



SILVER SPRING
TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

AGENDA

January 11, 2024 / 8:00 – 9:30 a.m.
Teams Meeting

Staff Contact: Jim Carlson / (240) 777-8382; (301) 318-0328
james.carlson@montgomerycountymd.gov

-
- 8:00** **1. Introductions** **Jim Carlson/All**
Welcome New Commuter Services Staff:
Samuel Damesa > TDM Administration & Compliance Coordinator
Kevin Obike > Travel Smart Ambassador Program

New Committee Appointments:
Shanavia McKinney > Small Business Representative
Erik Donald > Small Business Representative
Michael Price > Large Business Rep (re-appointment)
- 2. Minutes Review** **All**
November (©2)
- 3. United Therapeutics Expansion** **Thomas Kaufman**
Sr. Director, Corporate Real Estate, United Therapeutics
Jeremy Souders
Chief, Management Services, MCDOT Division of Parking
- 4. Metro Update** **Gary Erenrich**
MCDOT
- 5. Updates: TMD/DOT/Other County Updates** **Sandra Brecher**
Jim Carlson
- 6. Employer Outreach Update** **Jennifer Bolick**
TMD Outreach
- 9:30** **Adjourn / Next Meeting: January 11, 2024**
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Information Items

Montgomery County and WSSC Water Launch 2024 Salt Wise Campaign

Ride On Schedule Changes Begin Sunday, Jan. 14

Metro Announces Travel Alternatives During Blue, Orange, and Silver Line Construction Over MLK Holiday Weekend

NTSB chair critical of WMATA, FTA in briefing on Metrorail derailment report

**Silver Spring
Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
November 9, 2023**

Item 1 & 2- Introductions/Minute review: **Jim Carlson** called meeting to order and members and guests introduced themselves. Minutes from July were submitted for review.

The Committee welcomed **Shinavia McKinney** and **Erik Donald**, prospective members waiting confirmation as Small Business Representatives.

Item 3 – Purple line update presentation: **Christina Contreras** updated the Committee on the Purple Line (PL) construction.

Ms. Contreres displayed construction progress video presented by **Ray Briggs** of Maryland Transit Administration. The storm water system is 50 percent complete with over 20,000 sf of sand storm drainage structures. The video also covered construction at various sites:

- The Bethesda Metro Station tunnel
- The Capital Crescent Trail bridge
- Elevated stations and station canopies
- University of Maryland and Veterans Parkway
- PL train cars will be delivered in early 2024

Ms. Contreres reported that out of the three stations in Silver Spring - Silver Spring Transit Center (SSTC), the library, and Dale Drive, the transit center has the brunt of the construction. Currently, that is about 58 percent complete. Much of the construction is unseen with work underground and the unknown issues of unforeseen obstacles. Also reported:

- Placement of pole foundations on Bonifant St
- Eleven PL stations are under active construction.
- Upcoming work at the SSTC includes laying concrete, stair access to mezzanine, and the MARC platform bridge.
- Discussion regarding the pedestrian detour at Ripley for platform construction – there is 5–8-minute delay for departing trips due to construction detour
- There is signage for low vision pedestrians (braille) at the SSTC
- Construction at the western portion of Bonifant Street is finishing up as there are utility relocations, a signal at Georgia Avenue and storm drain construction starting in a few weeks

Ms. Contreres discussed PL construction at the library and Wayne Avenue and the Silver Spring International School (SSINS) as the foundations for the traction power station are constructed. They are working with MC's public school system as they are updating SSINS as well. Further steps:

- Wall construction at SS Library
- Wayne Avenue bridge over Sligo Creek includes bank stabilization work
- Wayne Avenue traffic further reduced to one lane due to track installation - no left turn onto Sligo Creek Pkwy

- A community grant from PL Transit Partners is available for neighborhood support of businesses effected by construction - 12 grants given per year, closed end of October 2023
- Work along the Colesville Road bridge is done during evenings when there is less traffic flow.
- Work along the east side of the SS library platform
- Water proofing on Wayne Avenue
- Concrete pour at station tunnel at Manchester Place

Q & A / Discussion:

