

# MD 355 Flash Bus Rapid Transit – Spring 2025 Public Meeting Summary

## Event Overview

The MD 355 Flash Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project team hosted its spring public meetings on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at Gaithersburg Middle School and Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at Richard Montgomery High School. Both meetings were held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. These locations were selected due to their close proximity to the project corridor, building accessibility, and ample space to conduct the activities programmed for the meeting.

These open-house style events provided attendees with opportunities to explore project visuals—including maps of the proposed route—engage directly with subject matter experts, and attend a formal presentation delivered by Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) project team.

Project team members were on-site to answer questions and discuss the project with the public. Despite inclement weather, there were a combined total of 58 attendees across the two public meetings. The project team also announced the Corridor Advisory Committee (CAC) would be accepting new members and the public was encouraged to apply electronically.

The public meeting was advertised via several email blasts to the project listserv, direct mailer postcards sent to residents and property owners around the corridor, pop-up events, and flyer drops at bus shelters and other strategic locations throughout the community.

Photos of the events are included in **Appendix A**.

## Presentation

Jamie Henson, BRT Implementation Manager for the MCDOT Flash BRT program, delivered a [presentation](#) outlining the Flash BRT initiative. He provided an overview of the program's objectives and core components, which include:

- Dedicated bus lanes
- Specialized transit vehicles
- Transit signal priority
- Enhanced stations with improved pedestrian and bicycle access

Jamie also presented details on the MD 355 BRT project, reviewing its purpose, identified needs, implementation timeline, and funding structure. The presentation included an analysis of proposed service patterns, frequency, and corridor operations.

A significant portion of the discussion focused on the environmental review process, which encompasses:

- Evaluation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Section 106 review for historic resource considerations

- Section 4(f) assessment of potential impacts to parklands, recreational areas, wildlife refuges, and historic sites

The presentation concluded with information on how the community can continue to stay engaged. Attendees were invited to apply to be members of the Corridor Advisory Committee.

## Display Boards

There were [32 boards displayed at the public meetings](#) with content available in both English and Spanish. The boards provided comprehensive information on the BRT program, including:

- Program overview
- Project-specific details such as purpose, need, funding, corridor analysis, and timeline
- Proposed roadway treatments and station design
- Environmental evaluation process presented

## Display Boards Feedback

Participants were encouraged to engage with staff stationed near the boards to ask questions and provide feedback. Common discussion themes included:

- Interest in the project's route and length of time needed to construct
- Concerns about project costs and requests for project team to be good stewards
- Questions about how to stay connected to the project
- Inquiries about the Corridor Advisory Committee and the application process

## Audience Questions and Answers

Public feedback reflected a broad spectrum of priorities and perspectives.

### Project Overview

During the public meetings, community members were reintroduced to the project and many expressed appreciation for the updates shared. Many attendees were enthusiastic about the progress made and welcomed the opportunity to reconnect with the project team. A number of participants who have followed the project since its inception actively engaged with the project team and offered feedback and sought clarification on specific details ranging from schedule of construction to the service patterns and frequency of service.

The County's reaffirmed commitment to advancing the BRT project was especially well received. Attendees expressed that they valued the comprehensive project overview, which helped clarify the current status, goals, and next steps. Overall, the meetings served as a constructive touchpoint, reigniting interest and reinforcing attendees' support for the initiative.

### Project Support/Cost

While support for the initiative was widespread, community members raised concerns about project costs, considering current economic and political uncertainties. Some questioned the use of public funds for a

project perceived to “primarily benefit through-travelers and visitors rather than residents”. The project team highlighted that the project would benefit residents, current transit users, and potential transit riders that desire a faster and more reliable transit service; benefit all travelers on the corridor on all modes of transportation by improving safety and by potentially attracting more trips on transit into the future that may not occur without this significant investment. Additional feedback focused on the project's economic scale, with attendees seeking clarity on transit ridership compared to auto travel in the corridor. Participants emphasized the importance of fiscal responsibility and urged the project team to be thoughtful stewards of public funding.

### Project Communications

Attendees expressed a strong interest in ongoing public engagement to stay informed about the project's progress. There was considerable enthusiasm surrounding the initiative, and community members emphasized the importance of regular updates and transparent communication. Many attendees shared that continued outreach efforts, such as public meetings, newsletters, or online updates, would help maintain momentum and foster a sense of inclusion as the project moves forward.

## Appendix A: Event Photos





