



PURPLE LINE NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2025



- **Construction Updates**
- **Business Spotlight: Glee Bridal's & Gift Shop Plus**
- **People Behind the Purple Line: Art Aroonlap, Systems Oversight Engineer, PLTP**

From Ray Biggs, II Purple Line Senior Project Director, MTA



Ray Biggs, II, Senior Project Director, MTA

September is a transition month – back to school, cooler mornings and the first signs of fall. It also gives us the chance to look back on a busy summer of construction, when crews pushed through to deliver major progress on the Purple Line. Today, the project is more than 80% complete, with 65% of the track installed, including 100% of track installed in Prince George's County.

During the summer, crews installed overhead catenary system (OCS) poles and wires across the University of Maryland campus and removed a construction staging area near Presidential Drive, ensuring plenty of parking for the busy football season ahead.

Construction crews also completed laying embedded track and reopened the Wayne Avenue and Fenton Street intersection in Silver Spring. We appreciate everyone's patience as we worked on this complex intersection.

September marks the start of our 15th round of Community Advisory Team (CAT) Meetings. Our team is gearing up to launch a series of dynamic, community-focused presentations - each one uniquely tailored to your area along the alignment. We're kicking things off with Glenridge/Riverdale Park/New Carrollton on September 29. Please see the schedule at the bottom of this newsletter for more information on your area's meeting or visit our website's [Public Meetings and Events page](#).

In August, we expanded our dynamic testing process as the first Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) crossed Annapolis Road from our Glenridge Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) to the eastern end of the alignment in New Carrollton. Seeing the LRV move through one of our 21 stations gave an exciting glimpse of where our project is headed. You can see more in this [YouTube video](#).

Looking forward to seeing you at a CAT meeting soon,
Ray Biggs, II

Construction Updates:

Prince George's County:

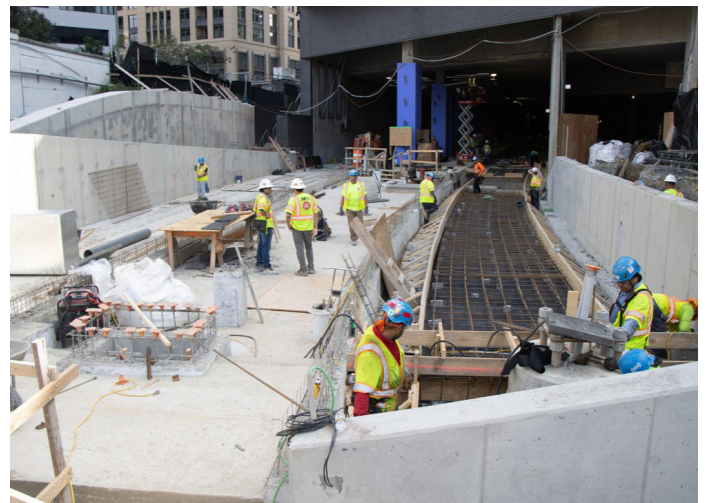


Clockwise from top left:

- 1. A Purple Line Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) arriving at the New Carrollton Station during an overnight testing operation at the eastern end of the alignment.*
- 2. A Purple Line LRV moving across the intersection of Veterans Parkway and Ellin Road near New Carrollton. The overnight testing verifies how the various systems required for operations work together, including signals, braking, propulsion and more.*
- 3. Tracks are installed in the center of Kenilworth Avenue just west of the Kenilworth Avenue Flyover in Riverdale.*
- 4. The Riverdale Park-Kenilworth Station, complete with elevator towers, railings, lights and more station elements.*

Construction Updates:

Montgomery County:



Clockwise from top left:

1. The Wayne Avenue and Fenton Street intersection in downtown Silver Spring in August. In this photo, rails are being aligned in preparation for track installation.
2. The Wayne Avenue and Fenton Street intersection in downtown Silver Spring in September, with embedded track installed. The intersection reopened on September 8.
3. The eastern end of the Bethesda Enclosed Trainway, one of two tunnels on the Purple Line alignment. Crews are installing tracks in this area.
4. A beam for the Sligo Creek Bridge on Wayne Avenue is lifted into place. The north side of the bridge is complete, and crews are now working to complete the south side.