- Construction team trying to reduce disruptions at the SSTC with routine calls with WMATA, public notices stressing braille signage and sending notices via PL outreach email blasts
- Ongoing Community Advisory Team (CAT) meetings will start again next Spring.
- The Wayne Ave. shift change will be in place until the north side of bridge is constructed.
- Discussion stressing the importance of including ADA considerations in wayfinding signage, using photos to communicate for those with disabilities such as autism and low vision pedestrians – pilot studies for low vision ran in Silver Spring using audible notices
- Since the use of sand filter technology for storm water drainage began in around 2015-2018, it has not been updated for climate change; however, they are believed to be adequate due to Silver Spring not having drainage control devices in place before construction.
- Providing ambassadors at the SSTC during peak period to assist with mitigating pedestrian flow during construction
- Signage banners as a good indicator that the PL construction is progressing; however, maintaining a balance to not overwhelm pedestrians, such as naming the business covered by the banners is considered - black banners currently in place are also used for dust control
- Expecting 18 mos. for construction completion with cars delivered to late winter / early spring.

Item 4 – Metro Update: Gary Erenrich reported that ridership is still returning to precovid levels during the week and beyond precovid levels on the weekends. Bus service is outperforming rail service with shifts in ridership increasing during the mid-week.

Metro is still facing a pending fiscal cliff of \$750 million out of a \$2 billion budget that has prompted cost saving scenarios to be presented by the GM to the WMATA’s board and public comment. Since WMATA does not have the capacity to tax it can only raise fares, cut service, move capital funding or propose layoffs of up to 50 percent of the workforce (5,000 -6,000 employees), resulting in a domino effect and making it impossible to rebound back to adequate service for the region. **Mr. Erenrich** updates continued:

- The cost of increasing rail service to meet demand barely impacts WMATA’s deficit
- Bringing Federal workers back to the office full time will help save the system \$50 million in revenue as they make up 12 percent oof system users; however, with telework it is now only at six percent.
- Metro’s Lift program offers 50 percent discount fares for low-income commuters - only 5,000 families have participated so far
- Discussion regarding Uber being preferred over Metro due to lack of sanitation – hand sanitizers are provided at stations but not available on buses.

- Metro Access is 10 percent of the budget and operates as a taxi system when it was really designed as shared rides – Prince Georges County uses Metro Access more than Maryland & DC combined.
- When is the Silver Spring Metro station going to receive the new fare gates to prevent fare jumping? Transit Police support is mostly in DC provided by MPD contractors
- The effect of the newly Democratic controlled Virginian legislature on Metro funding
- The \$500 million stream of dedicated funding from the jurisdictions will eventually run out as Metro is not able to utilize the bond market, enacting cost saving efforts such as moving capital funding to operational and preventive maintenance
- Discussion regarding increasing WMATA's budget by MD State Legislation action to keep pace with inflation – however, currently, any Maryland funding will come from other transportation projects

Item 5 – Employer TDM Plans/Reports: **Jim Carlson** presented employer TDM plans that meet requirements. The Committee recommended approval of the plans by MCDOT Director.

Item 6 – Updates:

- **Ms. Brecher** discussed assembling a virtual informational binder for the TDM Advisory Committee
- MTA meeting on tactical bus lanes tonight- lane construction on University Blvd almost completed.
- Bike classes this Saturday November 11th
- There is a new Climate Change Officer, **Sarah Kogel-Smucker**.

Item 7 – Around the Room: Items discussed were:

- **Mr. Price** discussed safety concerns raised by Discovery employees and having the Police attend AC meetings and the need to see a police presence in the area- encounter in the garage, safety concerns walking to garage.

**Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee Attendance Sheet
November 9, 2023**

Voting Members (12)			
Name	Affiliation	Present	Absent
Chamber Members (3)			
Chris Kabatt	Wells + Associates	X	
Vacant			
Vacant			
Citizens Advisory Board Members (3)			
Harriet Quinn	Kemp Mill, Four Corners, East SS	X	
Vacant	North & West Sector Plan Area		
Chris Perry	CBD Resident	X	
Employers less than 50 employees (3)			
Vacant			
Vacant			
Vacant			
Employers with 50 or more employees (3)			
G. Michael Price	Discovery Communications	X	
Vacant			
Vacant			
Non-Voting Members (3)			
Sandra Brecher, DOT-Commuter Services	MCDOT Director or Designee	X	
Larissa Klevan	M-NCPPC	X	
Jacob Newman	Silver Spring Regional Center	X	
Vacant	Montgomery County Police		
Staff			
Nakengi Byrd	MCDOT-Commuter Services	X	
Jim Carlson	MCDOT-Commuter Services	X	
Guests			
Jennifer Bolick	TMD Outreach Team	X	
Christina Contreras	MCDOT	X	
Erik Donald	SS Small Business Rep	X	
Carson Henry	SS Urban District	X	
Jay Elvove	SS Citizens Advisory Board	X	
Gary Erenrich	MCDOT	X	
Shinavia McKinney	SS Small Business Rep	X	
Nahom Tekle	SS Community Engagement Cluster	X	
Laura Van Eperen	Van Eperen & Co.	X	



