Transit Agencies and Service Development in the Baltimore Region

OVERVIEW

The Baltimore Regional Transit Governance and Funding Study will develop alternatives for how the region could structure, organize, and fund regional transit services. The approach to developing these alternatives includes working with the Baltimore Regional Transit Board (BRTB) through an iterative process of research, analysis, and stakeholder input to ensure that the alternatives are grounded in experience, respectful of history and constraints, but creative enough to recognize opportunities. This technical memo, the first in the series, focuses on the history and development of transit services in the Baltimore Region.

The first step involves focusing on the history and development of transit services in the Baltimore region to understand how the existing service network came to be and provides the context for why some regional services are operated by the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and others by Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS). Our goal is that by understanding the historical perspective, we will understand the transit network, its origins and evolution and its current form. The overview and historical perspective include the development and evolution of:

- **State leadership for local transit services** in the City of Baltimore.

- **State leadership for regional transit services**, including the MARC commuter rail system and the Commuter Bus program.


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- **County leadership for local services** in the counties surrounding Baltimore through the Locally Operated Transit System (LOTS) program.

The history leads to a brief overview of the existing transit system in the Baltimore Region, including individual services and the regional transit system, including systems and investments in existing service integration and coordination mechanisms (see Figure 1). The memo concludes with findings and implications for modern day governance and funding questions.

Figure 1   Summary Timeline: Transit Organization in Baltimore Region

1908

State Roads Commission created
with Commissioner appointed by Governor

1910

State Public Service Commission created
to regulate transportation providers

1957

On-Going Issues with private Baltimore Transit Company
lead the Mayor to call for local or public ownership; City Council and business community reject role for the City

1961

Metropolitan Transit Authority created
by General Assembly to regulate/ oversee public transit in the City of Baltimore and Baltimore County (MTA replaces PSC), [*Board includes locally-appointed members as majority; BTC continues to operate the service*]

1969

Strikes lead General Assembly to create new Metropolitan Transit Authority
to take over ownership and operation of BTC services, and to construct and operate a regional rapid transit system; Anne Arundel now included

1970

MDOT formed
to be statewide transportation agency with Governor-appointed Secretary and Commission
- "New" MTA is included as a modal administration

1985

Statewide Specialized Transportation Assistance Program
Provides state funds to Counties under MTA administration; reinforces role of administering grants to Counties

1983

MARC brand created
for commuter rail, Baltimore Metro subway opens

1978

State Railroad Administration created
in MDOT, separate from MTA

1974-75

County Governments assume responsibility
for planning, managing and operating county-based services, MTA provides funding

1974

MTA re-organized into three divisions:
1. Operate Baltimore transit services
2. Plan and construct rapid rail
3. Administer grants for transit programs statewide

1987

MTA begins funding contracted commuter bus service

1992

MTA assumes functions of State Railroad Administration
MARC now part of MTA; first section of MTA Light Rail opens

2015-2017

MTA Baltimore services restructured and rebranded
as BaltimoreLink

MTA AND BALTIMORE

Overview

Public transportation services are available throughout the Baltimore urbanized area with local and regional connections provided through a combination of bus, rail, and demand response services. Prior to public transportation services, private transportation companies served a similar geography since as early as the mid-1800s when streetcars served much of the region. Transportation services developed and evolved with transportation technology and ridership demand as did the management and ownership of services to the current structure where the State of Maryland through the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) administers a statewide public transit system through the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). The following section provides an overview of the development of transit service in the Baltimore region while Appendix A presents a detailed timeline.

Historical Perspective

From a national perspective, state management and administration of transit service development is not unique, but it also not anomalous. In Maryland, the state's management of public transportation evolved, beginning with decisions in the early 20th century that created state agencies to address transportation issues, including the State Roads Commission and the Public Service Commission (PSC). The creation of these agencies recognizes both the importance of transportation infrastructure and services as a public good and consolidates authority for management of the systems at the state level.

The PSC is most relevant to the development of public transportation services because the State of Maryland gave the PSC authority in the early 1900s over transportation companies including taxi, bus, and rail providers. This authority included setting rates, expectations for service levels and quality, and service design (bus routes); this step effectively transitioned authority for managing and governing local service to a state agency. In practical terms, it meant that the regions where private transportation companies operated service (City of Baltimore, Baltimore County and Anne Arundel County), local authorities did not have direct authority over the private transportation services that operated in their jurisdictions.

In the case of Baltimore, the transition to consolidated and state ownership of public transportation services advanced when the private Baltimore Transit Company (BTC) began to struggle in the post-war era. Losses in ridership and service decreases led to cases presented to the PSC. Further distress, including efforts to end the streetcar system, strikes, and media attention led to efforts from Baltimore's Mayor to express an interest in taking over the private system and creating some type of public transportation authority, as was happening in many cities. However, at the time the City of Baltimore considered seeking authority for a local or regional transit system, the City lacked any authority over fares and service development and

changing this structure would require state legislation. When the Mayor's efforts to find a local (private) buyer for the BTC did not yield any results, and the call for a local public takeover was rejected by the business community and City Council, the City turned to the state and legislation was passed in the General Assembly creating an initial state agency to address Baltimore's transit issues.

At the same time, the decline in ridership on transit led to the realization that streetcars and buses mired in traffic would not be able to attract ridership. This desire to build a fast and reliable transit network meant that system costs would be too much for the City of Baltimore to fund on its own, even with the anticipated availability of federal funding for construction. The need for funding, therefore, helped secure a second state role (funding), which resulted in a new agency, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), the State Public Transportation Administration. The creation of a multi-modal Transportation Trust Fund as the funding basis for the new MDOT further supported the development of transit as it would no longer necessarily be limited to simply transit fare revenues.
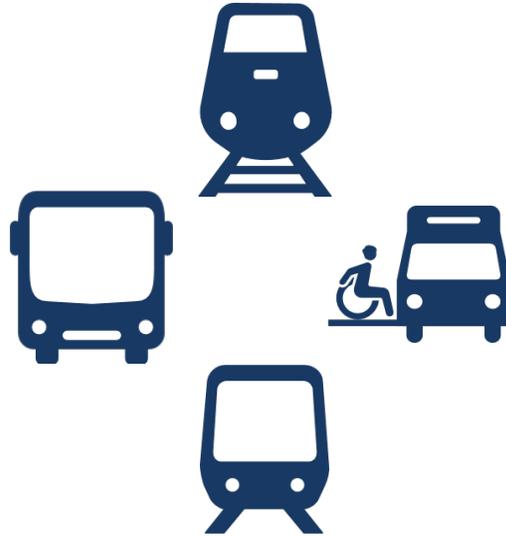
During the creation of MDOT it was recognized that a state agency focused on administering a transit system in a single part of the State (Baltimore) was awkward. A Task Force focused on the creation of a State Department of Transportation reviewed the role of MDOT and recommended a new role for the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) focused on owning and operating transit and developing a regional rapid rail system in Baltimore. The State role in the development of transit services in the Maryland suburbs of Washington DC was included as an MDOT function. These changes clarified the role of the MTA and expanded the role of MDOT. It also established a system of modal administration, which provided a logical vehicle to address the need to maintain commuter rail services, and then commuter bus services—both of which extended well outside the immediate Baltimore region.

Maryland's modal approach to managing transit investment matched changes at the federal level, which created transit funding programs oriented around service types (rural, urban, etc.) and some rider categories (older adults and people with disabilities). Federal transit programs distributed funds to the MTA, which reinforced statewide administration of these resources. Over time and into the 21st century, the MDOT MTA has retained responsibility for funding, managing and operating transit services for Maryland's urbanized areas.

Existing Services

Within the current governance structure, the MDOT-MTA manages, funds, and operates a mature transit network that consists of different modes and types of bus service, including local and regional service (see Figures 2 and Figures 3). The MDOT regional services are managed and funded by MDOT but operated by a private service provider.

