panels on County facilities through public-private partnerships, including 5.3 megawatts on the closed Oaks landfill, which will be used to power County facilities and provide community solar benefits to low-and-moderate income residents. Energy efficiency projects will continue to be implemented at County facilities as well.

The County plans to expand public transportation options to encourage the use of non-auto travel modes. For example, the e-bikes and e-scooters pilot program will continue, with residents and visitors encouraged to use them for short trips and to connect to mass transit. FY21 will also be the first year of operations for FLASH, Montgomery County's new express bus service along US 29 (Colesville Road). The successful Kids Ride Free program will continue as well, allowing all youth ages 18 and under to ride for free on our local buses, and the Seniors Ride Free program, offering free rides on local buses during off-peak periods. Employer incentives will be enhanced so they can buy down the cost of transit and vanpooling for their employees through the FareShare Program, and use of the Transportation Demand Management will be expanded beyond the current Transportation Management Districts by implementing the recently passed NextGen Transportation Demand Management legislation. The County is also building an extensive network of bikeway facilities, including protected bike lanes. These include facilities related to the Purple Line and Bethesda Metro Station transit projects and those in Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Areas (BiPPA) and master plan areas.

To support the transition to EVs, the County will increase availability of EV charging stations in our public parking facilities and at other County facilities. In addition, guidelines will be implemented for offering on-street EV charging in residential neighborhoods that don't have off-street alternatives for siting EV charging stations.

The County will develop energy-performance requirements for both new and existing buildings with a goal to get new commercial and multi-family buildings to achieve net-zero energy use by 2030. And support is increased for the Tree Montgomery Program, a tree-planting program which installs trees on private properties free of charge.

Montgomery County will improve efforts to respond to, prevent, and mitigate risks for flooding with an additional FTE with

hydrologic expertise to educate the public about changing flood risk and encourage Flood Insurance program participation. This position will also assist dam owners prepare for the impacts of climate change, and develop and use data such as GIS to better understand our changing flood risk.

FY21 Initiatives

- Complete the County's Climate Action and Resilience Plan to guide the County's actions to address climate change.
- Use of the Climate Change Non-departmental Account to fund technical analysis and begin implementation of the County's Climate Change Workgroup recommendations.
- Plant more trees by increasing funding to address the backlog of tree requests in the Tree Montgomery Program.
- Creation of new position in the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security to add hydrologic expertise to the County, improving our ability to predict and respond to flooding events.
- Install solar panels on the closed Oaks Landfill, generating 5.3 megawatts of electricity.
- Develop energy performance standards for both new and existing buildings.
- Procure electric buses and electric administrative and motor pool vehicles.
- Complete Phase I of the Brookeville Bus Depot electric bus charging station installation.
- Increase the availability of electric vehicle charging stations at public parking facilities and other County locations.
- Extend the e-bike and e-scooter pilot program and promote their use for short trips and to connect to transit in more areas of the County.
- Begin the first year of operations for FLASH, Montgomery County's new express bus service along US-29 (Colesville Road).
- Enhance incentives for employers to buy-down the cost of transit and vanpooling for their employees through the FareShare program
- Expand the use of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) beyond the current Transportation Management Districts by implementing the recently passed NectGen TDM legislation.
- Continue to build an extensive network of bikeway facilities including protected bike lanes, including those associated with the Purple Pine and Bethesda Metro Station projects and those in BiPPa and master plan areas.

ONGOING EFFORTS

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

- Green Business Certification Program: A voluntary program that recognizes and encourages businesses to take steps to reduce their ecological footprint.
- The County's Benchmarking Law: Building owners are to use a standard metric to measure energy usage, identifying energy savings opportunities. DEP offers assistance to building owners with compliance.
- Energy Connection: A program whose goal is to be a trusted source of information about home energy efficiency and renewable energy options.
- Tree Montgomery Program: A program that plants shade trees for property owners, free of charge, and implemented in partnership with the Department of Transportation.
- County Recycling Programs: DEP collects recycling from single family properties and processes recyclables from the entire County (single family homes, multi-family properties, businesses, etc.).

Department of Transportation

- Ride On: The County's public bus system provides an affordable alternative to driving.
- Capital Bikeshare, e-scooters, and e-bikes: Capital Bikeshare offers stations throughout the County, providing a

low-carbon alternative for short trips. The e-scooter and e-bike pilot program are another option for residents and visitors.

- Commuter Services: Facilitate and encourage the use of public transportation with programs like FareShare, the Commuter Choice Tax Credit, and Get In.
- Express bus programs: FLASH (starting in 2020) and Ride On Route 101 provide fast, reliable bus service along major County corridors.

Department of General Services (DGS)

- Office of Energy and Sustainability: Ensures County operations are environmentally sensitive and integrates sustainability into County decision making.
- Solar installations: Over 7.6 megawatts (MW) of electricity is generated from solar panels on County facilities. An additional 5.3 MW are planned for the decommissioned Oaks Landfill.
- Green Fleet: DGS is pursuing an all-electric fleet of County vehicles and buses.

Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS)

- Hydrologic Expertise: As climate change increases the intensity of rain events, a new position at OEMHS will help identify areas that will become prone to flooding and help the County prepare for the impacts.
- Grant Funding: OEMHS assists DEP and other County agencies pursue State and Federal grants to prepare for the effects of climate change.

Department of Permitting Services

- Green Building Program Review: Enforces the County's requirement for new construction, additions, and alterations to conform to the International Energy Construction Code. New commercial construction and additions of 5,000 square feet or greater must conform to the International Green Construction Code.

Department of Housing and Community Affairs

- Weatherization Assistance Program: Assists homeowners low-income residents in reducing home energy use by providing energy inspections, air leak identification, insulation, and energy efficient lighting.

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