

RISE PRINCE GEORGE'S

Platform 2022

A Shared Vision: We call on elected officials to work with us to build a prosperous, equitable and sustainable future Prince George's that offers: multiple thriving transit-focused downtowns (North, Central, and South county); inclusive, safe, healthy and connected neighborhoods and municipalities; preserved open spaces and natural areas, and climate-friendly development patterns.

Prince George's Possibilities: As we recover from the devastation of COVID-19, we seek to build a sustainable and shared prosperity, health equity and wellbeing for all Prince Georgians that creates a virtuous cycle of economic growth which retains homegrown talent and businesses, attracts new investment, and improves both people and places – especially benefitting Black and Latino residents who have been historically and structurally excluded from wealth, opportunity, and health.

Prince George's strengths: With 15 Metro stations, another 11 Purple Line stations on the way, and 8 MARC stations, the county's transit assets are *the* competitive advantage – for promoting future job growth, local economic development, and generating needed increases in the county's tax base. Prince George's has the benefit of planning for a future which forecasts increased job growth as well as increased demand for housing and amenities near jobs and transit.

Prince George's Metro stations have gained new buildings and activity that are helping shape a sense of place in recent years. These changes include a major Kaiser Permanente administrative building at New Carrollton Metro station, the University of Maryland Capital Region Medical Center at the Largo Metro station; and new housing and offices at West Hyattsville, Prince George's Plaza, Branch Ave. and College Park Metro stations.



The [new vision](#) launched by County Executive Alsobrooks for the county's economic development is anchored by the Blue Line Corridor Initiative, promising to further capitalize on a corridor of premier transit assets in the heart of the county. The Purple Line, once it is completed in the next few years, will provide yet another significant opportunity for economic activity, housing in all price ranges, equitable transit, and unique placemaking.

[RISE Prince George's](#) advocates for a shared, sustainable prosperity in Prince George's County by creating safe, walkable, inclusive and transit-oriented communities. RISE Prince George's does not endorse or work on behalf of candidates, or express any view for or against any candidate. <https://smartergrowth.net/rise-prince-georges/>

Addressing Our Challenges

Despite progress with growing transit districts, the county continues to facilitate sprawling land development patterns and roads designed for fast vehicles to the exclusion of people. This perpetuates underinvestment in transit-oriented places, and inequitable access for disadvantaged residents to grocery stores, healthcare, jobs, schools, and other daily needs.

These patterns pose or compound a number of challenges for Prince George's residents, including:

Too few walkable urban places near transit and inner Beltway communities: The majority of residential growth between 1980 and 2010 was outside of the Capital Beltway and far from our transit stations.

Unaffordable Housing: More Prince George's renters are cost-burdened than DC area residents.

Dangerous streets and poor connections for people walking and biking: Prince George's County typically wide, fast roadways do not safely accommodate many of its users. Often these areas are missing sidewalks, and safe, convenient crossings. Many more people are killed walking in Prince George's than in peer jurisdictions.



Long waits to ride the bus even on the busiest routes: No routes for Prince George's TheBus offer service more frequently than one bus every 30 minutes. TheBus service ends every day by 8:20 pm at the latest, and doesn't run at all on Sundays.

Recommendations

Great Places Around Transit: Implement creative, equitable placemaking and transit-oriented development projects, investments and policies. Prioritize public investments that foster walkable environments, including urban street designs around and connecting to transit stations and inner Beltway communities to reverse decades of disinvestment.

- Prioritize public investments that foster walk-friendly environments in and around transit stations, connecting communities with multi-modal (walk, bike, scooting) transportation networks, and make last mile connections to transit.
- Hold the Planning Board and Planning Department accountable for guiding growth to [transit-centers](#) rather than outlying areas. One tool to accomplish this could be through evaluating the impact of growth (and associated greenhouse gas emissions) by utilizing a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) standard for all new developments.
- Ensure the zoning rewrite is implemented to fulfill its promise to guide transit-oriented placemaking.
- Ensure coordination with housing investments so that TOD brings equitable access to residents who need quality, affordable housing and proximity to transit and amenities.
- Support growth in inner Beltway communities and around transit centers while protecting rural farm and forest lands to ensure environmentally-sustainable development.