Local service consists of:

- **Fixed-route bus service** that is structured and branded according to distinct service types:
    o CityLink high frequency bus service
    o LocalLink daily service
    o ExpressLink weekday peak-hour service.

- **Light rail service branded** as Light RailLink. The light rail network extends from Baltimore County on the north through the City to Anne Arundel County (with two branches) on the south end.

- **Heavy rail Metro SubwayLink** service, which operates from Owings Mills in the northwest suburbs (in Baltimore County) into downtown Baltimore City.

- **Demand response complementary paratransit service**, MobilityLink. This service is provided in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and is available for people with a disability that prevents them from using fixed route service. MobilityLink is available within ¾ of a mile of all MDOT-MTA fixed-route transit service.

Regional service includes:

- **MARC commuter rail service** on three lines: from Perryville in the northeast (Harford County) to Baltimore, the Camden line from Baltimore to Washington via the CSX line, and the Penn line from Baltimore to Washington via the Amtrak northeast corridor line, including service to BWI Marshall Airport.

- **Regional commuter bus service**. MDOT-MTA contracts with private bus operators to provide services to downtown Baltimore as well as service from the Baltimore region into downtown Washington, D.C. The commuter bus program also includes several routes from outside the Baltimore region (from southern and western Maryland to Washington.

Figure 2   Transit Services Currently Operated in the Baltimore Metropolitan Region—MDOT MTA

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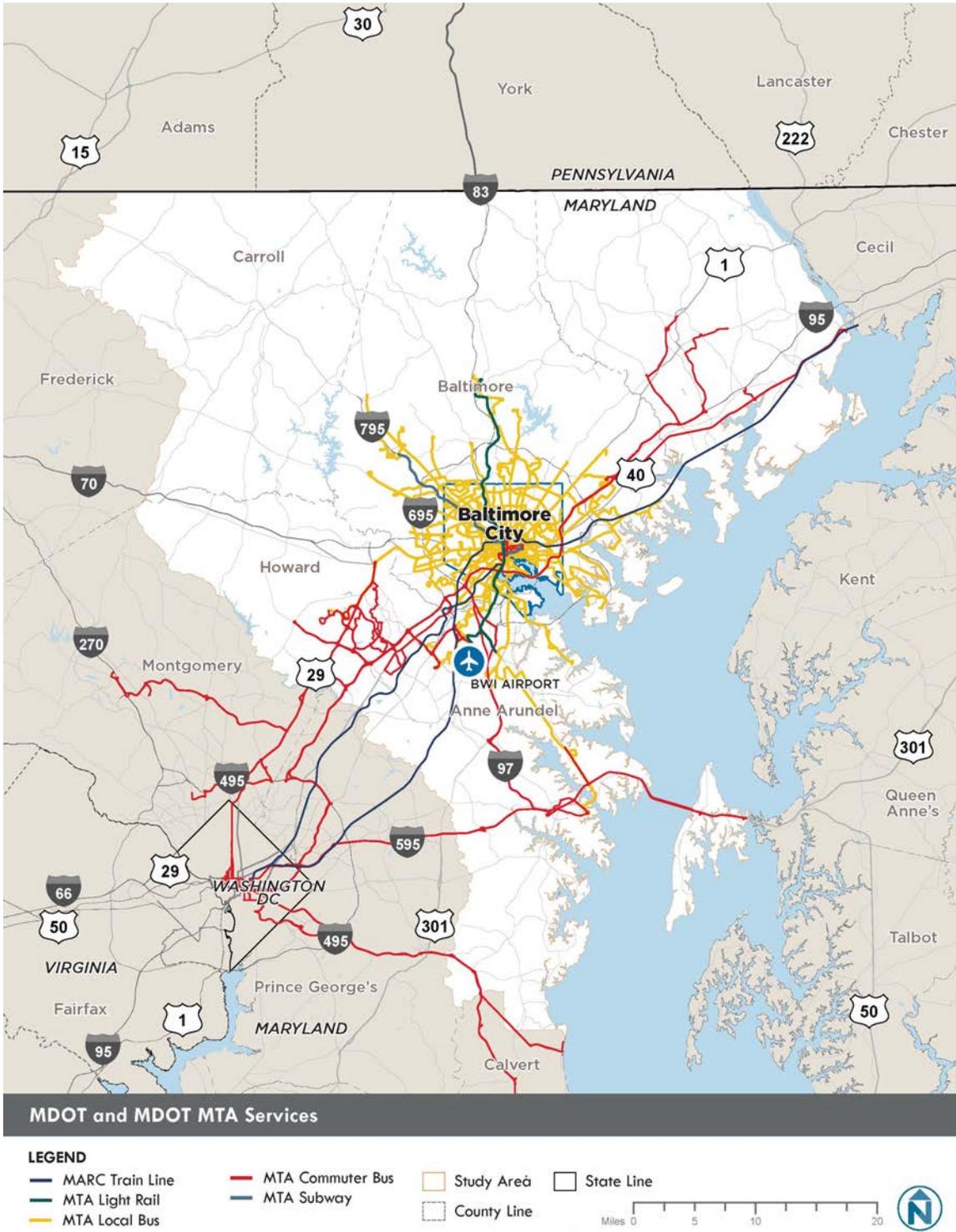
Figure 3   Inventory of Transit Services Currently Operated in the Baltimore Metropolitan Region—MDOT MTA

Transit Agency	Service Name	Operator	Type of Service	Service Area	Size Indicators	FY 2019 Ridership
MDOT MTA	BaltimoreLink • CityLink • LocalLink • Express BusLink	MDOT MTA	"Local" bus CityLink: frequent daily service LocalLink: daily service Express BusLink: weekday peak service	Baltimore City, Baltimore County, parts of Anne Arundel and Howard Counties	Per 2019 NTD: 615 peak vehicles	63,988,571
MDOT MTA	Light RailLink	MDOT MTA	Light rail	Baltimore City, Baltimore, and Anne Arundel Counties: Hunt Valley to Baltimore to Linthicum to BWI Airport/Glen Burnie	Per 2019 NTD: 38 peak vehicles Per Light RailLink Cornerstone Plan: 33 stations 58 miles of track 53 light rail vehicles	6,966,072
MDOT MTA	Metro SubwayLink	MDOT MTA	Subway	Owings Mills to Baltimore (Baltimore City and County)	Per 2019 NTD: 54 peak vehicles Per Metro SubwayLink Cornerstone Plan: 14 stations 34 miles of track 100 railcars	7,275,335

Transit Agency	Service Name	Operator	Type of Service	Service Area	Size Indicators	FY 2019 Ridership
MDOT MTA	MobilityLink Supplemented by Call-a-Ride Taxi Access program	Contract broker and private operators	ADA complementary paratransit	Baltimore City, Baltimore County, parts of Anne Arundel and Howard Counties - anywhere within ¾ mile of BaltimoreLink (CityLink, LocalLink, Express BusLink), Light RailLink, and Metro SubwayLink	Per 2019 NTD: 473 peak vehicles + 38 taxis	2,992,499
MDOT MTA	MARC Train	Host Railroads: Penn Line: AMTRAK Camden and Brunswick Lines: CSX Transportation	Commuter rail	• Penn Line: Perryville to Baltimore to Washington, DC (Baltimore City and Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Cecil, Harford, and Prince George's Counties) • Camden Line: Baltimore to Howard County to Washington, DC (Baltimore City and Baltimore, Howard, and Prince George's Counties) Brunswick Line: Martinsburg, WV and Frederick to Washington, DC (Frederick and Montgomery Counties)	Per 2019 NTD: 149 peak vehicles Trains per weekday per MARC Cornerstone Plan: Penn Line: 57 Camden Line: 21 Brunswick Line: 18	9,190,885
MDOT MTA	Commuter Bus	Private bus companies under contract to MDOT MTA	Commuter bus	• To Baltimore from Anne Arundel, Harford, Howard, and Queen Anne's Counties • To BWI and Ft Meade (Anne Arundel County) from Gaithersburg To Washington, DC and Montgomery and Prince George's Counties from Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Howard, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, and Washington Counties	Per 2019 NTD: 280 peak vehicles Number of routes and daily trips per Bus Cornerstone Plan: Balt-9 rts/95 trips Central Md-6 rts/102 trips Wash-23 rts/445 trips	3,623,587

Source: National Transit Database, FY2019 data

LOCALLY OPERATED TRANSIT SERVICES

Overview

Locally operated transit services (LOTS) consist of public transportation services distinct from services managed and operated by the MDOT MTA. While the MDOT MTA services evolved from private transportation companies, the LOTS systems emerged from federal transportation funding programs that were initially designed for seniors and persons with disabilities. The MDOT MTA administered and managed the federal funding programs and distributed funds to LOTS agencies around the State of Maryland. Overtime, the LOTS agencies began diversifying from services oriented around older adults and people with disabilities to provide general public services.

