

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Implementation Montgomery County, MD



BRT Implementation in Montgomery County, MD

- ▶ Two Projects Under Development
- ▶ Programmatic Efforts
- ▶ Fare Free Initiative
- ▶ Project Delivery and Green Infrastructure
- ▶ Questions & Discussion



Our Focus

- ▶ Connect County nodes with higher speed and frequency transit
- ▶ Safety
- ▶ Multimodal access
- ▶ Livable streets
- ▶ Developing approvable projects

Flash Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a planned network of eight routes designed to connect you to the places that matter most: work, school, healthcare, and regional transit hubs.

With frequent and reliable service, safe access, and comfortable stations, Flash makes travel simple and stress-free.



Faster Trips: Dedicated lanes and longer green lights help you avoid traffic.



Safe Connections: Upgraded sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike paths.



Easy Access: Walk and roll on easily with near-level boarding. Bike racks are on board.



Modern Stations: Lighting, comfortable seating, and real-time arrival updates.



Frequent Service: Every 15 minutes or less.



Zero Fare: Like all Ride On buses, Flash BRT is zero fare.

Two Projects Under Development

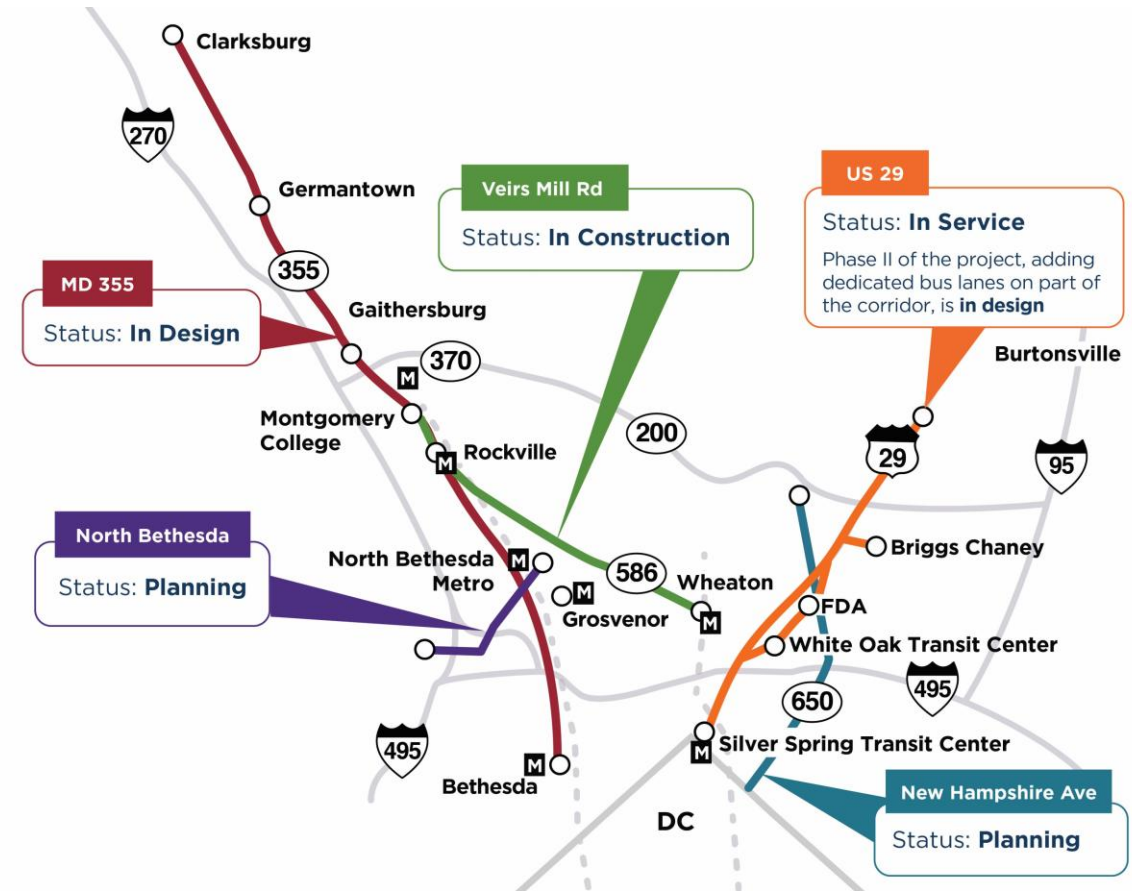
Where is Flash Today?

Planning &
Environmental

Design &
Construction

Service
Operation

- ▶ 1 operating service (US 29 Phase 1)
- ▶ 1 in construction phase (Veirs Mill Rd)
- ▶ 2 in design phase (US 29 Phase 2 and MD 355)
- ▶ 2 in the planning phase (North Bethesda and New Hampshire Ave)





Flash Veirs Mill Road (MD 586) BRT Corridor

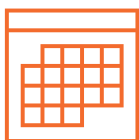
- ▶ Transit lanes cover about a third of lane miles
- ▶ New or upgraded pedestrian facilities along half of alignment
- ▶ 7.5 minute peak headway
- ▶ CMAR delivery
- ▶ Several rail connections:
 - The two legs of Metrorail Red Line
 - Amtrak and MARC in Rockville



Veirs Mill Road (MD 586)



- ▶ 7.6-mile corridor with 12 stations along Veirs Mill Road and MD 355. Approx. 51,000 residents and 38,900 jobs within half mile of the stations.