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Montgomery County and WSSC Water Launch 2024 Salt Wise Campaign: A Call for Responsible Winter Salt Use

For Immediate Release: Thursday, January 4, 2024

The Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) and WSSC Water proudly announce the launch of the 2024 Salt Wise Campaign. This initiative aims to raise awareness about the impacts to our environment and drinking water from excessive salt use during winter weather and encourages residents to be "Salt Wise."

"While salt is crucial for maintaining safe winter conditions, excessive use can have detrimental effects on our environment and water supply," said County Executive Marc Elrich. "Salt runs off into storm drains, local streams, and eventually, to the Potomac and Patuxent rivers, which are drinking water sources for people in Montgomery County. Salt can corrode concrete and masonry, harm pets, damage surrounding plants and lawns and adversely impact resident's health through impacts to the water supply, which is why we need to all use it sparingly and clean it up after storms whenever possible."

The Salt Wise campaign is a simple three-step method for residents to keep sidewalks and driveways safe while also reducing harm to the environment.

Community members can take the following three steps to be Salt Wise:

1. Shovel ice and snow early and often.
2. Use one 12-ounce cup of salt for 10 sidewalk squares or for a 20-foot driveway.
3. After storm events, sweep up excess salt for reuse.

Be Salt-Wise! It's Easy as 1-2-3

1
Shovel Right Away

2
Use Less Salt
Melts 10 Sidewalk Squares

3
Sweep & Reuse

Learn more at MontgomeryCountyMD.gov/salt

The Salt Wise campaign is a joint effort between Montgomery County and WSSC Water, a collaboration that underscores the shared commitment to environmental sustainability and responsible winter maintenance practices.

“Over the past three decades, salt levels have increased dramatically in our drinking water sources - the Potomac and Patuxent rivers,” said WSSC Water General Manager and CEO Kishia L. Powell. “And because our filtration process does not remove salt, higher levels end up in the drinking water. While our water is safe, increased salt levels in water can be a health concern for people on sodium-restrictive diets. With the threat of snow in the forecast, it’s perfect timing to remind people to use less salt by being salt wise.”





“Salt is a key component in making our sidewalks, driveways and roads safe during winter storms,” said DEP Director, Jon Monger. “However, too much salt has adverse impacts on our drinking water supply and our local streams posing a risk to sensitive wildlife. By practicing moderation with salt use and being Salt Wise, we can find a balance between protecting the public, our environment and our water sources.”

MCDOT manages the County’s snowstorm response and has implemented steps to reduce salt overuse.

“We apply the minimum amount of salt necessary to ensure public safety during snow events,” said MCDOT Director Chris Conklin. “We activate a Storm Operations Center, known as SOC, where staff is regularly checking and reporting out conditions and pavement temperatures around the county during snowstorms and we keep a close eye on the forecast. This allows us to determine if using salt is necessary in specific locations. We have implemented rubber tipped plow blades on all our plows, allowing for earlier plowing. We also use salt brine, a 23 percent salt to water solution to reduce the need for salt use.”

Residents can take action if they see piles of salt accidentally spilled onto roadways. MCDOT, who maintains County roads, advises residents to call 240-777-0311, or 311 from within the county, if they see a need for salt cleanup after a storm. Operators will contact the department responsible for a cleanup. MCDOT manages County roadways, the Maryland Department of Transportation manages state roads, Montgomery County Public Schools contracts for their properties, and the Department of General Services manages public facilities such as County libraries. For more information on how to effectively address salt use on residential and commercial properties, go to [MontgomeryCountyMD.gov/salt](https://montgomerycountymd.gov/salt).

Check the County’s Winter Storm Information Portal for information on snow plowing schedules, where to park your car safely, how to identify county-maintained versus state-maintained roadways, and more.