This historical perspective focuses on development of the eight LOTS systems currently operating in the Baltimore Region. Appendix B provides a detailed timeline for the development of each LOTS programs.

Historical Perspective

When the Metropolitan Transit Authority (the first MTA) was formed in 1961, it assumed management and operations for services in Baltimore City and Baltimore County only; these were the only communities with private transportation services, so the MTA's role was limited to this geography. In 1969, the MTA was expanded to include Anne Arundel County and a few years later, private suburban bus lines were added to the MTA. During this time, Baltimore City, Baltimore County and Anne Arundel County relied on MTA as their local provider of public transportation services; at that time other counties in the Baltimore region were not involved or interested in providing public transportation. The only other local transit service in the region was the local bus service in the City of Annapolis, which was not transitioned to the MTA; instead, the City assumed responsibility for the operations and management of local transit services.
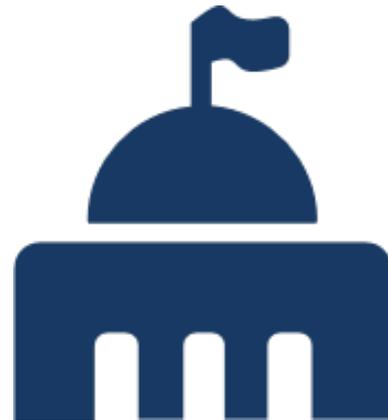
Beginning in the mid-1970's, however, Maryland counties began to become involved in providing transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities. The Older Americans Act (OAA) of 1965 created an Administration on Aging within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and called for the creation of State Units on Aging. In Maryland, as in many states, the Department of Aging provided federal funding under the OAA to the counties. In 1975 the federal OAA was amended to include transportation for seniors as a priority program, and the counties began providing (or contracting for) transportation for seniors.

At nearly the same time, the federal programs Section 16(b)2 and Section 18 (codified in 1991 as Section 5310 and 5311) were created in the Surface Transportation Act of 1978. The Section 16(b)2 program provided federal funds for vehicle capital for private non-profit entities providing transportation to seniors and persons with disabilities. Section 18 provided capital and operating funds for public transportation in non-urban areas. As discussed, these programs were administered by state government agencies, which in the case of Maryland was the MTA. With

this authority, the MTA provided funding to Maryland counties, including in the Baltimore region. Initially, county-based transportation services focused on seniors and persons with disabilities.

As local services began operating in individual counties, local agencies began requesting state financial support for local transit service initiatives. In 1975 the Governor created the Interagency Commission on Specialized Transportation to coordinate the transportation services developing under many human service programs. In 1985 the MTA conducted a comprehensive study of these programs, which led to legislation to create the Statewide Specialized Transportation Program (SSTAP), which provided state funding for transportation services that filled gaps in the public transportation services, especially for seniors and persons with disabilities. SSTAP was (and is) administered by the MTA with state funding provided to the counties across the state, including those In the Baltimore region.

In the mid-1970s and 1980s, the Baltimore region, including Carroll, Howard, Harford, and Queen Anne's were largely rural, as were large portions of Baltimore and Anne Arundel Counties. Consequently, the counties were eligible for federal rural transit funding and because they were not part of the MTA service, they developed their local transit systems, using a combination of federal, state, and local funds. Growth in the urbanized areas of Baltimore and Washington DC spurred growth and development in the surrounding counties, with large parts of ring counties transitioning from rural to suburban development patterns and increasing population and employment. As the counties grew, so did their need for public transportation services. In part because the ability (or willingness) of the MTA to expand operations of local services was limited, local transit systems enhanced their services.

This legacy of starting as senior transportation services and transitioning to general public systems is evident in several of the LOTS systems in the Baltimore Region. Several of these transitions are recent or ongoing. In Baltimore County, for example, the shift to a public transportation program from the CountyRide demand-response service for seniors and persons with disabilities is ongoing, with the development of the Towson Circulator and plans for additional public services even in the Urbanized Area portion of the County. In Anne Arundel County the Department of Aging and Disabilities Program demand-response service has just become a key part of the services provided under the Office of Transit. In Queen Anne's County the County Ride program is still administered by the Department of Aging.

This experience contrasts with LOTS in the City of Annapolis and Baltimore City. Prior to state control of public transportation services, Annapolis was served by privately-operated transit service. The private services were not transitioned to the MTA and instead, the City assumed responsibility for the operations and management of local transit services. Baltimore City operates two LOTS, the Charm City Circulator and Harbor Connector Ferry. In both cases, these services are in response to a desire for distinct local service focused on its downtown and visitors.

The resulting structure of county-based systems is still in place, and the shift in service operation in Anne Arundel County to the County after a twenty-year effort to create a regional multi-county entity for the Howard, western Anne Arundel, northern Prince George's region reflects the strength of the county-based model. In large part this is because the funding is provided to the Counties (and City of Annapolis), who must match it with local funds—both of which create a strong desire for local control of the services they are funding. The process of developing and expanding local transit services is continuing, with individual plans developed as five-year transit development plans; these transit plans are developed with MDOT-MTA funding. Plans to develop and expand services is also in the recent Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan.

Existing Services

As of January 2021, there are eight LOTS agencies in the Baltimore Region, each of which is operated by a local government, city, or county (see Figures 4 and 5). Each system primarily operates within a single jurisdiction and has its own name and branding. While the LOTS agencies are controlled locally, there is a strong relationship between MDOT-MTA and the LOTS. The MDOT-MTA provides funding, technical assistance, and compliance oversight to the LOTS through its Office of Local Transit Support Services (OLTS). MDOT-MTA is the recipient of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds for the Baltimore Urbanized Area, but also is the recipient of FTA funding as a state entity, and the LOTS in the Baltimore region are subrecipients of both Section 5307 and Section 5311 funding.