Business Spotlight: Glee Bridal's & Gift Shop Plus

1401 University Boulevard E. #G31 and #G24
Hyattsville, MD 20783
Open daily from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
To request an appointment, please call 202-940-3007

Originally founded in Guatemala, Glee Bridal's & Gift Shop Plus, owned and operated by Eileen Aquino, opened inside La Union Mall in Hyattsville in 2022. Glee combines a charming gift shop and a stylish clothing boutique, celebrating rich Latin American culture and traditions.

Glee's bridal boutique has received many positive reviews for exceptional service. Consultants are recognized for their attentiveness and professional styling and alterations. Aquino noted that customers appreciate their layaway and interest-free payment plans, which reduce their financial stress as they plan for their memorable occasions.



Owner Aileen Aquino and her team say they are proud of their Hispanic cultural traditions. They support local events like Miss Quinceañera USA by donating dresses to girls celebrating the cherished tradition of their fifteenth birthdays.



Aquino says her passion lies in the connections she creates with her clients in celebrating social events like quinceañeras, baptisms, weddings and first communions.



Aquino shared that the most rewarding aspect of her work is witnessing the joy as customers discover the dress of their dreams.

People Behind the Purple Line: Art Aroonlap, Systems Oversight Engineer, PLTP



Art Aroonlap, Purple Line Transit Partners, Systems Oversight Engineer

During the last few months, the Purple Line newsletter has featured several project experts dedicated to the dynamic testing phase of Purple Line Light Rail Vehicles (LRVs). This month, as the LRVs expand testing on the eastern side of the alignment in Prince George's County, we hear from System Oversight Engineer Art Aroonlap.

Art is part of a team dedicated to ensuring the Purple Line's entire complex network of technology and infrastructure is designed, implemented and maintained to the highest standards of safety, performance and efficiency.

Purple Line: Art, what should we know about “train control systems” and their importance during this part of the testing phase?

Art Aroonlap: When a project reaches the point of testing train controls, everything needs to come together, as this is as close to the final product as it gets. Leading up to train control testing, all the individual components along the track—in the

control center and onboard the train— have to be tested thoroughly. If all the pieces are working, the entire system will work just as smoothly.

PL: Across the alignment, people see the overhead catenary system (OCS) installed, including poles and overhead wires, which supply power to the LRVs. We've shared with readers that this system ensures consistent electrical contact, correct voltage levels and mechanical stability of the wire system during train operation. In your experience, is there anything unique about the Purple Line overhead catenary system (OCS), and any specific challenges in testing the OCS?

AA: The OCS is designed so that the LRVs will share the track with cars in the same right-of-way, which applies to many segments across the Purple Line alignment. One of the key objectives of OCS testing is to ensure that the pantograph (the device atop the train pulling power from the power lines) functions correctly with the OCS at all allowable speeds. This is one of the reasons most of the testing is conducted at night; it minimizes impact on traffic, and any “flash” of the pantograph is more easily visible.

PL: Art, you have worked with numerous train systems for nearly 15 years including Chicago, San Francisco and Boston. Any thoughts on how an operating Purple Line will benefit this area?

AA: There is a great need for increased public transportation within the Purple Line service corridor. You can tell by the number of commuters in cars across the Beltway each day. Having a public transit system like the Purple Line will benefit all the residents of Prince George's and Montgomery counties by alleviating traffic and assisting residents without cars. In my brief time here in Maryland, I've spoken to many enthusiastic people about this efficient, convenient alternative means of transportation.

Check out the Purple Line's social media @purplelinemd to see exciting images and video of the testing phase, along with safety tips and more perspective from Art and the rest of the project's testing team.

CAT Meetings Coming Soon



Our 15th round of Community Advisory Team meetings begins later this month! Find your neighborhood meeting below, and visit our [Public Meetings and Events page](#) for meeting invites and more information.

Monday, September 29: Riverdale Park/Glenridge/New Carrollton

Tuesday, September 30: College Park

Tuesday, October 7: Long Branch

Wednesday, October 8: Bethesda/Chevy Chase

Thursday, October 9: University Boulevard

Tuesday, October 14: Lyttonsville/Woodside

Thursday, October 16: Silver Spring

All meetings start at 6:00 p.m.

Thank you for subscribing to the Purple Line newsletter.

Stay connected through our social media channels and our website, purplelinemd.com.