- ▶ Design completed in 2025. Utility construction started in 2026. Service opens in late 2028.



- ▶ Estimated total cost is \$230 million. MCDOT expects FTA grant agreement in Summer 2026.

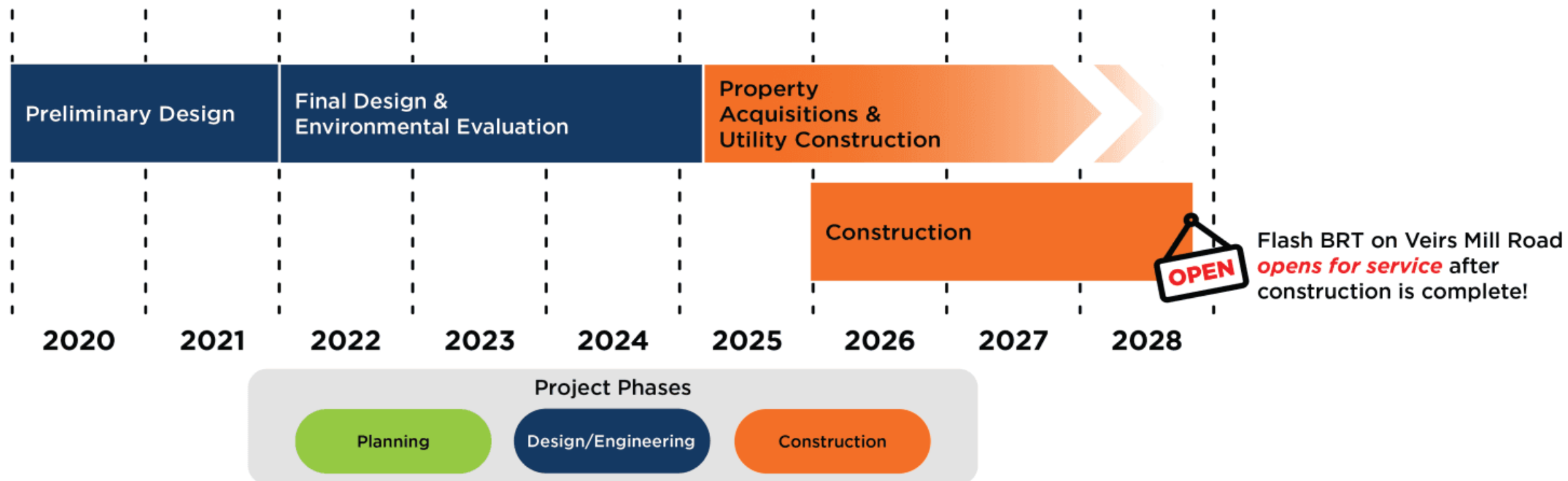


- ▶ Serves 10,000+ existing trips. BRT will be as much as 20-30% faster in peak periods.



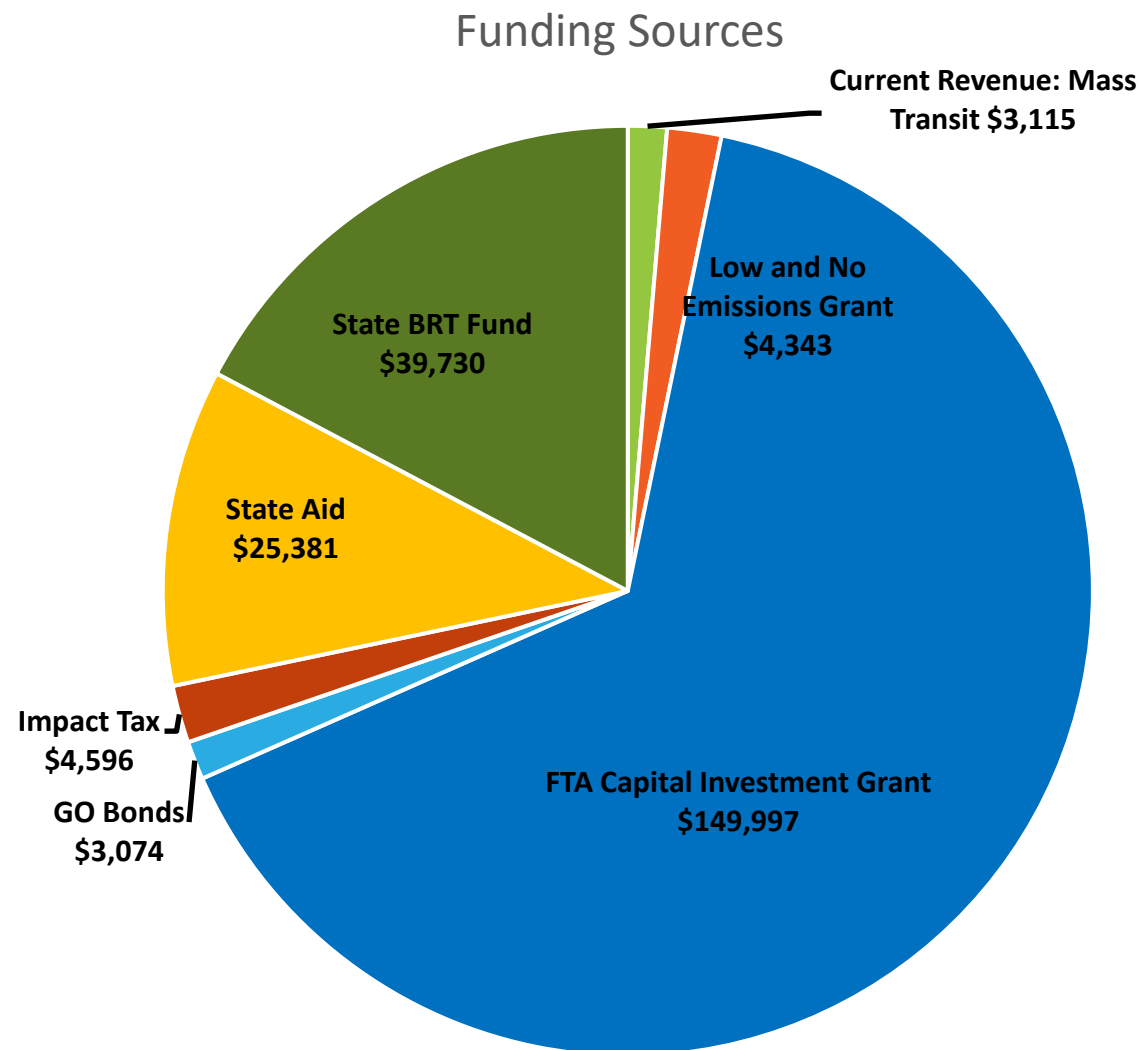
- ▶ Pop-ups, individual meetings, and community engagement ongoing.

