

TRANSIT FIRST!

Coalition members (list in formation): Action Committee for Transit, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 689, Audubon Naturalist Society, CASA de Maryland, Clean Water Action, Coalition for Smarter Growth, Crofton First, Greater Greater Washington, MCGEO — UFCW Local 1994, Prince George's Advocates for Community-based Transit, Progressive Maryland, Save Maryland Area Rail Transit

Fact Sheet: Montgomery County Parking Rates

- [This County Council memorandum](#) presents the proposals under consideration at the April 21 hearing. The proposal would increase parking rates in Bethesda as follows: at long-term (all-day) spaces from 50¢ to 75¢ per hour, at short-term spaces in lots and garages, unchanged at 75¢ per hour, and on-street from 75¢ to \$1.00 per hour. Parking meters outside parking districts (mostly North Bethesda) would see smaller increases.
- The proposed increases in parking fees would provide needed revenue to avoid severe cuts in Ride-On bus service.
- Parking rates in Bethesda have [only increased once](#) in the last twenty years. During that time, Metro has had [six fare increases](#).
- Since 1989, the minimum Metro fare has increased from 85¢ to \$1.65 in rush hour, \$1.35 off-peak, and \$1.25 for buses, or 47% to 94%. Parking in Bethesda has increased from 40¢ to 50¢ per hour at long-term spaces and from 50¢ to 75¢ at short-term spaces, or 25% to 50%.
- The Bethesda parking district's [budget](#) for the current year shows \$12.5 million in expenses and \$8.7 million in parking fee revenues. The difference – a subsidy of \$3.8 million for automobile users – is made up from a parking tax imposed on those commercial buildings that don't have their own parking.
- Parking districts receive further subsidies from the general taxpayer. Street construction is paid for by general funds, yet on-street parking meter revenue goes to the parking districts. Lots and garages owned by the districts are exempt from real estate taxes and are not operated as profit-making entities like the county liquor stores.
- The current structure of the parking tax works against county transportation policy by creating incentives for excessive automobile use and traffic congestion. Reform of the parking tax and the parking chapter of the zoning code, with which it is intertwined, has been recommended by the [Office of Legislative Oversight](#) and the Planning Board. There is no time during the current budget season to develop a complete new parking policy, but we can move in the right direction by reducing subsidies.
- Transit First! has no position on the other transportation revenue increases under consideration. We believe that the proposed parking increases can provide most, and very possibly all, of the revenue needed to forestall service reductions.