Annapolis Transit
City of Annapolis

Office of Transportation
Anne Arundel County

County Ride
Queen Anne's County

Harford Transit LINK
Harford County

MDOT-MTA
Commuter Bus, Light RailLINK,
Local Bus, MARC Commuter Rail
Greater Baltimore Region

Regional Transit Authority
(RTA) of Central Maryland
Howard County

Carroll Transit System
Caroll County

Baltimore CountyRide
Baltimore County

Figure 4   Services Currently Operated in the Baltimore Metropolitan Region –
Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS)
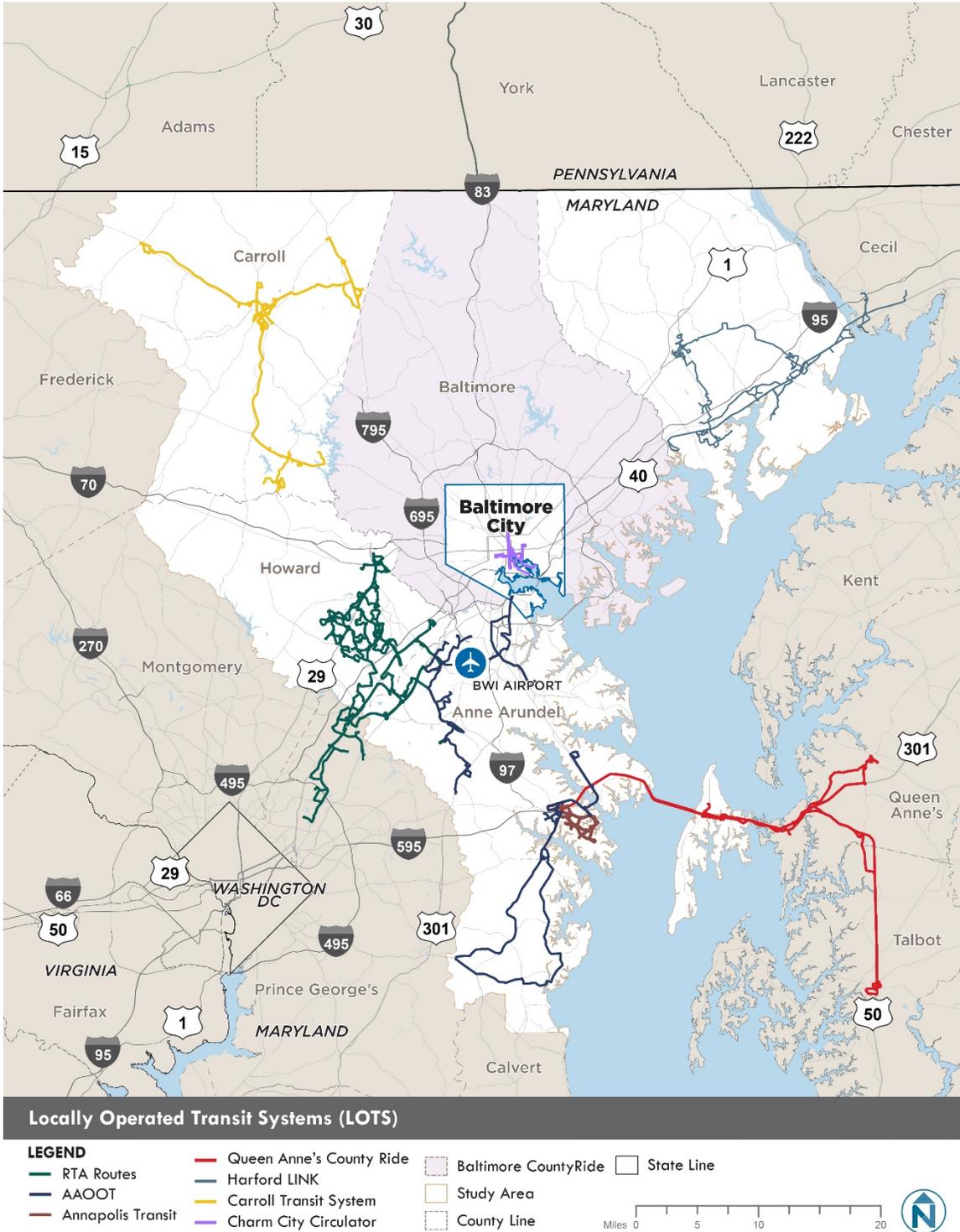
Figure 5   Services Currently Operated in the Baltimore Metropolitan Region-Locally-Operated Transit Systems

Transit Agency	Service Name	Operator	Type of Service	Service Area	Size Indicators	FY 2019 Ridership
City of Annapolis Department of Transportation	Annapolis Transit	City of Annapolis	Fixed route and ADA complementary paratransit	City of Annapolis	Per 2019 NTD: 12 peak vehicles	413,457
Anne Arundel County Office of Transportation		Contract operators	Fixed route and demand response	Anne Arundel County (6 routes in the north and 3 routes in the south)	Per 2019 NTD: 38 peak vehicles	295,177
City of Baltimore Department of Transportation	Charm City Circulator (CCC)	Contract operator	Fixed route	Central business district of Baltimore	4 routes Per 2019 NTD: 17 peak vehicles Per Lib's research: 24 vehicles	1,400,238
City of Baltimore Department of Transportation	Harbor Connector	Contract operator	Ferry boat	Baltimore Harbor	3 routes Per 2019 NTD: 3 peak vehicles	332,561
Baltimore County Department of Public Works (transitioned from Office on Aging July 2020)	CountyRide	Baltimore County	Demand-response	Rural Baltimore County	Per 2019 NTD: 20 peak vehicles	38,533
Carroll County Department of Public Works	Trailblazer	Contract operator	Deviated fixed route and demand-response	Carroll County	Per 2019 NTD: 30 peak vehicles	161,867

Transit Agency	Service Name	Operator	Type of Service	Service Area	Size Indicators	FY 2019 Ridership
Harford County Office of Community and Economic Development	Harford Transit LINK	Harford County	Fixed route and ADA complementary paratransit	Harford County with one connector service to Cecil County	Per 2019 NTD: 24 peak vehicles	358,500
Howard County Office of Transportation	Regional Transportation Agency of Central Maryland (RTA)	Contract operator	Fixed route and ADA complementary paratransit	Howard County, Anne Arundel County, Prince George's County, and the City of Laurel	Per 2019 NTD: 46 peak vehicles +22 taxis	751,434
Queen Anne's County Department of Aging	County Ride	Queen Anne's County	Deviated fixed route and demand-response	Queen Anne's County	Per 2019 NTD: 19 peak vehicles	26,662

Sources: National Transit Database, FY2019 data.

FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING

The evolution of decisions about governing and managing transit services in the Baltimore Region created a structure that is both consolidated and disaggregated, and like all systems, offers advantages and disadvantages for the administration and development of transit services. The history of transit services in the Baltimore Region offers the following insights into current challenges related to governance and funding:

Historical Insights

- The State of Maryland, through MDOT and the MTA has been actively engaged in transit service development and funding in the Baltimore Region for over a hundred years. The State's role has largely evolved in reaction to exogenous events, like the decline of privately operated (and funded)services and changes in federal funding programs, rather than a coordinated strategic investment plan.
- The State's role, especially in the last century, created stability for transit services, especially in the post-war era through a combination of funding and an early vision for rapid transit services in the Baltimore Region.
- While the State played a hands-on role in developing services in urbanized Baltimore, it was decidedly less active – both in funding but also management of the suburban systems. While it has provided technical support and funding it has not directed the development of LOTS services. As a result, the LOTS systems have more local control over service development but also more responsibility for funding, operations, and service management.
- The MTA significantly expanded its jurisdiction in two ways, once when it became the manager of federal transit funding for statewide programs. The second expansion was modal, when the MDOT-MTA expanded from a Baltimore-oriented transit operator to the provider of light, heavy and commuter rail (MARC) and commuter bus services for the greater region. These expansions are a unique aspect of the historical development of transit in the region, facilitating the development of these multi-jurisdictional services.

Different Approaches to Transit Governance

- The evolution of MTA's role in administration of transit services means the State treats communities differently based on geography. Local urban services and regional services are managed, funded, and operated by the State, while suburban communities manage and operate their services with State financial assistance. In part because the evolution reflects incremental decision making and exogenous factors, Maryland's dual approach to transit services is inconsistent and difficult to understand and communicate.
- This parallel approach for urbanized and suburban areas has resulted in a fragmented transit network. Baltimore's services and the regional commuter services are separated

from the LOTS with few opportunities for shared transit investment or service development.

- Separate service administrations mean the funding mechanisms and formulas are different. Funding models will be explored as part of a subsequent analysis, but the historical development of separate approaches to providing and funding services is a legacy challenge to regional transit governance.

- A major advantage for the local jurisdictions has been that they only have to provide the non-federal share for the LOTS programs, not for the MTA-operated services. This eliminates the need for local budgets to support a major part of the region's transit program.