Salt Wise campaign videos and storm preparation b-roll are available for media use.

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Media Contacts:

DEP: Cindy Peña, Celinda.Pena@montgomerycountymd.gov, 202-875-1563

MCDOT: Emily DeTitta, Emily.DeTitta@montgomerycountymd.gov, 240-372-2282

WSSC Water: Charles Brown, Charles.Brown@wsscwater.com, 301-206-8188

Release ID: 24-003

Media Contact: Emily DeTitta, 240-372-2282

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Ride On Bus Schedule Changes Begin Sunday, Jan. 14

For Immediate Release: Monday, December 18, 2023



The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) will adjust 23 Ride On bus route schedules starting Sunday, Jan. 14, 2024, to improve efficiency and on-time performance. Although service levels are staying relatively the same, the changes reflect a shift of resources to allow for more reliable service where there is higher demand. The new schedules will be available at rideonbus.com and in print.

Route changes include:

- 21 routes have timetable changes: 8, 9, 10, 15, 20, 21, 23, 31, 32, 37, 38, 45, 46, 47, 53, 55, 57, 64, 76, 83 and 90.
- Four routes have slight map changes: 17, 18, 53 and 76.

Here are details of each route affected:

- Route 8: Trip time changes on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.

- Route 9: Trip time changes on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- Route 10: Trip time changes on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- Route 15: Trip time changes on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- Route 17: Map and bus stop changes on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- Route 18: Map and bus stop changes on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- Route 20: Trip time changes on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- Route 21: Trip time changes on weekdays.
- Route 23: Trip time changes on weekdays.
- Route 31: Trip time changes on weekdays.
- Route 32: Trip time changes on weekdays.
- Route 37: Trip time changes on weekdays.
- Route 38: Trip time changes on weekdays.
- Route 45: Trip time changes on weekdays.
- Route 46: Trip time changes on Sundays.
- Route 47: Trip time changes on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- Route 53: Increased trips on weekdays and map change.
- Route 55: Trip time changes on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- Route 57: Trip time changes on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- Route 64: Trip time changes on weekdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- Route 76: Move stop at Quince Orchard High School to State Route 28 in front of the McDonalds, extend service to Poolesville Crossvines Golf Club.
- Route 83: Trip time changes on weekdays.
- Route 90: Trip time changes on weekdays.

Ride On bus fare is only \$1 and monthly passes are \$22.50 using SmarTrip, cash, or tokens. Seniors age 65 or older, persons with disabilities and youth ages 18 and under all ride free using specialized SmarTrip cards.

Riders can plan trips online using the free Ride On Trip Planner App.

For the most up-to-date service information, riders should follow @RideOnMCT on X, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. In addition, information is available at rideonbus.com, by subscribing to receive email alerts, or by 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 and Instagram and subscribe to MCDOT's "Go Montgomery!" newsletter.

#

Release ID: 23-145

Media Contact: Emily DeTitta, 240-372-2282



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For immediate release: January 5, 2024

Metro announces travel alternatives during four-day Blue, Orange, and Silver line construction over Martin Luther King Jr. Day weekend

Metro today announced travel alternatives to help customers plan for track work and maintenance over the Martin Luther King Jr. Day weekend that will close a portion of the Blue, Orange, and Silver lines on Friday, Jan. 12 through Monday, Jan. 15.

During the four-day closure, buses will replace trains with no rail service between Foggy Bottom-GWU and Arlington Cemetery on the Blue Line; and between Foggy Bottom-GWU and Clarendon on the Orange and Silver lines. The Rosslyn and Court House stations will be closed. Customers traveling through the work zone should expect significant delays and allow at least 30 minutes of additional travel time to account for shuttle buses.

Work crews will replace rail, rebuild concrete grout pads that support the rail, run fiber-optic cables, install platform edge lighting, and other maintenance activity. Without the closure, the work would have caused major disruptions over multiple weekends, as trains would single track every 26 minutes or with truncated service.

Metro will continue to run normal service on the Yellow and Green lines, and supplement Blue Line service between Foggy Bottom-GWU and Downtown Largo and on the Silver Line between Ashburn and Clarendon.

During the winter months, Arlington Cemetery Station typically closes at 7 p.m. to align with Arlington National Cemetery's hours. However, Metro will keep the station open through closing during the four-day construction project to accommodate shuttle bus customers.

