

December Program: Transportation and Pedestrian Safety Issues | *Chris Conklin*, the Director of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation, will share updates on key projects including sidewalk expansion, bus rapid transit, and school-area safety reviews. *Wade Holland*, Manager of the Vision Zero program in the Office of the County Executive, will discuss recent crash data trends, progress under the FY25-26 Vision Zero work plan, and new enforcement and education strategies for reaching zero deaths by 2030. | **P. 3**

President’s Message | Cheryl Gannon says to get involved | **P. 4**

Civic Fed Forum for Montgomery County Executive Candidates | The event gave residents an early, in-depth look at the 2026 race. Council Vice President Will Jawando, Councilmembers Evan Glass and Andrew Friedson, and Silver Spring project manager Mithun Banerjee participated. Lou Peck, a contributing editor with *Bethesda Magazine*, moderated. | **P. 5**

MCDOT Ride On and Metrobus Service for Seniors | Ride Ons and many Metro buses are free if you’re age 65 or older | **P. 7**

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TO PRINT, USE PRINT VERSION

of note

Next MCCF Meeting #969

Monday, December 8, 2025, 7:00 p.m. *online via Zoom*. Topic: “Transportation and Pedestrian Safety Issues.”

- Join the Zoom Meeting Here [See further instructions on page 2. No password is required.]

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November Meeting Minutes

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Membership Application

JOIN ONLINE | MAIL-IN FORM

Federation Meeting #969

Monday, December 8, 2025

7:00 p.m.

Online Zoom Meeting

AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Introductions
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes: November General Meeting **P.8**
4. Treasurer’s Report
5. Announcements
6. December Program: Transportation and Pedestrian Safety Issues **P.3**
7. Committee Reports
8. Old Business
9. New Business
10. Adjournment

About MCCF Meetings

All monthly MCCF meetings are open to the public. They are held on the second Monday of each month, September through June.

The December meeting will be held online via Zoom (see page 3 for program) at 7:00 p.m.:

▮ To be part of the video conference, first **visit the Zoom website** to download the program for your phone or computer.

▮ **Date and Time:** Monday, December 8, 2025, 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

▮ To **join the Zoom meeting from your browser, use this link.**

▮ To participate by phone (audio only), call 301.715.8592. The meeting ID is **831 3067 0742**. No password is required.

We hope you will join us! ▮

The **Montgomery County Civic Federation, Inc.**, is a county-wide nonprofit educational and advocacy organization founded in 1925 to serve the public interest. Monthly MCCF meetings are open to the public (agenda and details at left).

The *Civic Federation News* is published monthly except July and August. It is emailed to delegates, associate members, news media, and local, state, and federal officials. **Recipients are encouraged to forward the Civic Federation News to all association members, friends, and neighbors.** Permission is granted to reproduce any article, provided that proper credit is given to the “*Civic Federation News* of the Montgomery County (Md.) Civic Federation.”

Civic Federation News

civicednews AT montgomerycivic.org

TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE, SEE PAGE 11

December Meeting #969: Montgomery County Transportation, Pedestrian Safety issues

By Jerry Garson, Transportation and Pedestrian Safety Chair

At the Monday, December 8, 2025, Civic Federation meeting, delegates will have the chance to hear directly from two of the County's leading voices in safe roads. **Chris Conklin**, the Director of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation, will share updates on key projects including sidewalk expansion, bus rapid transit, and school-area safety reviews. **Wade Holland**, Manager of the Vision Zero program in the Office of the County Executive, will discuss recent crash data trends, progress under the FY25-26 Vision Zero work plan, and new enforcement and education strategies for reaching zero deaths

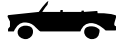
by 2030. The County is responsible for all non-numbered roads.

Montgomery County continues to make transportation and pedestrian safety a priority, addressing urgent issues that impact everyone who lives, works, and travels in our communities. With steady population growth, increasing congestion, and renewed attention to recent pedestrian fatalities, the need for safer streets and equitable access to transit is more apparent than ever. The County has made all Ride On busses free to all riders.