- A major disadvantage is that the level of funding (services) and project prioritization for transit in the region is ultimately determined by a state agency that is directed by the Governor and his/her appointees, a structure that – other than voter input to election of the Governor - does not reflect local input to decision-making. The structure also means priorities change with political leadership, eroding continuity for projects that span election cycles.

The current situation, in which transit in the Baltimore region is provided by a state agency that both owns and operates services and is the funder and oversight agency for local services, is the logical outgrowth of a model that began with the development of the state role in roads and transportation regulation, led to the state as the entity responding to transit needs at each turn. The next technical memorandum will delve into the details of the current organizational structure and its relationship to the various transit funding programs.

Appendix A: Development of the State Role

This document summarizes the history of the MDOT MTA organization, as well as the history of each of the public transportation services operated today by (or under contract to) MTA. The history is organized into the following sections:

- Early State Involvement in Transportation (Roads)
- Evolution of Public Transit Services Prior to State Involvement
  - Streetcar and Bus Services (Predecessors to Baltimore Bus, Commuter Bus, Metro Subway, Light Rail, and Paratransit Modes)
  - Long-Distance Rail Service (Predecessors to MARC Train)
- Baltimore Turns to the State (1948-1961)
- Creation of a State Transit Organization for the Baltimore Region (1961-1971)
- Evolution of MDOT's Transit Administration (1971 to the present day)
  - General Organization Changes
  - As a Transit System

EARLY STATE INVOLVEMENT IN TRANSPORTATION [1]

1908-12 Governor Crothers creates the State Road Commission (SRC). It is given seven years to create a state road network by buying out private turnpikes and building additions. Its five members are appointed by the Governor, with the Governor himself as an ex-officio member.

1910 Automobile Law of 1910 includes state fees for use of state roads: a fee for a driver's license, a fee for vehicle registration, and a fee for a license plate—all required to use state roads.

1910 Maryland Public Service Commission enacted by General Assembly to regulate public utilities including transportation companies statewide—including Baltimore.[2]

1912 SRC Report to the General Assembly regarding state role in creating a road network.

1915 First paved state road completed—State Road 1 between Baltimore and Washington via Laurel (later U.S. 1).

1922 State gas tax

1947 Maryland Expressway Act of 1947—network of four-lane highways to be built by state.

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EVOLUTION OF PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICES PRIOR TO STATE INVOLVEMENT

Streetcar and Bus Services (Predecessors to Baltimore Bus, Commuter Bus, Metro Subway, Light Rail, and Paratransit Modes)

1859   Baltimore's first local public rail service started with Baltimore City Passenger Railway.[3]

1899   All street railway companies in Baltimore were consolidated. [4] (Previously, services were operated by 9 independent railway companies.[5]) The United Railways and Electric Company operated streetcars in Baltimore until 1935. [6]

1910   Control of streetcar fares were assigned to the Public Service Commission.[7]

1933   The United Railways and Electric Company of Baltimore went bankrupt.[8]

1935   The privately-owned Baltimore Transit Company (BTCO) begins operating streetcar and bus service,[9] taking over United Railways and Electric Company services.[10]

1948   BTCO is purchased by National City Lines.[11]

1959   Electric trolleybus ceased operation in Baltimore.[12]

1940s-
1960s   Baltimore streetcar routes are converted to bus operations.[13]

1963   BTCO ends streetcar service[14]

1969   The following Baltimore-area transit operators were operational as of December 1969[15]:

  – Ruxton Bus Company – service between Towson and Mount Washington

  – Baltimore & Annapolis Railroad Co (The B&A) – service to Annapolis, Fort Meade, northern Anne Arundel County, Aberdeen, and downtown Baltimore

  – Suburban Transit Company – serving Pimlico, Ranchleigh/Wellwood, Park Heights-Slade Ave, and Stevenson

  – Woodstock Bus Line – serving Gwynn Oak Junction and Woodstock

  – Clyde's Charter Bus Service – serving Reisterstown and Liberty Roads in Baltimore County, U.S. 140, 26, and 32 in Carroll County, and Fort Meade

  – Moulsdale Bus Line – connecting Baltimore to Bata Shoe in Belcamp, Aberdeen, and Bel Air

  – Additional operators were identified in the surrounding counties; see the local transit history for more information.

  – Job Express Transportation (JET) - a federally funded demonstration project transporting inner city residents (300 daily riders) to jobs in Woodlawn, Towson, East Baltimore, and Rosewood State Hospital in Owings Mills.[16]

1971   **Baltimore & Annapolis Railroad Company** ("The B&A") strikes in February. At the time, the B&A operated commuter bus between Annapolis and Baltimore with stops in Anne Arundel County, Friendship Airport, and Fort Meade, was carrying 3,000 passengers a day. The B&A also operated Saturday-only Service from Glen Burnie to Washington,

DC. The nonunionized Lake Shore Bus Company operated Baltimore to Gibson Island (but not Annapolis)[17]

Long-Distance Rail Service (Predecessors to MARC Train)

1827 The Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad Company was chartered by the General Assembly to construct a transportation link to the west, establishing the nation's first long-distance railway. [18]

1830 B&O service began between Baltimore and Ellicott City, including part of what is now the MARC Camden Line. [19]

1831-
1842 The B&O's main line was extended to Frederick Junction (with a branch to Frederick) in 1831, to Point of Rocks in 1832, to Brunswick and Harpers Ferry in 1834, and Martinsburg in 1842.[20]

1835 B&O began service from Baltimore to Washington on what is now the MARC Camden Line.[21]

1838 The Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad (PW&B) completed its line between Baltimore and Philadelphia in except for a ferry across the Susquehanna River, not bridged until 1860s.[22]

1872 The Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR)-owned Baltimore and Potomac Railroad (B&P) was completed between Baltimore and Washington.[23]

1873 B&O completed its Metropolitan Branch; most service from Martinsburg and Frederick was diverted onto the Metropolitan Branch to Washington and the old main line became a secondary route. This established the basic route for what would become the Brunswick Line.[24]

1881 PRR acquired PW&B in a stock battle with the B&O.[25]

1884 PRR ended B&O trackage rights over the PW&B in 1884, forcing it to open its own parallel route in 1886.[26]

1902 The PW&B and the B&P were combined into the PRR's Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington Railroad.[27]

1949 The B&O ended local service on the Frederick Branch.[28]

1958 All B&O passenger service between Baltimore and Philadelphia ended; local service from Washington was curtailed to Camden Station.[29]

1964ish Local service north of Baltimore on the PRR ended.[30]

1968 The PRR folded into Penn Central, which took over its passenger operations.[31]

1971 Amtrak took over most intercity passenger service in U.S., including some of Penn Central's former routes.[32] The B&O and Penn Central continued to operate their Washington–Baltimore and Washington–Brunswick commuter routes without subsidies.[33]

1972 Sometime before March 20, 1972, B&O discontinued commuter train between Washington and Martinsburg (and West Virginia commuters sued)[34]

1972 Penn Central ends Aberdeen-Baltimore train (which also continued to DC) on April 28

1976 Conrail was created, taking over unsubsidized ex-PRR Baltimore–Washington service from Penn Central[35], responsible for local passenger train operations in the Northeast Corridor (New York to Washington) after the bankruptcy of Penn Central and other Northeast railroads. [36]

1982 Congress relieved Conrail of the responsibility to operate local passenger rail service. [37]

Baltimore Turns to the State (1948-1961)[38]

Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC), a state agency, provides regulatory oversight of fares and service levels/quality. Cities and Counties have no direct role.

January 1948 PSC hearings and investigation into poor service quality on BTC.

Ridership begins to decline, services reduced by BTC. Bus substitutions for streetcars and trackless trolleys a major issue at PSC for ensuing decade and a half.