Shuttle buses will be available for connections to the last trains on the Blue, Orange, and Silver lines. Last train times may be adjusted with some inbound trains departing the end of the line earlier than normal, and the last outbound trains may arrive later than normal.

In addition, due to construction for the MDOT MTA Purple Line Project on Saturday, Jan. 13 and Sunday, Jan. 14, Red Line service will be impacted with no train service between Takoma and Forest Glen. While the MDOT MTA work is unrelated to Metro, the closure will give Metro the opportunity to perform leak mitigation, replace rail ties, and perform switch maintenance.

SERVICE IMPACTS AND TRAVEL ALTERNATIVES

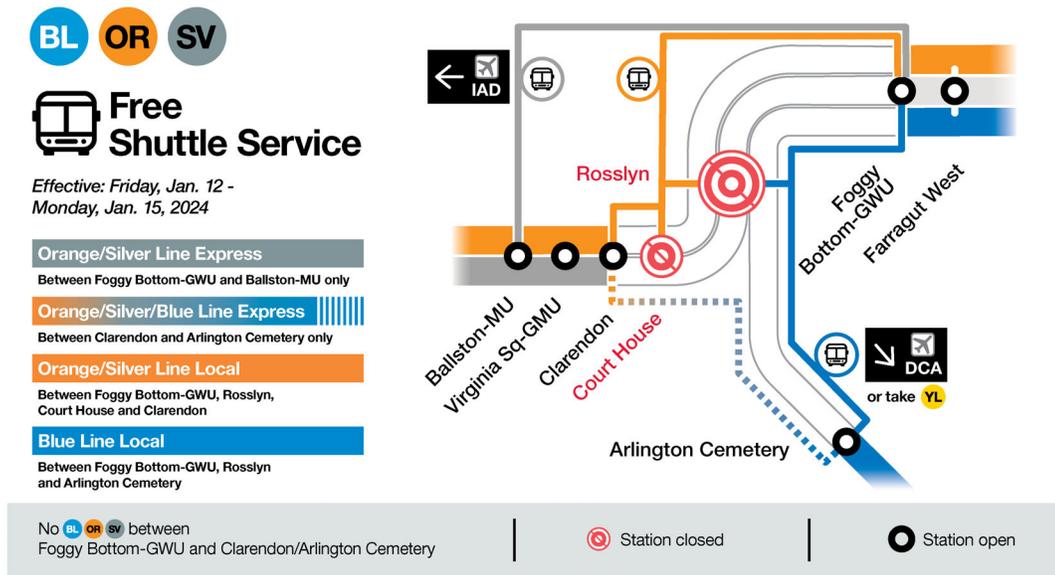
Blue Line Orange Line Silver Line Construction between Foggy Bottom-GWU and Arlington Cemetery/Clarendon
Friday, Jan 12 – Monday, Jan. 15

- Buses replace trains between Foggy Bottom-GWU and Arlington Cemetery/Clarendon
- Rosslyn and Court House stations closed

Blue Line Blue Line trains operate in two segments: between Franconia-Springfield and Arlington Cemetery every 12 minutes (daytime) and 15 minutes (evening); and between Foggy Bottom-GWU and Downtown Largo every 10 minutes (daytime) and 15 minutes (evening).

Orange Line Orange Line trains operate in two segments: between Vienna and Clarendon every 10 minutes (daytime) and 15 minutes (evening); and between Foggy Bottom-GWU and New Carrollton every 10 minutes (daytime) and 15 minutes (evening).

Silver Line Silver Line trains operate between Ashburn and Clarendon only, every 10 minutes (daytime) and 15 minutes (evening).



BUS ALTERNATIVES

Free Express & Local Shuttle Buses

Orange Line Silver Line Orange/Silver Line Express Shuttle

- Express service between Ballston and Foggy Bottom-GWU.
- Customers traveling into DC should exit at Ballston-MU for Express Shuttle Bus to Foggy Bottom-GWU. Do not stay on the train to Clarendon. Only local shuttle buses, stopping at all affected stations, will be available from Clarendon.

