

Office of the County Auditor
Auditor's Analysis

Council Bill No. 4-2025

Introduced: January 7, 2025

Auditor: Diane Zagorski-Kelly

Fiscal Impact:

The fiscal impact of this legislation will include \$1,450,000 for bus acquisition, \$550,000 for planning and design of six stations, \$2,000,000 for station construction, and \$780,000 of operational costs in the first year of operation.

According to the Office of Transportation (OOT), the cost of installing cameras and data lines that will be used by the Police Department are included in the project budget; however, the final operational costs will depend on the technical requirements which are still to be determined. Personnel costs for this project will be absorbed within the existing budgets for OOT and the Department of Public Works.

Purpose:

Council Bill 4-2025 is seeking Council approval for a multiyear memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Howard County and Montgomery County to extend Montgomery County's existing Flash Bus Rapid Transit Service (BRT) along the US 29 Corridor. If approved, this MOU will allow the counties to collaboratively plan, design, and operate the service to Maple Lawn, Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, and Downtown Columbia.

Other Comments:

According to the OOT, under the Federal Congressionally Directed Spending grant, Howard County is responsible for providing the \$1,450,000 match for the acquisition of four buses. This grant has been approved, and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires confirmation of the signed MOU to proceed.

Attachment A provides an overview of expenditures from FY2024 through operational year five.