March 1951 bill passed in General Assembly calling for governor to appoint a special commission to investigate BTC. Governor McKeldin appoints the "Wise" Commission to address Baltimore transit situation.

- Focuses on service improvements to attract/maintain ridership and improve productivity, including perimeter parking lots, zone fares, far-side stops, "incentive" fares, abandonment of some suburban routes, turn-backs to avoid congested core, parking restrictions to improve flow, etc.
- Also calls for racial integration of operator staff

January 1952 BTC strike creates public outcry.

October 1952 PSC conducts own probe of BTC service quality, proposes new standards for adequacy of service, calls for increase in staffing to monitor Baltimore. $50,000 for additional PSC staff rejected by state budget office.

January-March 1956 Strike. Governor McKeldin seizes transit system and state operates it until April, BTC returned to its shareholders. Issues addressed by "Grand Inquest" of the General Assembly.

January 1957 Mayor D'Alesandro calls for local business to buy out BTC (owned by National City Lines), and if no local interests step up, then public ownership. Mayor appoints transit study commission headed by Dr. Abel Wolman of Johns Hopkins. Resulting "Wolman Report" calls for City creation of a Metropolitan Transit Authority to take over all transportation in the Baltimore area, including public transportation and street/highway planning, maintenance, and operations.

- City departments reject loss of control of planning and highways
- Greater Baltimore Committee rejects public ownership of transit.

January 1957 Bills are introduced into the General Assembly calling for a City Transit Authority with local control: four members appointed by the City and one each from Anne Arundel, Baltimore, and Howard Counties.

- Mayor turns to General Assembly for authority to create a public authority to operate transit in Baltimore, no action in 1957.
- PSC calls for public ownership in 1958 rate case, City Traffic Commissioner Barnes calls for public ownership.
- 1959 House Bill 807 creates Greater Baltimore Area Mass Transit Study Commission.
- 1961 General Assembly act creates the Metropolitan Transit Authority, replaces PSC authority.

Creation of a State Transit Organization for the Baltimore Region (1961-1971)

1957-61 Transit services in Baltimore were negatively impacted by strikes and financial difficulties. Efforts were made to involve the state legislature in creating a metropolitan area transit authority. Efforts initially sought to include Anne Arundel County; however, there was opposition by State Senator Phipps from Anne Arundel County resulting in exclusion of the county from the final bill.[39]

1961 The Metropolitan Transit Authority was created by Chapter 670, Acts of 1961, to improve the mass transportation facilities in the area comprising Baltimore City and the metropolitan area in Baltimore County.[40]

- The enacted bill set up 5-member board: 2 members appointed each by the City Mayor and County Council, and with a "swing" member named by the Governor. If the Governor-appointed representative is a City resident, the successor in that seat must be from the other jurisdiction. If either the City or County fail to appoint in 90 days, the Governor appoints members.[41] [42]
- The authority assumed regulatory powers over mass transportation from the Public Service Commission beginning Jan. 1, 1962 [43] except for approval of route changes. To allay fears of smaller bus companies, a late-inserted provision in the bill prohibited the Authority from "extending or changing bus routes of any transit system it controls and operates without approval of the PSC."[44]
- The bill also authorized the Authority "to float bonds to purchase buses and equipment that could be leased to the Baltimore Transit Company."[45]
- The bill authorized the Authority to "establish a formula based on gross revenues, the so-called operating ratio system"[46] following the model of a regulated utility to provide a defined level of return on capital.
- The State provided the Authority with an advance of $25,000 to operate in 1961 (to be paid back in 1962 after the Authority begins receiving tax revenues).[47]
- Beginning in 1962, Authority receives tax revenues, expected to reach $175,000 annually and used to finance its daily operations. [48] These funds are mostly anticipated to be spent on the Authority's regulatory functions.[49]
- The Authority was also granted power to acquire, if necessary, the Baltimore Transit Company beginning June 1, 1963.[50] (However, the Authority did not acquire BTC until 1971.)

1965 Baltimore Area Mass Transportation Plan is published.[51]

1968   Baltimore Region Rapid Transit System, Feasibility, and Preliminary Engineering Study is published[52], setting forth a vision of a comprehensive regional rapid transit network.

1968   The Metropolitan Transit District of Baltimore (Baltimore and Anne Arundel Counties and Baltimore City) is served by 11 bus carriers operating 989 buses to carry 93,667,347 passengers, approximately 95 percent of which are transported by the Baltimore Transit Company. Following a Baltimore Transit Company strike in October, city officials called for public ownership. [53]

1969   The Metropolitan Transit Authority was reformed by Chapter 160, Acts of 1969.[54] The reformed authority, was created for two purposes: construct and manage a $1.7 billion rapid transit system to serve Baltimore City and parts of Anne Arundel and Baltimore Counties, includes all three jurisdictions[55], and to own and operate the former BTC bus system. Impetus for the new authority included the availability of federal funding from the Urban Mass Transit Administration (UMTA) to implement the rapid transit plan.[56] The PSC took on the regulatory functions of the previous authority [57] with regard to the suburban bus lines not operated by the MTA.

1969   Washington Suburban Transit Commission requests a $15.6 million financial commitment from the State of Maryland for FY 1971 ($99 million total over the next 10 years) to prevent state tax revenues from being channeled solely to the new Transit Authority for Baltimore. The requested funds would be used to cover 50 percent of the Montgomery and Prince George's County share to develop the future Metrorail system.

1970   A study conducted for the Government's Task Force on Creation of a State Department of Transportation recommends that the proposed DOT include a state public transit administration among other modes. [58]

1970   The Metropolitan Transit Authority took over operations of Baltimore Transit Company on April 30, 1970.[59] The Authority contracted with ATE Management and Service Company, Inc. to operate the system under a 3-year, $1.1 million contract.[60]

1970   MDOT was established by Chapter 526, Acts of 1970 as amended by Chapter 253, Acts of 1971.[61] Highways, bridges, tunnels, airports, the Port of Baltimore, and public transportation were consolidated under one department, which began operation on July 1, 1971.[62] The Mass Transit Administration (MTA) was created as modal administration in MDOT.

1971   MTA purchased the Baltimore Transit Company for $1.1 million in February 1971.[63]

1971   MDOT legislation includes formation of a Transportation Commission: 17 members, 10 appointed by the Governor, plus one each from seven highway districts serve ex-officio.[64]

Evolution of MDOT's Transit Administration (1971 to the present day)

General Organization Changes

1971   The Mass Transit Administration was created as modal administration in MDOT.[65]

1973-
1974   At this time, the MTA was organized into three divisions: the Metropolitan Transit System Division, the Rapid Transit Development Division, and the Public Transportation

Development Division. In addition to administering and operating the Baltimore regional system, the MTA "administers a program to provide technical and financial assistance for the development or improvement of public transportation facilities in small urban areas throughout the State of Maryland."[66]

1975   Interagency Committee on Specialized Transportation is created by the Governor through Executive Order 01.01.1975.02[67] MTA administers the application process for the federal transit program providing capital to private non-profit agencies for client transportation, the Section 16(b)2 program (now codified as the Section 5310 program). This Committee evaluated grant applications, while MTA administered the program.