Blue Line Orange Line Silver Line Blue/Orange/Silver Line Express Shuttle

- Express service between Arlington Cemetery and Clarendon.
- Customers traveling to/from stations south of Arlington Cemetery and west of Clarendon on the Orange and Silver lines should use the Express Shuttle Bus between Arlington Cemetery and Clarendon to transfer between the Blue, Orange, and Silver lines.

Orange Line Silver Line Orange/Silver Line Local Shuttle

- Serves Clarendon, Court House, Rosslyn, and Foggy Bottom-GWU.

Blue Line Blue Line Local Shuttle

- Serves Arlington Cemetery, Rosslyn, and Foggy Bottom-GWU.

Customers should allow at least 30 minutes of additional travel time for shuttle buses, subject to road and traffic conditions.

Metrobus

38B Ballston – Rosslyn – Farragut North & West stations

4B Seven Corners – Court House – Rosslyn

RAIL ALTERNATIVES

- Blue Line customers traveling to/from Virginia and the District should consider using the Yellow Line instead. Customers may transfer back to the Blue Line at L'Enfant Plaza.

Yellow Line trains will operate every 6 minutes during peak periods on Friday, and every 8 minutes all other times including the federal holiday.

ADDITIONAL BUS AND RAIL OPTIONS

**All routes may not operate seven days a week or on the holiday. Check with the transit providers for schedule information.*

- **Virginia Railway Express (VRE)**
 - [Manassas Line \(https://www.vre.org/service/schedules/\)](https://www.vre.org/service/schedules/) – Customers may transfer to Metro at King St., Crystal City, L'Enfant Plaza, or Union Station.
- **DC Circulator**
 - [Rosslyn – Georgetown – Dupont Circle \(https://dccirculator.com/explore/where-we-go/dupont-circle-georgetown-rosslyn/\)](https://dccirculator.com/explore/where-we-go/dupont-circle-georgetown-rosslyn/)
Customers traveling to/from Foggy Bottom-GWU Station should use the eastbound stop at 24th & L streets NW and westbound stop at 24th & M streets NW. The stops are a short 2-3 block walk from the Foggy Bottom-GWU Station.
- **Arlington Transit (ART)**
 - [ART 41 – Columbia Pike - Ballston - Court House \(https://www.arlingtontransit.com/art-routes/art-41/\)](https://www.arlingtontransit.com/art-routes/art-41/)
Pike Ride route with service between the Columbia Pike west area and Clarendon and Courthouse.
 - [ART 42 – Ballston - Pentagon \(https://www.arlingtontransit.com/art-routes/art-42/\)](https://www.arlingtontransit.com/art-routes/art-42/)
Weekday service between the Ballston Metro and Pentagon Metro stations. Stops at Virginia Square, Clarendon, Courthouse Road, and Navy Annex. *Weekend service goes to Pentagon City instead of the Pentagon Metro.
 - [ART 43 Crystal City - Rosslyn - Courthouse \(https://www.arlingtontransit.com/art-routes/art-43/\)](https://www.arlingtontransit.com/art-routes/art-43/)
Limited stop service between Crystal City and Courthouse. Stops are at the Crystal City VRE Station, Crystal City Metro, Rosslyn Metro and Courthouse Metro.
 - [ART 61 – Rosslyn - Court House Metro Shuttle \(https://www.arlingtontransit.com/art-routes/art-61/\)](https://www.arlingtontransit.com/art-routes/art-61/)
Service between the Rosslyn and Court House Metro stations.
 - [ART 62 – Court House Metro - Lorcom Lane - Ballston Metro \(https://www.arlingtontransit.com/art-routes/art-62/\)](https://www.arlingtontransit.com/art-routes/art-62/)
Service between North Arlington and the Ballston, Clarendon, and Court House Metro stations, every 30 minutes during weekday rush hours.
 - [ART 77 – Shirlington - Lyon Park - Courthouse \(https://www.arlingtontransit.com/art-routes/art-77/\)](https://www.arlingtontransit.com/art-routes/art-77/)
Service between Shirlington Bus Station and the Clarendon and Court House Metro stations, every 30 minutes Monday through Friday.

AIRPORT TRAVELERS

Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport

From Maryland and DC

- Use the Yellow Line via Gallery Place or L'Enfant Plaza.

From Virginia

- Normal Blue and Yellow line service to the airport will be available for customers traveling south of Arlington National Cemetery.
- Take the VRE Manassas Line to Alexandria. Transfer to Yellow or Blue lines at King St – Old Town.
- Orange and Silver line customers should use the express shuttle bus between Clarendon and Arlington Cemetery. Transfer to the Blue Line at Arlington Cemetery.