Timeline



Cost and Funding

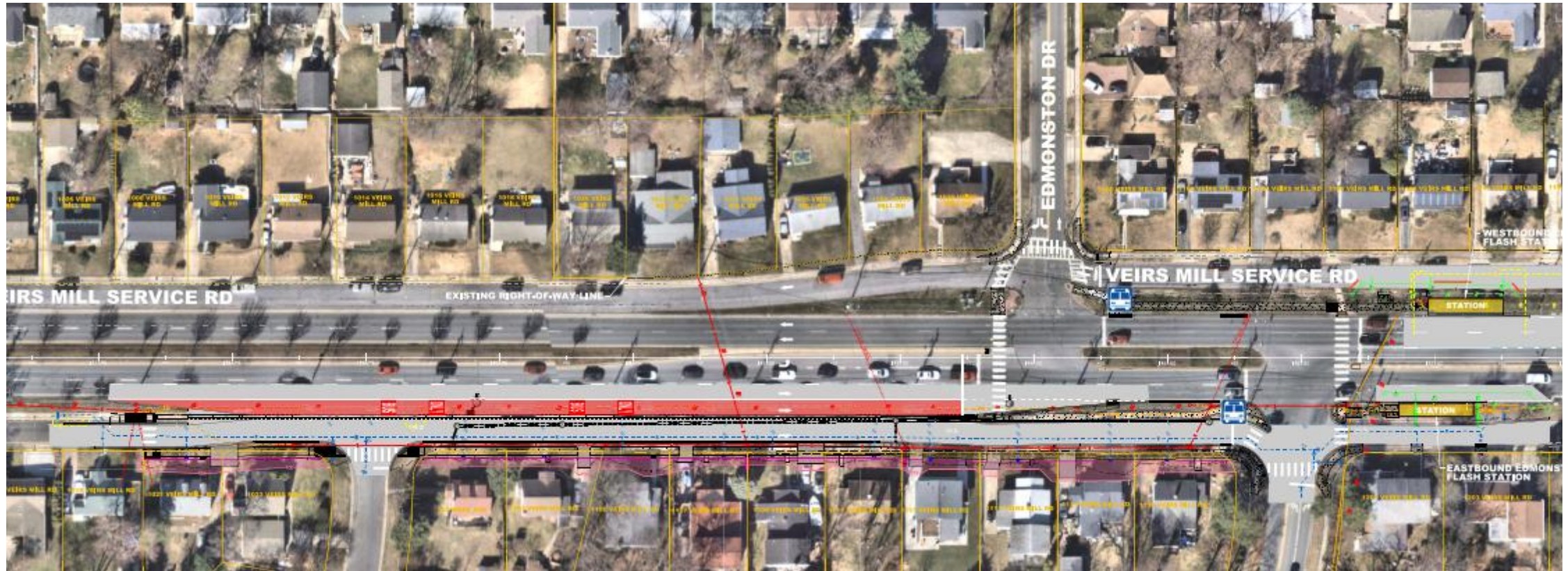
- ▶ Est. Total Cost = \$230M.
- ▶ Funding Sources Summary
 - **Federal:** FTA Small Starts anticipated, Low and No Emission (Low-No) grant for vehicles received
 - **State:** State Bus Rapid Transit Fund (State lottery proceeds), other State aid
 - **Local:** G.O. Bonds, Development Impact Taxes, Mass Transit Revenue



Typical BRT Station



Typical Queue Jump Layout



Typical Station and Pedestrian Facilities Layout





MD 355 BRT Corridor

- ▶ Transit lanes cover about 60% of lane miles
- ▶ Focused pedestrian facility upgrades
- ▶ Significant level of transit service
- ▶ Progressive Design Build delivery
- ▶ Several rail connections:
 - Metrorail Red Line
 - Amtrak and MARC in Rockville



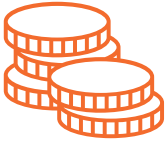
MD 355 BRT (Central Phase)



- ▶ 10-mile corridor along MD 355. Approximately 79,000 people live within half a mile of the corridor and stations, 14% of whom live in car-free households.