1978   State Railroad Administration created within MDOT[68]

1979-
1980   MTA is organized into the following divisions: Metropolitan Transit System Division, the Baltimore Region Rapid Transit Division (new name) and the Public Transportation Development Division.[69]

1981-
1982   MTA is organized into the following divisions: Metropolitan Transit System Division, the Baltimore Region Rapid Transit Division, and the Planning and Program Development Division (new name).[70]

1983-
1984   MTA is reorganized into the following four divisions: Transit Operating Division, Engineering Development Division, Planning and Program Development Division, and Division of Finance. [71]

1985   Statewide Specialized Transportation Assistance Program (SSTAP) established through statewide legislation, Section 2-103.3 of the Transportation Articles of the Maryland Annotated Code – to be administered by the Secretary of the MDOT in consultation with the Maryland Department of Aging (MDOA) and the Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) Office.[72]

1989-
1990   MTA is reorganized into the following six divisions: Communications; Transit Development; Human Resources; Management Analysis and Programs; Finance; and Transit Operations[73]

By 1991-
1992   MTA is organized into the following divisions: Communications; Transit Development; Human Resources; Capital and Statewide Programs (new name); Finance; and Transit Operations[74]

By 1994-
1995   MTA is reorganized into eight offices: Administration; Planning and Programming; Engineering; Transit Operations; Finance; Customer Services; Media and Public Relations; and Real Estate. "The Office of Planning and Programming began as the Capital and Statewide Programs Department, formed in 1984, and received its present name in 1993. The Office is responsible for the capital program, statewide and federal grants, legislative liaison, regional and State planning, and technical assistance."[75]

2001   Mass Transit Administration renamed Maryland Transit Administration in October (Chapter 730, Acts of 2001) [76], [77] and branded as MTA Maryland

2011   Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation Funding Presents its Final Report to the Governor and Maryland General Assembly on November 1.[78]

2011   MTA is organized into:

- Engineering, Support Services, and Statewide Service Development
- Service Oversight, Core Services, and Information Technology
- Transit Development and Delivery (created in Feb. 2011, this division supported major ongoing transit initiatives, such as the Purple Line)[79]

2013   MTA reorganized in December into:

- Administration
- Operations
- Planning, Program, and Engineering [80]

2013   Local and Regional Transportation Funding Task Force was authorized (Chapter 429, Acts of 2013). To raise funds for regional and local transportation systems, the Task Force studied and made recommendations on the feasibility of certain transportation funding options, such as creating regional transit financing entities, and local-option transportation revenues. The report was submitted to the Governor and General Assembly Dec. 19, 2013.[81]

2015   MTA was further reorganized in December, with functions consolidated under two deputy administrators:

- Operations
- Planning, Program, and Engineering[82]

2017   MTA was rebranded as MDOT MTA.

2018   MDOT MTA services branded as "Link" services, (CityLink, RailLink, SubwayLink, MobilityLink, etc.)

As a Transit System

1971   MTA purchased the Baltimore Transit Company for $1.1 million in February 1971. Replacement bus purchases are under way during 1971.[83]

1971   MTA took over operations of the JET buses in June 1971.[84]

1972   MTA took over B&A service to Riviera Beach (Anne Arundel County) and Brooklyn in January 1972.[85]

1972   In July, MTA launched Park 'N Ride Express commuter bus service from eastern and western Baltimore County to downtown, in partnership with GEM stores (which provided the parking).[86] Dundalk-Essex and Westview Park-Catonsville are served.

1973   In May, the State began subsidizing Amtrak service that carried Maryland commuters between Cumberland and Washington (the beginning of Maryland's subsidization of rail service). This train formerly operated to Parkersburg, WV.[87]

1973   MTA acquired McMahon lines (in part), B&A commuter bus and its subsidiary Lake Shore Bus Company, Suburban Transit Company, Dundalk Bus Company, and Ruxton Bus Lines)[88], [89] McMahon continued to operate service between Bel Air and Baltimore.[90]

1974   In March, MDOT began a 50% subsidy of the B&O's Washington–Brunswick and Washington–Baltimore service to sustain this commuter service that the B&O was threatening to discontinue due to heavy financial losses.[91], [92]

1975   MDOT entered into an Operating Agreement with the B&O, where the State agreed to pay the total operating deficit for the trains and provide the rolling stock.[93]

1976   MDOT entered into subsidy agreement with Conrail[94] after Conrail threatened to discontinue service.[95]

1978   MTA began offering paratransit service for people with disabilities, taking over service previously provided by Baltimore's Lutheran Social Services.[96],[97]

1980   BWI Rail Station opened for Amtrak and Conrail trains.[98]

1983   State law enacted requiring MTA to recover at least 50 percent of its operating costs from fares.[99]

1983   The State entered into an operating agreement with Amtrak to continue the former Conrail service that became the MARC Penn Line. [100]

1983   The MARC brand was created. MARC has been described as an acronym for Maryland Rail Commuter,[101] Maryland Area Rail Commuter,[102] and Maryland Area Regional Commuter. According to the MARC Cornerstone Plan, by 1984, the State had assumed control of all remaining commuter rail services and inherited a wide range of legacy equipment. [103]

1983   MTA contracted out a portion of its paratransit service to meet growing demand.[104]

1983   Baltimore Metro subway opened on November 21 (Charles Center to Reisterstown Plaza)[105],[106]

Mid-1980s   MTA launched commuter bus service from Charles County to Washington, D.C.[107]

1987   The Baltimore Metro subway was extended to Owings Mills.[108]

1987   The B&O assets, including the Frederick Branch, were acquired by CSX.[109] CSX continued to operate the MARC Camden and Brunswick Line service.[110]

1987   U.S. DOT awarded a grant of $825,000 to MTA to fund commuter bus services.[111]

1988   In April, Eyre Bus Service began operating the Route 29 Flyer from Columbia to Silver Spring and Washington, D.C. under contract to MTA. The contract began subsidizing service Eyre had operated on some level since 1979.[112] MTA also began sponsoring routes from Frederick to Washington, Waldorf to Washington,[113] and Annapolis to Washington (Dillon's Bus Service, in August[114]).

1989   In July, MTA launched new commuter routes: the dual Route 929-Route 29 Flyer to Silver Spring and Washington (operated under contract by Eyre Bus Service), the Fort Meade Flyer from Columbia (operated by Dillon's Bus Service), and the Laurel Flyer from Baltimore (operated by Dillon's Bus Service).[115] In November, MTA awarded another contract to Eyre Bus Service to subsidize commuter bus service between Columbia and Washington via I-95.[116]

Late 1980s   MTA expanded commuter bus program to Calvert and St. Mary's Counties[117]

Early 1990s   MTA expanded the paratransit fleet to address requirements of the ADA.[118]

1990s   Additional commuter bus routes funded from Howard, Queen Anne's, and Anne Arundel Counties. [119]

1991   The MARC Penn Line was extended to Perryville.[120]

1992   MTA assumed functions of the State Railroad Administration.[121], [122]

1992   The Central Light Rail Line opened on Orioles first game at Camden Yards (Timonium to Camden, extended to Cromwell later in year).[123]

1995   Baltimore Metro subway extension to Johns Hopkins Hospital opens May 31.[124]

1997   Central Light Rail Line was extended to Hunt Valley, Penn Station, BWI airport.[125]

2001   MTA launched the Frederick branch service on the MARC Brunswick Line.[126]

2004   MTA adopted a new paratransit service delivery model which included a centralized control center and a dedicated fleet of cutaway buses, added service provider contractors and vehicles to help meet increasing demand[127] multi-provider brokerage arrangement for contracts[128]

2008   State law amended the 50% farebox recovery requirement to 35% and added farebox recovery reporting requirement.[129]

2005   MTA awards paratransit contracts to two vendors for Mobility and one for Taxi Access [130]

2008   The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 Section 212 (PRIIA 212) established a cost-sharing arrangement for Northeast Corridor infrastructure along the MARC Penn Line for commuter and intercity rail services; replaced previous Joint Benefits program MDOT had with Amtrak.[131]

2010   MARC began looking for a new operator to replace CSX Transportation for the Camden and Brunswick Lines.[132] The MDOT Secretary noted that CSX has been seeking to get out of commuter operations for a long time.[133]

2011   Legislative amendment prohibited MTA from reducing the level of services to achieve the minimum required farebox recovery.[134]

2012   MTA awarded contract to operate the MARC Camden and Brunswick Lines to Canadian company Bombardier Transportation [135]

2013   Legislative amendment required increases in MTA fares over time (except on commuter bus and commuter rail)[136]

2013   MTA awards contract to three paratransit contractors. MTA no longer operates or maintains any portion of the revenue fleet[137] although it still owns the fleet[138]

2015-
2017   MDOT MTA overhauled and rebranded the MTA transit system under BaltimoreLink[139]

2016   State contracts with Purple Line Transit Partners consortium to design, finance, construct, and operate the Purple Line in Montgomery and Prince George's County. The project is believed to be the largest public/private partnership in the nation.[140] Purple Line construction begins in 2016.[141]

2017   The State law requiring minimum 35% farebox recovery is repealed.[142]

2017   BaltimoreLink begins service on new express commuter bus routes to Kent Island and Annapolis in March.[143]

2019   MDOT MTA Cornerstone Plans are published. These are strategic plans for each operating mode short-term through long-term (i.e., through 2045).