The County's Vision Zero initiative, coordinated across departments, is showing meaningful results: serious and fatal crashes dropped countywide by 5 percent this year,

and high injury network corridors saw a 29 percent decrease over pre-pandemic years. These gains are credited to expanded automated enforcement, new legislation, sidewalk and signal improvements, and targeted interventions along dangerous corridors such as Georgia Avenue and New Hampshire Avenue, where major state and local investments were made to improve pedestrian infrastructure and reduce driver speed.

Join the Civic Federation online via Zoom at 7:00 p.m. to learn how these programs are building a safer, fairer, and more connected Montgomery County for all. Everyone is welcome to participate in this timely discussion on creating secure streets and vibrant neighborhoods. ■

**President's Message**

Dear Delegates and Members,

As we close out 2025, I want to take a moment to thank you all for your participation in the Civic Federation and for the work you do for your communities. Civic activism has always been important but is particularly compelling now considering the economic and budgetary challenges we face in our county. There is a critical need to advocate for legislation that puts residents on the path to equity, stability, and a quality of life we aspire to. I hope that you stay engaged in the coming year. We need all your voices.

We will be making an urgent call to action on funding for an Office of the People's Counsel this year, and we need your help.

I testified In November before our state delegates and Senators

on transparency and access issues that the state should be addressing, including funding for our existing statute authorizing an Office of the People's Counsel (OPC) for Montgomery County residents.

■ The OPC was first funded in 1999, but the funding lapsed 16 years ago, and the office has not been funded since.

■ The OPC office is an important resource for citizens to level the playing field with developers by providing residents with expert legal and technical advice and an independent voice in the public interest on land use matters. Land use and planning is a complicated area and developers, the Planning Board, and the Council all have attorneys advising them. Only in the wealthy communities are residents able to hire

a land use attorney to advise and advocate. This is why the county's mandatory Racial Equity and Social Justice Officer has recommended full funding of an OPC.

■ Our land use is governed by MNCPPC, a state agency that controls land use in Montgomery County and Prince George's County. The state has granted an OPC to Prince George's County, with state funding, but nothing for Montgomery County residents! It is inequitable to fund an OPC for Prince George's County but not Montgomery County.

■ Five counties in Maryland have an OPC on land use for residents, but not its biggest county—ours.

In our recent forum for County Executive candidates, Councilmembers Friedson and Glass indicated



President’s Message, cont.

that they would not support funding the OPC statute. Councilmember Jawando stated that he would support it this year. As we saw with the massive land use proposals this past few years, residents could have really used this help. But we remain in a disadvantaged position because of the failure to provide a robust OPC for residents.

We need to make a concerted push for funding this office in the upcoming budget process. If you’d like to help with this legislative issue, please reach out to me.

Our final meeting of 2025 will be held on December 8, and the topic is transportation.

Have a happy and healthy New Year, and we look forward to seeing you on Dec. 8 and next year.

—Cheryl Gannon, President

Civic Fed Forum for Mont. County Executive Candidates

By Alan Bowser

The Montgomery County Civic Federation’s recent County Executive candidate forum at Newport Mill Middle School gave residents an early, in-depth look at the 2026 race and the issues that will define it. Held on a Saturday afternoon in the school’s auditorium, the event drew

well over 100 community members, underscoring strong public interest in the county’s future leadership.

Moderator Louis Peck, a contributing editor with *Bethesda Magazine*, guided a focused, two-hour conversation with Democratic County Executive hopefuls Coun-

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Candidates Forum, cont.

cil Vice President Will Jawando, Councilmembers Evan Glass and Andrew Friedson, and Silver Spring project manager Mithun Banerjee. The forum was open to all declared candidates and organized to highlight governing approaches rather than sound bites, with extended time for opening statements, audience-submitted questions, and candidate rebuttals.