- ▶ Currently in value engineering phase. Final design will start in 2026. Construction is planned for 2028-2031. Service will open in 2031.



- ▶ Total estimated cost is \$517 million. MCDOT is eligible for Federal funding under the FTA's Capital Investment Grant New Starts program.



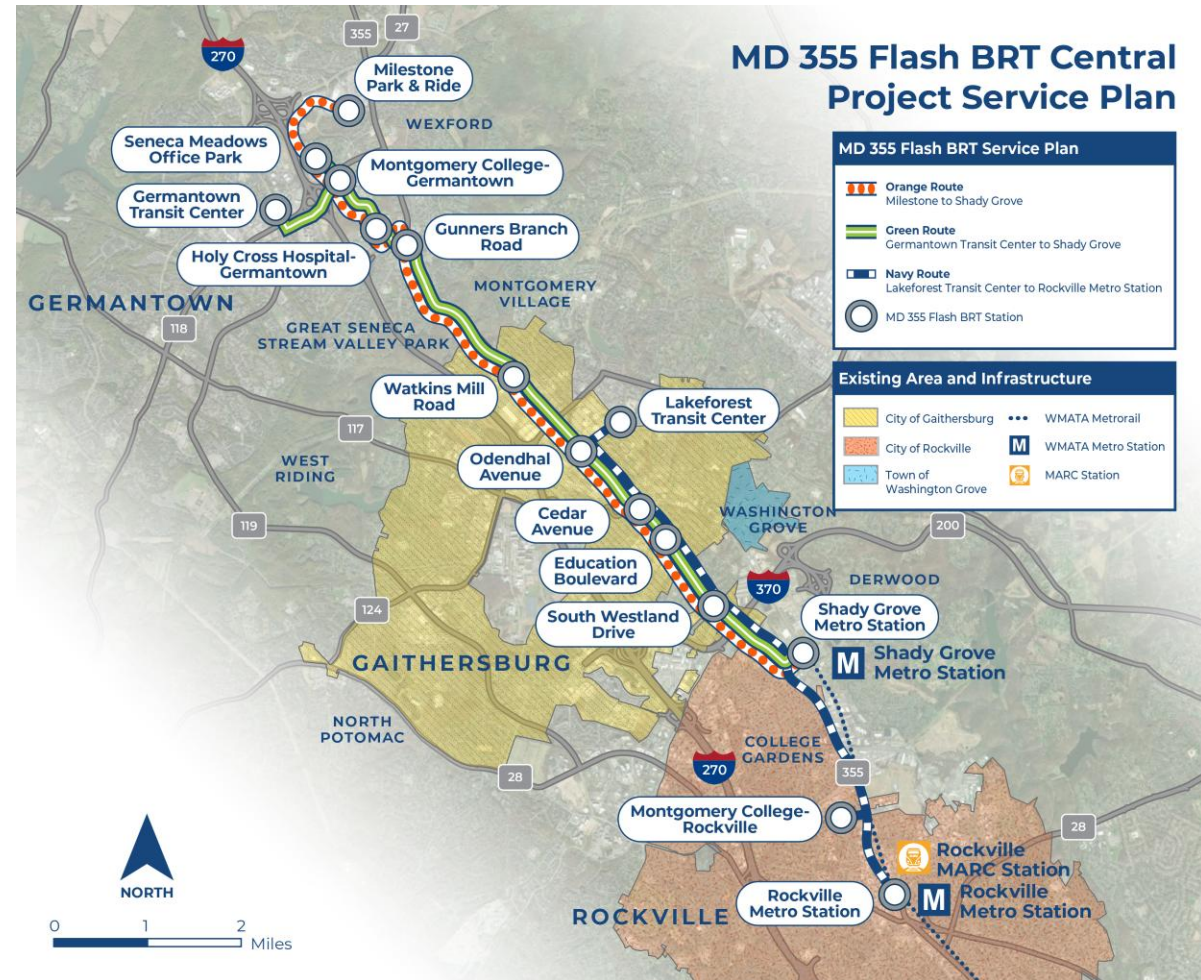
- ▶ Serves 14,000+ existing daily trips. BRT will be as much as 25-45% faster in peak periods



- ▶ A Corridor Advisory Committee (CAC) has been engaged with the project since 2015.

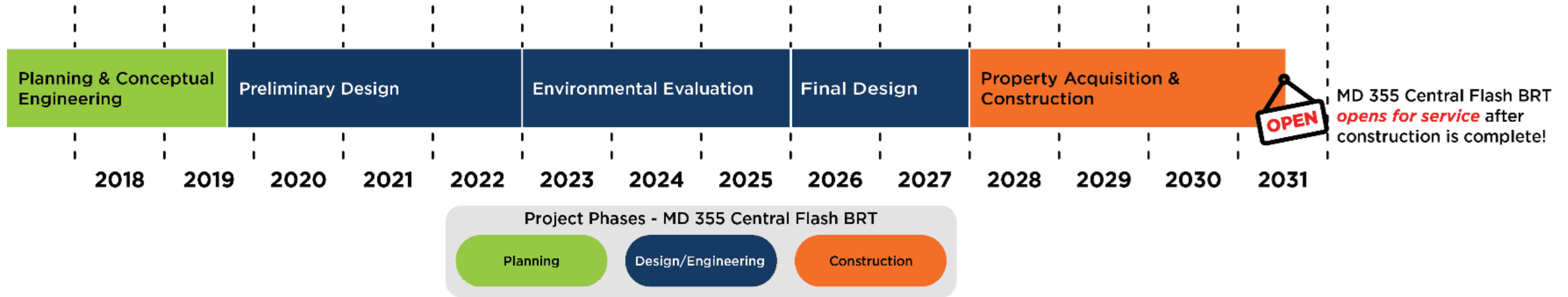
Three service patterns :

