



CITY TAKOMA OF PARK MARYLAND

Support with Amendments House Bill 527 – Maryland Transit Administration - Purple Line - Free Ridership and Advertising
House Environment and Transportation Committee
February 14, 2025

The City of Takoma Park supports and urges favorable consideration of HB 527 with amendments.

The construction of the Purple Line has greatly impacted the businesses and neighborhoods in its vicinity for nearly 8 years. In the City of Takoma Park, traffic volume has skyrocketed through adjacent residential neighborhoods, with one community experiencing over 18,000 cars weekly on its tertiary road. Commute times have been unpredictable though almost always longer. Residents have had to navigate ever-changing detours and closures to reach their homes and the businesses they'd like to patronize. Moreover, the route due to construction is often plagued with safety hazards like potholes or blocked sidewalks that impact pedestrians and drivers alike.

While all will benefit from this new form of public transportation, steps could be taken to compensate for the disproportionate burden those closest to the development have endured. Bill HB 527 strives to address this need by allowing residents who live within a 1/4-mile radius of the Purple Line track to ride for free upon its launch. The bill will also support businesses that have been impacted through free advertising. Advertising for the businesses along the transit line will be mutually beneficial - boosting sales to local businesses while also encouraging the use of the Purple Line to reach services.

However, the City of Takoma Park recommends amending HB 527 so that residents who live within a 1/2-mile radius of the Purple Line track would be eligible for free ridership. Because of the size of the commercial lots adjacent to the Purple Line, many of Takoma Park's most impacted residential neighborhoods fall slightly outside of the 1/4-mile radius. This act would not just show appreciation and provide a measure of compensation for the hardships endured - it would jumpstart ridership once the Purple Line has opened.

The success of the Purple Line will depend upon public trust and usage, and those closest neighbors will be a critical share of users. The City of Takoma Park supports HB 527 with amendment and urges a favorable committee vote.