Questions from Civic Federation leaders and residents centered on economic development, housing affordability, school infrastructure, transportation, and public trust in county government. Candidates addressed how to attract and retain employers, strengthen small businesses, and grow the tax base while maintaining services, as well as how to implement rent stabilization and

expand affordable housing supply in ways that protect tenants and encourage responsible investment.

Education was another major focus, with candidates pressed on aging school buildings, overcrowding, and the need for transparent long-range planning in partnership with communities. Audience members also raised concerns about equity, climate resilience, and ensuring that county decision-making remains ac-



cessible and accountable to residents from every neighborhood.

By the end of the afternoon, attendees left with a clearer sense of each candidate’s priorities, temperament, and readiness to manage a growing, diverse county facing complex fiscal and land-use choices. The Civic Federation plans to continue offering similar nonpartisan forums to help voters make informed choices well ahead of the 2026 primary. ■



MCDOT Ride On and Metrobus Service for Seniors

By Jerry Garson, Transportation Chair

Starting June 29, 2025, everyone began riding for free on all Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) buses. Seniors age 65+ and persons with disabilities also ride free on *select* Metrobuses in Montgomery County at all times. Metrobus Routes included are: M12, M20, M22, M42, M44, M52, M54, M60, M6X, M70, M82, P30, and P31. Show the Metrobus operator either your Medicare card and a current photo ID or use a Metro Access Card.

When you board the Metrobus, tap the farebox with your (1) Senior SmarTrip Card, (2) Reduced Fare SmarTrip Card (formerly Disabled card), or (3) Metro Access SmarTrip card.

Starting February 1, 2026, tapping the farebox with your SmarTrip card is mandatory.

There will be no flashing of cards to the operator.

REDUCED FARES FOR CUSTOMERS AGE 65 AND UP

A Senior SmarTrip card lets you travel at reduced fares on Metrorail, Metrobus, and regional buses that accept SmarTrip. To get a Senior SmarTrip card, show a valid government-issued photo ID with proof of age at:

- [Metro's Transit Accessibility Center](#)
- [The Commuter Stores](#)
- [All Montgomery County Public Libraries](#) (Call Montgomery County Libraries at 240-777-0002 for details.)

HOW TO GET A VIRTUAL SENIOR SMARTRIP CARD ON YOUR MOBILE PHONE

Once you have a plastic Senior SmarTrip card, you can transfer it to your mobile phone's Apple Wallet or Google Pay by following these Mobile Pay instructions:

- [Transfer to Apple Wallet on iOS](#)
- [Transfer to Google Wallet on Android](#)

ADD MONEY TO YOUR SENIOR SMARTRIP CARD

You can add value and passes to your Senior SmarTrip card at any Metrorail fare vending machine, online using your SmarTrip account or the [SmarTrip Mobile App](#), or by visiting a sales location at select retail stores, like CVS pharmacy, Gi-

[MORE](#)

Senior Metro Fares, cont.

ant Food, and Commuter Stores. To add stored value to your virtual card, you can use Apple Wallet or Google Wallet by following these [Mobile Pay instructions](#). You can also add stored value to a card at any bus farebox that accepts SmarTrip.

REDUCED BUS FARES FOR SENIORS WITHOUT A SENIOR SMARTRIP CARD

Display a valid, government-issued photo ID with your date of birth to pay the reduced Metrobus fare in cash, or purchase the [Metrobus Weekly Senior Pass at one of these locations](#). ■

MCCF November 10, 2025, General Meeting #968 Minutes

By Alan Bowser, Secretary

1. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order by President Cheryl Gannon at 7:04 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda. The agenda was approved.

3. Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the October 13, 2025, General Meeting were approved.

4. Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Jerry Garson reported a bank balance \$6,336.00.