- ▶ **Orange Route:** Milestone Park & Ride to Shady Grove Metro Station
- ▶ **Green Route:** Germantown Transit Center to Shady Grove Metro Station
- ▶ **Navy Route:** Lakeforest Transit Center to Rockville Metro Station



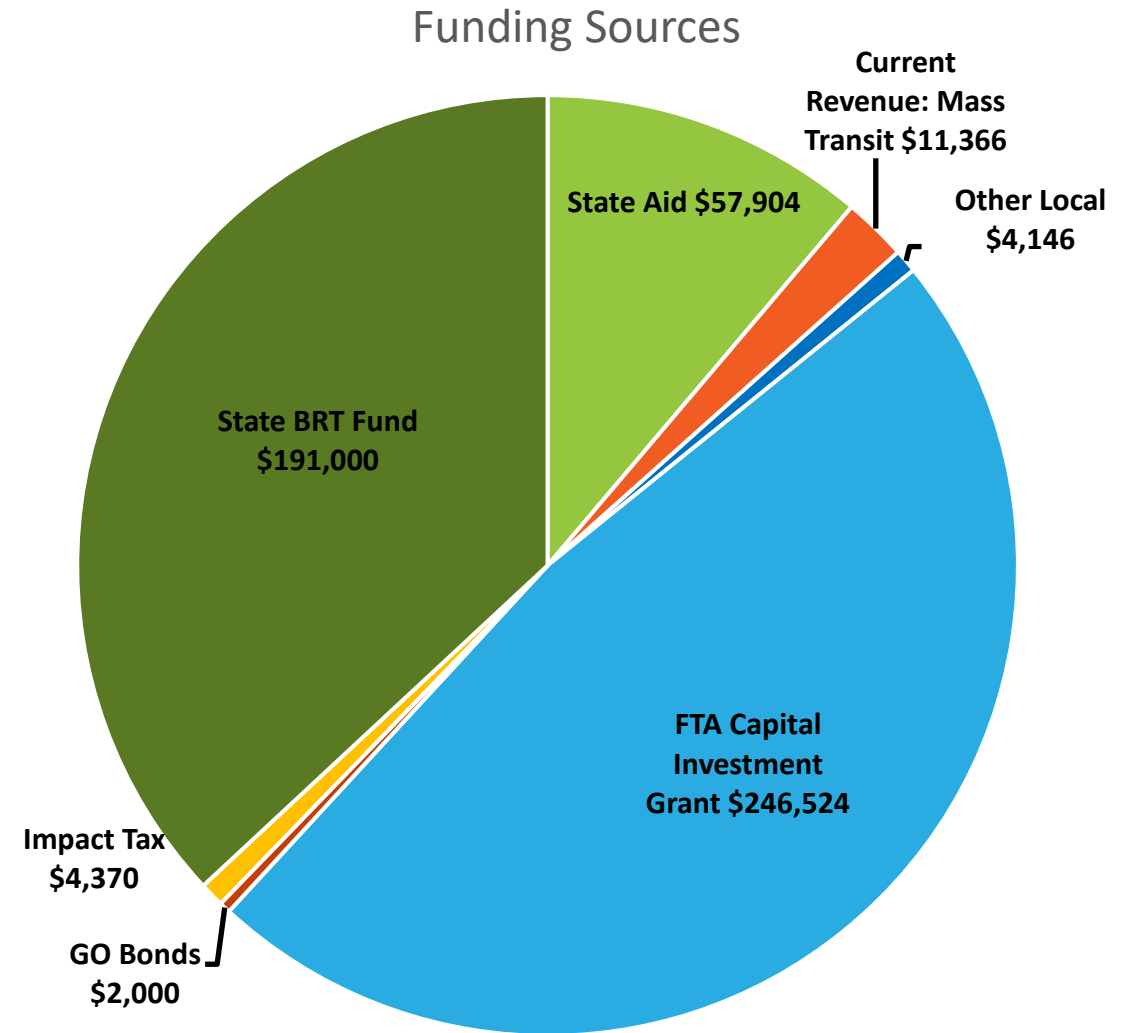


Timeline

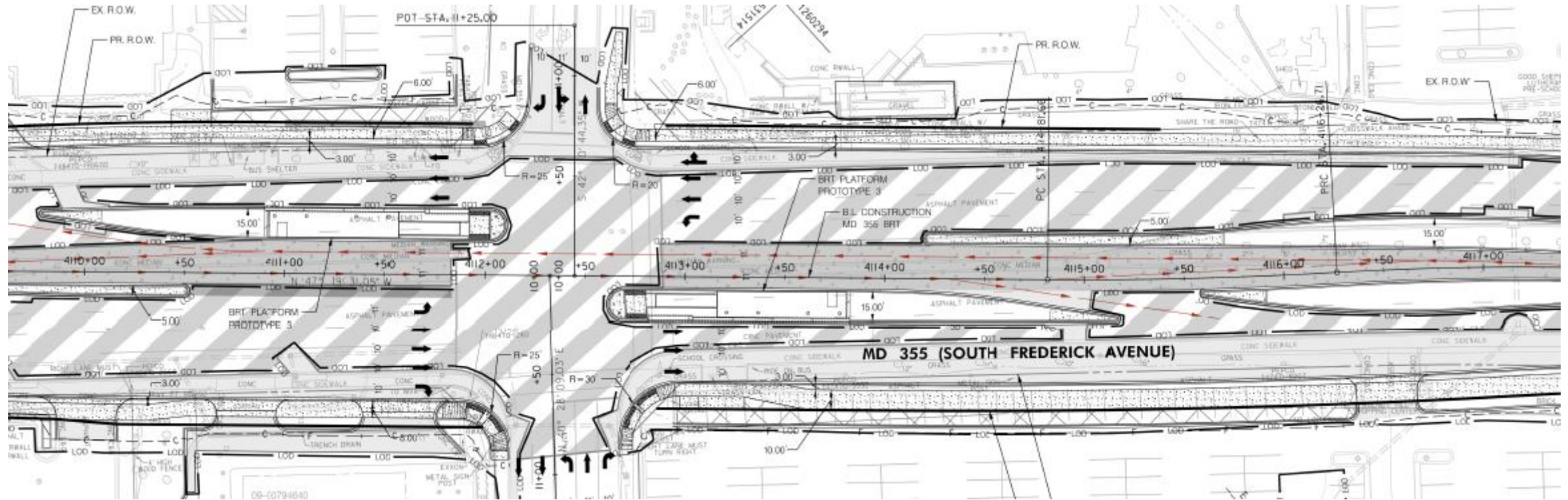


Cost and Funding

