

## US 29 Public Meeting Summary

On Tuesday, June 10, 2025, the US 29 Flash Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project proudly hosted a community-oriented public meeting in Silver Spring, MD. This event served as a vital element within the Montgomery County Department of Transportation's (MCDOT) comprehensive public engagement strategy for the project, emphasizing the importance of transparent communication and community involvement throughout the planning process.

Building on themes and discussions from the previous meeting, the session focused on the bicycle and pedestrian pathways component. The primary aim was to carefully gather and analyze community feedback, providing a platform for residents to share their insights on critical connection points, voice their concerns regarding current infrastructural gaps, and help prioritize improvements that respond directly to local needs.

The meeting was structured to begin with a detailed presentation that offered context and updates on the project's progress, ensuring that all participants were well informed before the discussions commenced. Following the presentation, a brief question and answer session allowed community members to engage directly with project representatives, thereby fostering a dialogue that enriched the planning process. Furthermore, the event featured two innovative interactive activities specifically designed to pinpoint problematic areas along the corridor and to generate creative, community-derived ideas for ideal bike and pedestrian layouts.

This multifaceted approach not only reinforced MCDOT's commitment to inclusive stakeholder participation but also underlined the project's dedication to integrating public feedback into its final design, thereby ensuring that the improvements made would effectively resonate with the everyday needs and aspirations of the community.

**Meeting Date:** Tuesday, June 10, 2025, 6 – 8:00 p.m.

**Meeting Location:** Silver Spring Civic Building at Veterans Plaza, 1 Veterans Place, Silver Spring

**Number of Attendees:** 50+ attendees

### Montgomery County Staff and Consultants in Attendance

Jamie Henson	MCDOT BRT Implementation Manager
Niño Ranjo	MCDOT Project Manager
Justin Willits	MCDOT Project Manager
Joe Moges	MCDOT Chief - Division of Transportation Engineering
Rex Lloyd	Consultant
Jake Smith	Consultant

Kristin Hileman	Consultant
Laura Barcena	Consultant
Sarah Johnson	Consultant
Megan O'Reilly	Consultant
Shellee Casiello	Consultant
Caroline Barrera	Consultant
Fernando Snellings	Consultant
Sharron Lipford	Consultant
Edgar Bermudez	Spanish Translator
Kaylee Anthony	American Sign Language Interpreter
Sophia Coverston	American Sign Language Interpreter

## Connection Activity

During the connection activity, participants were invited to examine an expansive roll plot map of the US 29 project corridor in detail. This interactive tool allows community members to mark both the origin and destination points of their daily commutes and the routes they frequently take, providing a visual representation of travel patterns along the corridor. In addition to mapping their journeys, participants were encouraged to add detailed comments directly onto the map. These comments highlighted areas of concern or interest—ranging from potential traffic bottlenecks to spots that might benefit from future enhancements—thus ensuring that every piece of feedback was recorded. This approach not only enriched the data collection process by integrating real user experiences but also created a vibrant dialogue between the project team and the public.

### Summary of the comments and their associated areas:

#### Northwest Branch

- Many citizens are concerned about making sure that bike and pedestrian pathways are added.
- Trail connections and sidewalk safety were also top priorities.

#### New Hampshire Avenue

- Suggestions were to prioritize bike and pedestrian improvements over car capacity including narrowing or eliminating lanes in the area of US 29 and New Hampshire.

#### Burnt Mills (Shopping Center)

- Traffic congestion near the shopping center at Burnt Mills is a concern in this area.
- Traffic congestion along with sidewalks and bike paths for safety were the top comments.

#### Four Corners

- The safety of bicyclists and pedestrians at Four Corners around Montgomery Blair High School was the biggest concern in this area.

- The access to on- and off-ramps in the area was also mentioned several times.

### **Lockwood Drive**

- As an alternate route to US 29, most comments about Lockwood Drive were about adding bike paths and wider sidewalks. The bicycle connections throughout the area were top of mind for participants.

### **Sligo Creek Parkway**

- High volumes and confusing intersections led many people to express their concerns about traffic volumes and safety in the area of US 29 and Sligo Creek Parkway.

### **The Top Areas of Connection**

- Burnt Mills (Shopping Center)
- NW Branch/NWB Trail
- Four Corners
- Lockwood Drive
- Southwood Avenue
- Indian Spring Terrace Park/Montgomery Blair High School
- Sligo Creek Parkway



## **Component Activity**

The components activity gave the public the ability to design their own bike/pedestrian paths along a few key areas on the US 29 project corridor including 5' sidewalks, 11' bikeways, and 6' and 3' grass buffers. This activity allowed citizens to see what it takes to create bike and pedestrian pathways along with grass buffers and street traffic.

### **Summary of the comments:**

#### **Colesville Road at Crestmoor Drive (Northbound)**

- Most participants selected 6' grass with an 11' bike path.
- Some participants wanted all elements, 5' sidewalk, 3' grass, 11' bike path, and 6' grass.



### **Colesville Road at Lorain Avenue (Northbound)**

- Many people chose 3' grass, 5' sidewalk and 11' bike path however many were apprehensive about how much space that would take.

### **Columbia Pike between Burnt Mills Avenue and Southwest Drive**

- This area was not a popular area to adjust to, and many want it to be left as it is.

## **Presentation Q&A**

Q: When mentioning feasibility and infeasibility, what are these things?

A: From MCDOT's perspective, we generally consider a project feasible when it has minimal impacts on property, does not have major environmental concerns, and has a reasonable cost.

Q: Could you include a barrier/wall for the bike/pedestrian pathway activity?

A: There is little space currently for this. However, if you think this is appropriate, please note this in your comments.

Q: Pedestrian concerns on East West Highway are dangerous. What are you doing there?

A: This project focuses only on US 29. It in no way minimizes the concerns on East West Highway but does not address those concerns.

Q: What are you expecting the project to cost and where is the funding coming from?

A: In the previous Mobility Study, the cost was noted as \$128 million. Costs have gone up, and MCDOT will have a better estimate later this fall. MCDOT is in the process of identifying funding sources.

Q: Is the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) giving out money?

A: MCDOT is working closely with FTA and is expecting to receive a grant on a separate County BRT project.

Q: What effects on ridership will the bike/pedestrian improvements have?

A: MCDOT wants to make sure that bike facilities are at the bus stops.

Q: Does the project start at Sligo Creek?

A: The planned facilities start at Franklin Avenue. Sligo Creek is where the study area corridor starts. We have determined the most appropriate place to start improvements is on Franklin Avenue.

Q: How will riders access the BRT station if they are in the middle of the road?

A: Riders will have to cross half the street to access the new stations. There will be no additional crossing distance for riders. Currently, bus riders cross the full length of the street in one direction. Pedestrian crosswalks will be available.

Q: In 2022, the DOT said it would cost \$128 million; we were told last year it's already \$170 million.

A: With inflation, MCDOT knows the cost will go up. We are working to develop an updated cost estimate as part of the preliminary design effort, and we would expect the cost to be somewhat higher than the original estimate.

## Comments and Feedback

Along with asking questions and providing feedback, there was a physical comment box and forms that attendees could fill out and submit. For those that needed more time to draft their comments, the physical comment forms could be mailed in later or they could [submit their comments online](#) through July 28, 2025.



## Next Steps/Action Items

- Bike/Pedestrian enhancements to proceed separately
- Early Fall 2025: Additional meetings (Corridor Advisory Committee, public meeting)
- Late Fall 2025: 35% Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Evaluation
- Winter 2025/2026: Mandatory Referral