

Table of Contents:

PAGE 2

Construction
Photo/Update

PAGE 2

Business Spotlight

PAGE 3

Purple Line Fast Fact

PAGE 3

People Behind
Purple Line

*Purple
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PULSE

Your guide to Purple Line news,
information and events

APRIL 2022

Message from Matt

Get ready for a noticeable ramping up of construction work along the Purple Line alignment.

I am happy to share the good news that the Purple Line project successfully achieved commercial and financial close on April 14, providing the full funding necessary for our concessionaire, Purple Line Transit Partners (PLTP), and the new design-build contractor, Maryland Transit Solutions (MTS), to resume full-scale construction activity along the alignment this summer.

Over the last two years, the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA) has continued to advance the project by relocating 18 miles of underground and overhead utilities, working to complete the College Park Bus Loop, continuing the assembly of light rail cars, and completing the Plymouth Tunnel's east portal and the Polk Street and Glenridge maintenance facilities.

You also can expect to see increased proactive outreach and engagement from members of the Purple Line team to residents and businesses located along the alignment. In May, we are planning two project open houses. In Montgomery County, we will be at the Silver Spring Civic Building, located at 1 Veterans Place, on May 25 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. In Prince George's County, we will be in the atrium at the Stamp Student Union, located at 3972 Campus Drive, on May 26 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The next round of our Community Advisory Team meetings will be held in June. We look forward to introducing the key members of the new design-build team.

If you haven't updated your preferences lately, I would encourage you to go to our website and review your notifications settings at: mtamarylandalerts.com/purpleline. We also have English and Spanish hotlines for construction-related inquiries that are answered 24/7: 443-451-3706 (English) or 443-451-3705 (Spanish).

I look forward to continuing to keep you updated on our progress, as we work with our new design-build partner to deliver a high quality, environmentally friendly light rail line for the citizens of Maryland.

Matt



Matthew Pollack, PE, PMP

Sign up to receive construction notifications at purplelinemd.com

Construction Photo/Update:



Photos clockwise from left: Crews from Terra Site Constructors work on the Sleaford Road overpass in Bethesda in December; Work progresses with the goal of opening the underpass this summer; Crews from Priority Construction work to build the College Park Metro Bus Loop; The bus loop is taking shape in this photo from last Friday.

Business Spotlight: Carolina Furniture

Carolina Furniture opened in Hyattsville in 2004. Owner A. Abdallah opened a second location in Riverdale four years later. His goal is to provide quality, contemporary and modern furniture at an affordable price for the community and beyond, he said.

The name for the business was inspired by the state of North Carolina, one of the hubs of American-made furniture and where most of Abdallah's furniture comes from.

The two family-owned and operated stores offer a wide variety of seating, bedding, storage, rugs and accessories.

The showrooms are 3,800 and 7,000-square-feet, respectively.

"Carolina Furniture looks forward to serving both existing customers and the new potential customer base that the Purple Line will provide access to," Abdallah said.

His stores are located at 1600 University Boulevard East, Hyattsville, MD 20783, and 6625 Riverdale Road, Riverdale, MD 20737.

To learn about other businesses along the corridor, please visit: purplelinemd.com/business-engagement/business-spotlights.



Purple Line Fast Fact:

1 OF EVERY **4**
JOBS

**WILL BE PERFORMED BY SMALL OR
MINORITY OWNED BUSINESSES**



People Behind the Purple Line: Sheritha Semakula, DBE Program Administrator

Sheritha Semakula has what she describes as a “whatever it takes” work ethic. As an administrator for the Purple Line’s Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program, she and fellow DBE team members work hard to make sure the Purple Line has a diversified work force that reflects the general population.

“I love the diversity and mixture of professionals of the team, working with engineers, communications, construction crews, etc. I truly enjoy the collaboration across industries,” said the Prince George’s County resident. “It’s important the Purple Line has a DBE program to be accountable to the small business community to assist with their ability to grow and compete in emerging markets.”

Semakula, a Denver native who came to Maryland in 2017 and joined the Purple Line the same year, is part of a large consulting staff that helps the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA) oversee the project.

She has experience in program management, evaluation and analysis; strategic planning; policy development and analysis; federal and state organizational compliance; project scoping and process improvement; and data analytics.

She provides technical, design and development guidance for the management of the DBE program; oversees day-to-day outreach initiatives with key stakeholders to increase awareness of the program; and organizes and facilitates network engagements



to advertise for DBE, Minority-Owned Business Enterprise (MBE) and Small Business Enterprise (SBE) organizations. She also coordinates and tracks outreach initiatives with Purple Line contractors and consultants.

Semakula holds a bachelor’s degree in social work from Union College and a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Denver. She also serves on a local faith-based committee that works to address food insecurities for residents of Prince George’s County.

For more information on the MBE program, click on this link: [youtube.com/watch?v=gNHQP_wMFIE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNHQP_wMFIE)