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Typical Station Design for Median Center Lane BRT



Flash BRT Programmatic Efforts

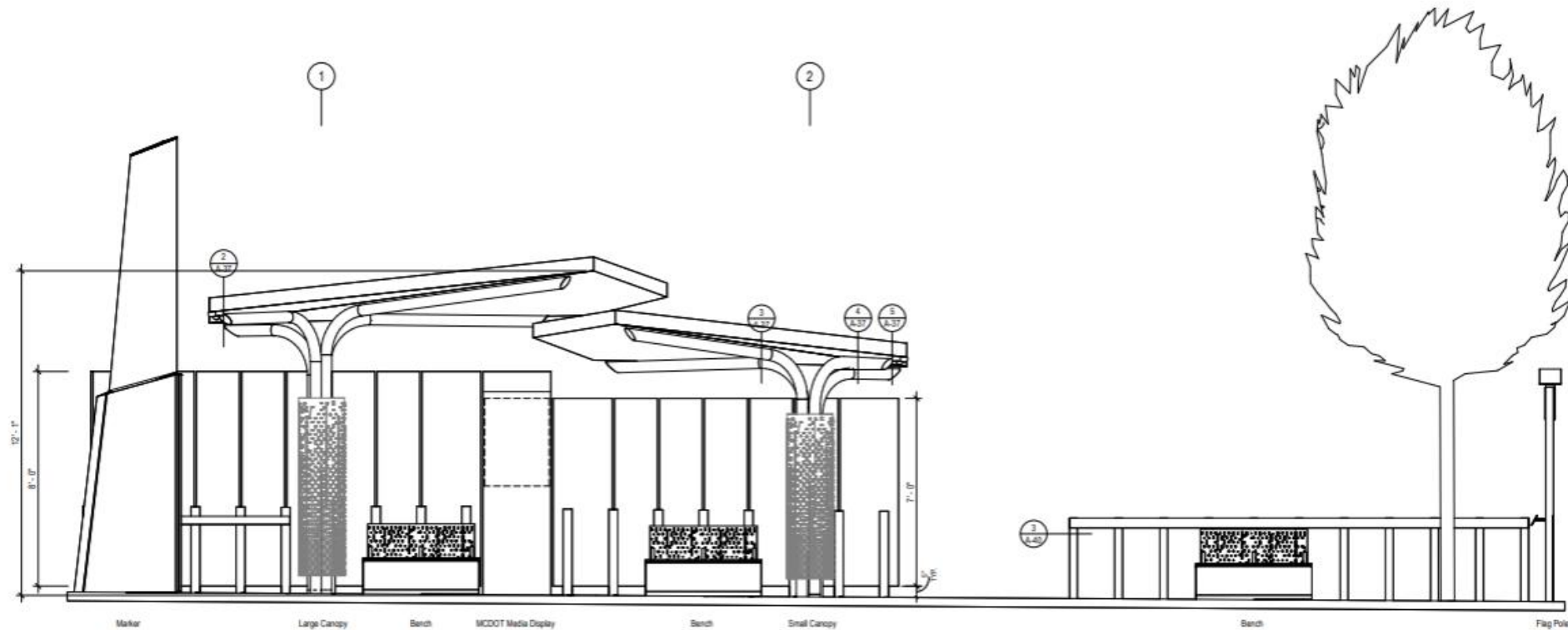
Flash BRT Programmatic Efforts

- ▶ Third Party Coordination
- ▶ Funding and Finance
- ▶ Standards and Specifications
- ▶ Programmatic Risk
- ▶ Programmatic ROW
- ▶ TSP Practices
- ▶ Workforce Development