5. November Program. 1st Vice President Joyce Gwadz introduced the speakers, *Lyric Winik* and *Ricky Ribeiro*, education advocates in Montgomery County,

who discussed "Hot Issues In Education." Using a Powerpoint presentation, they discussed important issues facing the school system, including infrastructure challenges and financing, a recently proposed MCPS regional programming model, and safety and security issues in MCPS schools. Following their presentation, MCPS Chief of Schools Leadership *Dr. Peter Moran* responded to concerns raised in the presentations and summarized some of the initiatives that MCPS is taking with respect to infrastructure, academic achievement, and school safety.

6. Delegate and Member Questions. Delegates and members asked a range of questions about the presentations, including

[MORE](#)



November Minutes, cont.

questions about school transportation, boundary studies, school security and community alerts, equity and parity in advanced programs, role of the school board, and transparency and accountability in MCPS decision-making.

7. Update on University Boulevard Corridor Plan. Members discussed recent developments regarding the University Boulevard Corridor Plan, recommended by the Planning Board, and recently advanced by the County Council's PHP Committee to the full Council. John Holden of the South Four Corners Civic Association reported that the Committee's recent discussion focused on the related zoning, environmental sustainability, and racial equity and social justice issues. The

Committee voted 2-1 to advance the legislation.

8. In the follow up discussion, members expressed the view that the Civic Federation should more publicly advocate for Council and public discussion of racial equity and social justice issues when they came before the County Council. Members also expressed the view that the Planning Board's emphasis on corridor planning was contradictory to the County's long-standing master planning process where community input was sought regarding major zoning changes.

9. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

10. Meeting Recording. A video of the Nov. 10, 2025, General Meeting is [available online here](#). ■

MCCF ExCom Minutes November 20, 2025, 7 p.m.

By Alan Bowser, Secretary

1. Members Present. Cheryl Gannon, Joyce Gwadz, Jerry Garson, Jay Elvove, Alan Bowser, and Jacquie Bokow.

2. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

3. Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Jerry Garson reported a bank balance of \$5,145.00.

4. Report on County Executive Forum. Members discussed the recent County Executive Candidate Forum, noting that there was a large audience and considerable interest in the issues presented.

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Nov. ExCom Minutes, cont.

Lou Peck served as the moderator. Among the issues discussed, it was noted that Councilmembers Glass and Friedson said that they did not support the Office of the People's Counsel, a Civic Federation priority issue.

5. MCCF Board Responsibilities. Gannon discussed responsibilities for Civic Federation Board members and commented on the need to build up Committee structure.

6. MCCF Priorities. Members discussed priority issues for the Civic Federation. Gannon highlighted the importance of transparency and accountability issues, with emphasis on support for the Office of the People's Counsel.

7. Silver Spring Transportation Management Committee. Director Jay Elvove reported on recent developments with the SSTMC, which recently discussed Purple Line progress.

8. Thanksgiving Parade. MCCF will participate in the Montgomery County Thanksgiving Parade in Silver Spring.

9. University Boulevard Corridor Plan. Members discussed recent developments regarding the UBCP and MCCF concerns about the Plan recommended to the full Council. Gannon discussed the RESJ prepared for the UBCP, noting that it was critical of the recommended plan from the Planning Board and the PHP Committee.

10. Electricity Issues. Cheryl Gannon noted that some Federation delegates are interested in electricity rate and related data center issues.

11. December Meeting. The December General meeting will discuss transportation and pedestrian safety issues, led by Transportation Committee Chair Jerry Garson. Wade Holland and Chris Conklin are invited as speakers.

12. Committee for Montgomery. The Annual Legislative Breakfast is scheduled for Friday, December 5, 2025. MCCF and the Renters' Alliance will share a non-profit partnership.

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Candidates Forum



More than 100 community members attended our County Executive candidates forum last month. *See page 5* for details and more photos.

Nov. ExCom Minutes, cont.

13. Newsletter. December Newsletter articles are due by November 29, 2025.

14. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m. ■

Montgomery County Civic Federation

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Submit contributions for the next issue by the 26th of the current month. Send to CFN at [civicednews AT montgomerycivic.org](mailto:civicednews@montgomerycivic.org).

Send all address corrections to membership AT montgomerycivic.org.

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