Washington Dulles International Airport

From Maryland and DC

- Use Express Shuttle Bus between Foggy Bottom-GWU and Ballston to transfer to/from the Silver Line. Allow at least 30 minutes of additional travel time due to shuttle bus.

From Virginia

- Normal Orange and Silver line service will operate to all stations west of Clarendon. Transfer to the Silver Line at East Falls Church.
- Customers traveling to/from areas south of Arlington Cemetery should use the Express Shuttle Bus between Arlington Cemetery and Clarendon to transfer to/from the Silver Line. Allow at least 30 minutes of additional travel time to account for shuttle buses.
- Customers may also consider using the park & ride from Wiehle-Reston East on the Silver Line. Multi-day parking is available.

Red Line **Red Line closure between Takoma and Forest Glen for MDOT MTA Purple Line construction**
Saturday, Jan. 13 and Sunday, Jan. 14

- Buses replace trains with no rail service between Takoma and Forest Glen.
- Silver Spring Station closed.

Red Line Red Line trains will operate in two segments: between Shady Grove and Takoma every 6 minutes (daytime) and 10 minutes (evening); and between Forest Glen and Glenmont every 10 minutes.

FREE SHUTTLE BUS

- Free local and express shuttle buses will provide service between Takoma, Silver Spring, and Forest Glen.

Metrobus

- 70, 79 Silver Spring to Archives Station
- Q2, Q4 Silver Spring to Wheaton Station
- S2 and S9 Silver Spring to Federal Triangle/Franklin Square
- Y2, Y7, Y8 Silver Spring to Wheaton

*Metrobus fare is free when transferring to/from rail with transfer discount.

Ride On Montgomery County

- 12 Silver Spring to Takoma via Wayne Ave
- 16 Silver Spring to Takoma via New Hampshire Ave

Customers are encouraged to [sign up for MetroAlerts \(https://www.metroalerts.info/Login.aspx\)](https://www.metroalerts.info/Login.aspx) text or email messages for the latest service information or follow us on X [@wmata \(https://twitter.com/wmata\)](https://twitter.com/wmata), [@metrorailinfo \(https://twitter.com/metrorailinfo\)](https://twitter.com/metrorailinfo), [@metrobusinfo \(https://twitter.com/metrobusinfo\)](https://twitter.com/metrobusinfo). Metro's customer service team is also available to respond to social media, [email \(mailto:csvc@wmata.com\)](mailto:csvc@wmata.com), [chat \(https://wmata.custhelp.com/app/chat/chat_launch/request_source/8/survey_comp_id/1/survey_comp_auth\)](https://wmata.custhelp.com/app/chat/chat_launch/request_source/8/survey_comp_id/1/survey_comp_auth), or by phone at 202-637-7000 (automated information available 24/7) weekdays from 7 a.m. – 8 p.m. and weekends from 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.

NTSB chair critical of WMATA, FTA in briefing on Metrorail derailment report (additional updates)

By [David Lassen](#) | January 4, 2024

Final report on 2021 incident calls for transit agency to better track actions to address safety

WASHINGTON — National Transportation Safety Board chair Jennifer Homendy blasted the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority for its “poor safety culture” in a press briefing today (Thursday, Jan. 4) on the final report into the Oct. 12, 2021, derailment of a DC Metrorail train in Arlington, Va., saying the agency’s issues with WMATA include some 125 safety recommendations issued since 1970.

“It’s the same story again and again since 1970,” Homendy said. “In case after case, WMATA struggles to proactively identify safety hazards, including low-probability, high consequence risk. When they do identify risks, they’re not communicated within the organization; mitigations are put in place, but then those mitigations are not monitored or measured for effectiveness. And the hazards themselves aren’t tracked to see if there’s a trend over time and to see if more actions need to be taken.”

Homendy was equally critical of the Federal Transit Administration for failing to enforce safety regulations for rail transit systems, a power she said it gained under 2015’s Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act, or FAST Act, but has not used.

The repeated issues with WMATA are reflected — albeit in more restrained form — in the final report’s call for the transit agency to expand its use of trend analysis to identify and address safety issues, and that the Washington Metrorail Safety Council develop a program to support and monitor WMATA’s actions in this regard.