Standards and Specs

- ▶ Stations
- ▶ Vehicles
- ▶ Runningway
- ▶ Guideway Systems Connectivity



Third-Party Agreements & Infrastructure Maintenance

- ▶ Third Party Agreements with Key Stakeholders help delineate responsibilities.
- ▶ Required by FTA as part of CIG review process.
- ▶ Third-Party Agreements (External)
 - Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA)
 - Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)
 - Utility Companies (multiple)
- ▶ Internal Agreements (MCDOT)

TSP Practices

- ▶ Assess current approach
 - Compare system on vs. off
 - Understand current utility
- ▶ Considering a cloud-based approach
- ▶ Consider adjustments in priority policy



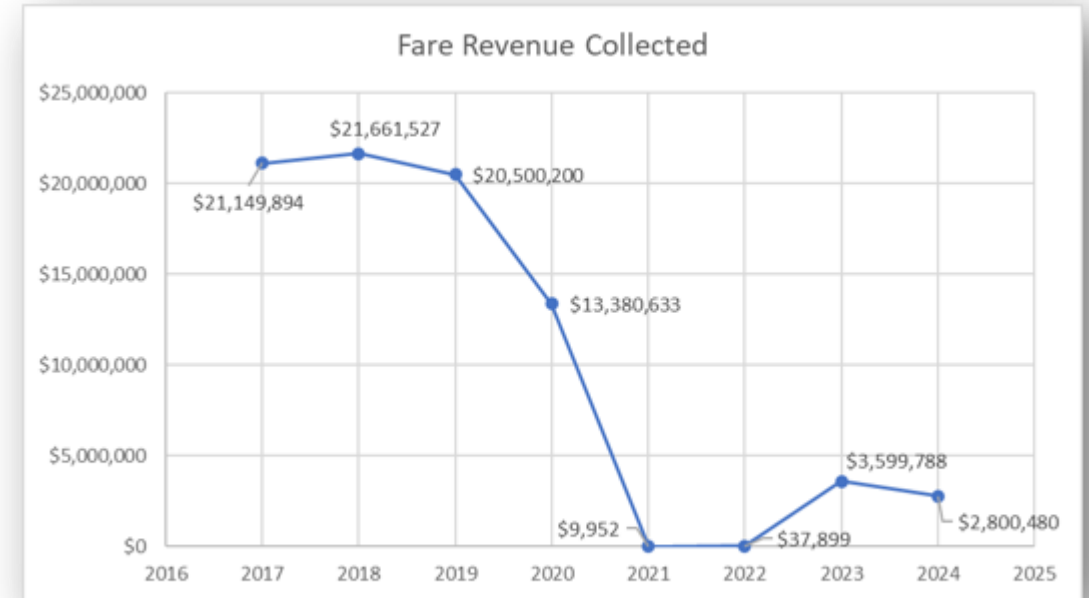
Fare Free Initiative

Background

- ▶ Prior to COVID, Ride On mirrored regional fare policy
 - 30-35% fare evasion rate
 - “Inform not Enforce” policy for operator safety
- ▶ Ride On discontinued fare collection during COVID
- ▶ MCDOT conducted a Fare Equity Study in 2021
 - Informed a long-term fare policy following COVID
 - Results of continuing zero fare were inconclusive in 2021
- ▶ In 2022, Ride On reinstated a \$1 fare

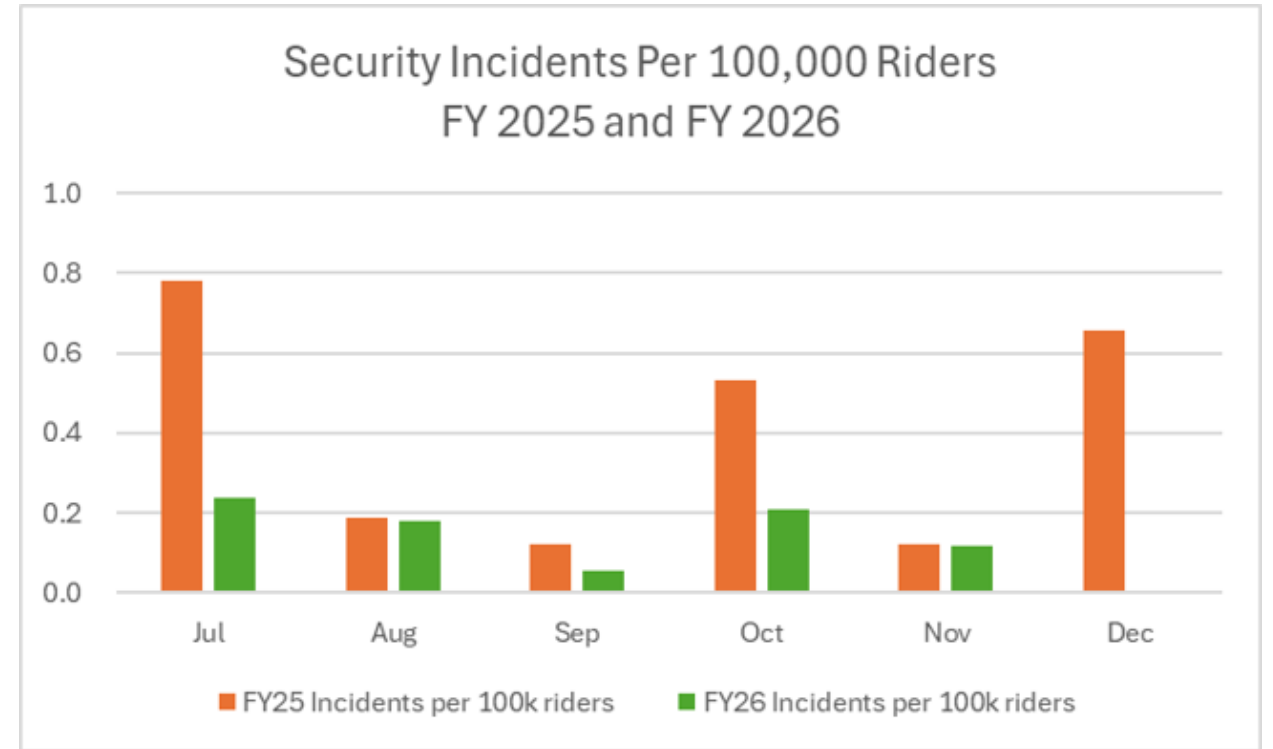
Fare Policy (2022-2024)