Housing for All: Guide land use, budget priorities, and housing policy changes to address the needs of all Prince George's diverse residents, including seniors, families, and low-income individuals. This begins with increased county funding. It also means better utilization of state and federal funding streams to preserve and build the housing of the future and achieve housing stability, quality, choice and prevention of displacement. Support the county's [Housing Opportunities for All](#) strategy implementation.

- Increase funding for the Housing Investment Trust Fund by doubling the county's annual \$10 million commitment until reaching the [recommended](#) \$82 million/year.
- Prioritize funding for preserving and building new affordable housing close to Purple Line and Metro stations.
- Build on the [Housing Opportunities for All \(HOFA\) strategy](#) by engaging with the [HOFA workgroup](#) and implementing its recommendations.

- Strengthen the county's use of Right of First Refusal (ROFR) to acquire, rehabilitate, and secure long term affordability of apartment complexes. Leverage financing, planning and policy tools to build and sustain more mixed-income housing around transit. Include demolition permits under ROFR.
- Strengthen tenant protections while encouraging property owners to invest in maintaining their properties and build new rental housing.
- Ensure the county government has sufficient staff capacity to implement expanded affordable housing development activity, including through nonprofit sector partners.

Safe Streets: Achieve zero traffic deaths ([Vision Zero](#)) and transit-oriented placemaking goals by slowing vehicle speeds, and changing how streets are designed and operated, ensuring sidewalks and other facilities; focus on areas of high pedestrian deaths, and activity centers in need of improved walk and bike access. Allocate the necessary funds to make streets safe for all modes and connect communities.

- Increase oversight of Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) & Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement (DPIE) on implementation of [Vision Zero](#) and [Urban Street Design Standards](#). Set a goal to reduce travel speeds and track progress.
- Engage with county agencies to work with the Maryland State Highway Administration to make state roads in the county meet Vision Zero goals and conform to Urban Street Design Standards in activity centers.
- Implement walk/bike access audits for all Regional and Local Transit Centers. Include assessments of wide, high speed roadways to be prioritized for urban street design retrofits that lower vehicle speeds, reduce crossing distance, tighten turn radii, and expand walk and bicycle facilities (such as adding sidewalks, crossings, protected bike lanes, and trails).
- Require the county to include planned bike/pedestrian facilities in all new reconstruction projects; require routinely in resurfacing. Ensure protected bike lanes are built.
- Expand the use of speed and red light cameras (Automated Traffic Enforcement - ATE) where road design solutions need greater support; [remove ATE from the police](#); commit to [transparency, accountability and racial equity in operations](#) with a goal of few infractions and increased safety; adjust fines to promote deterrence rather than being punitive (e.g. income percentage-based adjusted fines).
- Accelerate the construction of the [Capital Trails Network](#) as outlined by the Capital Trails Coalition (CTC), which prioritizes trail projects based on four metrics: low-income areas, high populations of people of color, activity centers, and high density areas. Priorities

include the Central Avenue Connector Trail, the Suitland Parkway Trail, and the Prince George's Connector Trail.

Better Buses: Make better bus service a top priority. Allocate increased transportation investments and focus policy priorities to improve the frequency, reliability, accessibility, and customer experience in public transportation. This is especially important for serving low income residents and communities who need quality transit options to travel throughout the county. As the county recovers from the pandemic, it should step up investments in better service on high ridership routes, building on the recommendations from the [Transit Vision Plan](#) and [Reimagining TheBus POST COVID](#) plan, specifically:

- Provide frequent bus service every 15 minutes rather than the current 30 minute headways on the [13 higher ridership routes](#) which serve population and job centers concentrated inside the Beltway as well as higher-density communities outside the Beltway (including Laurel, Bowie, Upper Marlboro, Clinton, and Fort Washington).
- Extend service until 10 pm each day and add Sunday service.
- Accelerate walk/bike facilities implementation from the Transit Vision Plan, which identified \$8.8 million for 24 miles of sidewalk network to ensure residents can safely walk to bus stops.
- Expand bikeshare and safe bicycling facilities to connect to bus stops/local destinations.