While the wheel should be flush against the bearing, this wheelset included a gap of 1.1 inches between the two on the right-side wheel. The left-side wheel had a gap of .63 inches. NTSB The cause of the 2021 derailment was a flaw that allowed a wheel to move outward on its axle, an issue identified early in the investigation that led to an NTSB recommendation and FTA advisory for other transit systems to check their equipment [see [“DC Metrorail issues spur FTA inspection advisory,”](#) *Trains News Wire*, Nov. 1, 2021]. It also led Metrorail to sideline its fleet of Kawasaki-built 7000-series railcars to address the flaw — a process that is still continuing [see [“DC Metrorail begins wheel replacement ...,”](#) *News Wire*, Dec. 5, 2023].

That out-of-specification wheelset on the fourth car of the eight-car train caused a wheel to leave the rail at a switch, according to the final report. The derailment occurred about 4:49 p.m.; none of the 188 people on board — an operator and 187 passengers — were injured. The NTSB found that the train had derailed and re-railed twice earlier in the day prior to incident near the Rosslyn station in Arlington [see [“Metrorail car in Arlington derailment had left tracks twice ...,”](#) *News*

Wire, Oct. 19, 2021], and found surveillance video showing both those incidents. (That video is included in [this YouTube recording](#) of today’s media briefing on the report’s release.

The agency also found that WMATA’s Office of the Chief Mechanical Officer, Rail, had first observed wheel migration issues on some equipment in 2014, and on the 7000-series cars in March 2017, but the problem had not been added to a “hot issues” list of significant problems because of a low number of occurrences. The issues on the 7000-series cars — discovered while deliveries were still in progress — led WMATA to change the specifications for pressing the wheels onto the axles, Homendy said. But the 66% of the cars that had already been delivered — including the one that derailed in the October 2021 incident — were left in service under the old specification, and wheel migration incidents continued to occur, even on cars operating under the new specification. (Ultimately, the wheel-pressing specification was increased further.)

“Had WMATA conducted a trend analysis to ensure the risk mitigations they put in place were effective, this incident may have been prevented,” Homendy said.

Homendy said issues with the FTA were illustrated in its submission on this incident, which “encourages” transit systems to increase the wheel-press specifications to freight rail standards, as WMATA has done.

“But you don’t need to recommend if you’re FTA,” she said. “You don’t need to encourage it. You need to mandate it. You have the authority to do so, just like we do for every other form of transportation. ... So I’m calling on FTA to take immediate action to regulate and enforce public safety on our nation’s rail transit systems. That’s something that we have recommended over and over and over again since the 1970s.”

WMATA, in [a statement issued on X](#), said it “fully supports” the NTSB report and “has issued a fleet defect notice to Kawasaki” regarding the wheel issue and that based on the contract between the two parties, “Kawasaki is responsible to pay all costs to fix this wheelset defect. We are confident that our current Wheelset Replacement program will address this wheelset defect as we work over the next several years to repress all 7000-series wheelsets at a higher press tonnage and increased interference fit.”

Kawasaki, however, responded in its own statement that “any suggestion that Kawasaki should absorb the cost of WMATA’s own failures regarding the wheelsets of the 7000 series trains is not rooted in reality.” The company said it met the design specifications established by WMATA, which “supplied the wheelset design for the 7000 series railcars to match their older railcars and then failed to alert Kawasaki when they increased the mounting pressure for those older railcars after they identified 33 instances of back-to-back failures in 2014 — *before the first 7000 series car was even delivered.* [Italics in the original statement.] The mismanagement by WMATA under prior leadership, cited in the NTSB’s final report, comes as no surprise to those who have followed the agency.”

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 689, which represents WMATA workers, said it is “troubled by the final report’s conclusions about the railcar’s wheel migration on and off the track that ultimately caused the derailment,” and that the union is committed to working with WMATA

and other stakeholders “to address the core roots of the accident and taking steps to prevent future ones.” The union also heralded WMATA’s inclusion of a union representative in the NTSB investigation process as “a great step in the right direction to improve transparency and the Union is hopeful this will be the case moving forward.”

The full report [is available here](#).

— *Updated at 2:40 p.m. with comments from NTSB press briefing revisions throughout; updated at 6:10 p.m. with Kawasaki statement.*