- ▶ Fare revenue did not return
 - Fare evasion $\approx 75\%$
- ▶ Annual cost to collect fares $\approx \$563,000$
- ▶ Major capital outlay needed to upgrade fareboxes (\$19.4M)
- ▶ Enforcement = financial and political costs, unclear efficacy



Results

- ▶ Modest increase in ridership
 - 4% increase in ridership
- ▶ Safety and security incidents reduced
- ▶ Positive public feedback among existing riders
 - No budget for promotion so many non-riders are unaware
- ▶ Actively monitoring regional and federal fare policies



Project Delivery and Green Infrastructure

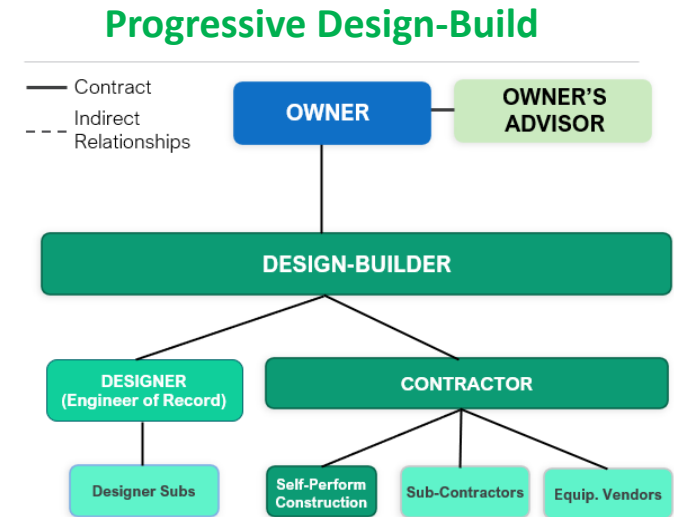
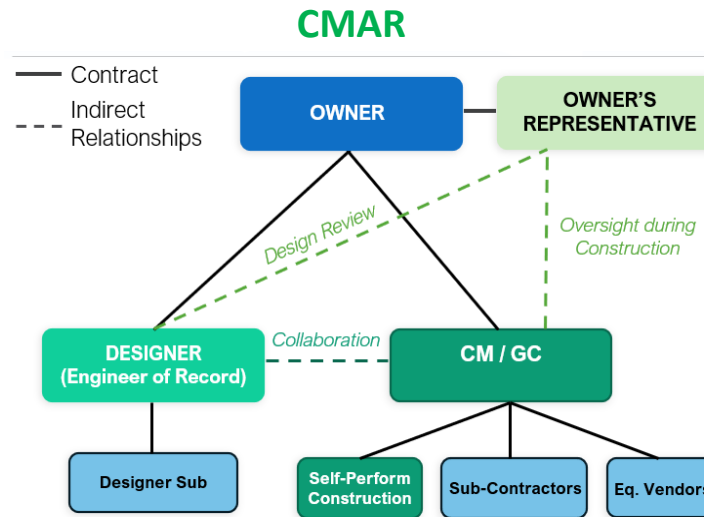
Innovative Delivery

- ▶ \$2 Million grant through USDOT Build America Bureau, Regional Infrastructure Accelerator (RIA) program
- ▶ AccelerateMC – an entity focused on moving the MCDOT transit program forward using innovative, cost-effective solutions
 - ✓ Funding, Financing, Project Delivery, Risk Management, Third-Party Agreements, Right-of-Way, Workforce, and Research



Flash BRT Delivery

- ▶ US 29 BRT Phase 1 CMAR
- ▶ Veirs Mill Road BRT CMAR
- ▶ MD 355 BRT Progressive Design Build
- ▶ US 29 BRT Phase 2 CMAR or PDB
 - ✓ Accelerated Schedule
 - ✓ Best Value
 - ✓ Cost and Schedule Certainty
 - ✓ Constructability and Innovation
 - ✓ Risk Management



Climate Action Plan

Transition to Zero Emissions by 2035

- ▶ 110 BEBs and 13 hydrogen fuel cell buses in service by the end of 2026
- ▶ 2 MW Brookville Bus Depot Microgrid for up to 70 BEBs
- ▶ 5 MW EMTOC Bus Depot Microgrid for up to 200 BEBs and hydrogen fuel cell buses
- ▶ \$15 million grant from FTA for 13 hydrogen fuel cell buses and green hydrogen fueling station



Questions & Discussion

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