Appendix B:
Development of the Locally Operated Transit Systems

As noted in the text, there are eight Locally-Operated Transit Systems (LOTS) in the Baltimore region:

- City of Annapolis—Annapolis Transit
- Anne Arundel County—Office of Transit
- City of Baltimore—Charm City Circulator and Harbor Connector Ferry
- Baltimore County—CountyRide
- Carroll County—Carroll Transit System
- Harford County—LINK
- Howard County—RTA
- Queen Anne's County—County Ride

> **Key Terms and Acronyms:**
>
> ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act
>
> ATP - Annual Transportation Plan
>
> LU – Large Urban, relates to federal funding provided to urbanized areas (FTA Section 5307)
>
> TDP – Transit Development Plan

Each of these has developed in unique ways in response to local needs and available funding programs. A brief history of each follows.

CITY OF ANNAPOLIS

Local public transportation in the City of Annapolis is provided by the City's Department of Transportation, operating as Annapolis Transit. Services include: six core fixed routes; a state shuttle; a parking circulator; and ADA complementary paratransit. Anne Arundel County's Office of Transportation - Transit also operates three fixed routes in the Annapolis area of the county that were previously operated by Annapolis Transit. MDOT-MTA provides commuter bus service from the Annapolis area to both Washington, DC, and Baltimore. Intercity bus service is also offered through Greyhound from the Harry S. Truman Park and Ride lot on Riva Road in Parole.

Early History

1908-1935 - The Washington, Baltimore, and Annapolis Electric Railway (WB&A) provided regional passenger and freight service on an electrified route between its namesake cities. The WB&A provided a third rail route between Washington and Baltimore, which both complemented and competed with the Pennsylvania Railroad (now Amtrak's Northeast Corridor) and the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O, now the MARC Camden Line).[144]

A later newspaper article (1969) references the Baltimore and Annapolis Railroad, which served Annapolis, Fort Meade, Northern Anne Arundel County, to downtown Baltimore.[145]

1937   Arundel Bus Company formed.[146] This private bus company provided fixed route service in the Annapolis area.

Modern History

There was a study done in 1974 that looked at creating a joint City of Annapolis- Anne Arundel County Transit Authority.[147] The authority was not created.

The 1974 TDP cites two services operating in Anne Arundel County and the City of Annapolis: Arundel Bus Company and Rural Community Bus Lines (see Anne Arundel County, below).

The SSTAP study (1984) indicates that in 1975 the Housing Service of Annapolis operated a free minibus for all senior citizens in Annapolis.

1978   City of Annapolis purchased assets of Arundel Bus Company and took over the provision of transit service.[148]

Public transit service in the Annapolis area has been operated by the City since 1978 as Annapolis Transit.

Intercity bus service was provided by Greyhound prior to 1982 and again, beginning in 2000 when an agreement was reached to have the Annapolis Department of Transportation serve as the stop. In 2015 the stop was moved to Harry S. Truman Park and Ride on Riva Road.[149]

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

Local public transportation services in Anne Arundel County have two areas of focus – Northern Anne Arundel County, which is oriented to serving the Baltimore suburbs and the areas near Baltimore Washington International (BWI) Thurgood Marshall Airport, and Southern Anne Arundel County, which is focused on the City of Annapolis and the areas of the county south of Annapolis.

Northern Anne Arundel County

Maryland Department of Transportation - Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT-MTA) operates local bus service, light rail service, ADA complementary paratransit services, as well as commuter bus and MARC commuter rail service in the northern portions of Anne Arundel County. The Anne Arundel County Department of Transportation – Transit also operates six routes in Northern Anne Arundel County, some of which were previously operated by the Regional Transportation Agency of Central Maryland (RTA). The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) operated express bus service between the Greenbelt Metrorail Station and BWI, which is currently suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Early History

The early history of transit in northern Anne Arundel County follows the history of MDOT- MTA.

A later newspaper article references the Baltimore and Annapolis Railroad, which served Annapolis, Fort Meade, Northern Anne Arundel County, to downtown Baltimore. This same article

highlights several private bus companies that served the Baltimore suburbs (see Baltimore County) (1969 article).[150]

Modern History

MTA history documented in a separate section. Local transit history is documented below.

1987 - Corridor Transportation Corporation (CTC), a private non-profit organization affiliated with the Baltimore- Washington Chamber of Commerce was formed to provide transit management services for Central Maryland. The first services were called Connect-A-Ride and served Laurel (Prince George's County). A few years later, services were added for parts of Anne Arundel County, including the areas close to Laurel and to Fort Meade.[151]

2001 - The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) initiated express service between the Greenbelt Metrorail Station and BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport.[152] The service was suspended in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

2010   CTC re-organized as Central Maryland Regional Transit, remaining as a non-profit.[153]

2014   The Regional Transportation Agency of Central Maryland (RTA) was established, taking over most of the public transit services operated by Central Maryland Regional Transit. RTA served Howard County, Anne Arundel County, northern Prince George's County, and the City of Laurel.

2018   Anne Arundel County Office of Transportation is created, combining all transit and transportation planning and management functions for the County. Direct operation of RTA routes in northern Anne Arundel County begins with creation of a new shuttle route from Arundel Mills to BWI replacing a segment of RTA service from Columbia to BWI, other former RTA 200 series routes are taken over as the County shifts from participation in the regional entity to direct County management of services it funds (services operated by contractors). County-funded routes previously operated by Annapolis Transit are now operated by the County.

- The demand-response program providing van transportation services to seniors and persons with disabilities previously operated by the Anne Arundel County Department of Aging and Disabilities (DOAD) is incorporated into the transit program managed by the Office of Transportation. DOAD retains the taxi voucher program. Eligible riders for both van and taxi service include persons age 55 and above and people age 18 and older with disabilities.

Southern Anne Arundel County

Local public transportation in Southern Anne Arundel County is operated by Annapolis Transit and by the Anne Arundel County Department of Transportation – Transit. The services provided by Anne Arundel County DOT Transit in Southern Anne Arundel County include three routes that use the Westfield Annapolis Town Center as a hub and a South County Call'N Ride. The routes based from the Town Center were previously operated by Annapolis Transit. MDOT-MTA operates commuter bus service, oriented to both Baltimore and Washington. Greyhound service is also offered from the Harry S. Truman Park and Ride lot on Riva Road in the Parole area.

Early History

The early history of southern Anne Arundel County is like the history of transit in the City of Annapolis, with regional service provided by the WB&A railway and local service provided by the Arundel Bus Company.

Glen Burnie Motor Coach Company, a private operator, provided service from Westview Shopping Center in Parole, Riviera Beach, and the National Security Administration.[154]

Modern History

1971 Anne Arundel Community Action Agency began the Rural Community Bus Lines, structured as a cooperative, with a loan from the Farmer's Home Administration.[155] The service focused on serving rural southern Anne Arundel County. The 1974 "City-County Transit Authority" article indicated that this rural service was in financial difficulty at the time.[156]

1984 The SSTAP study (1984) indicates that in 1975 services for senior citizens and people with disabilities were provided by the Anne Arundel Economic Opportunities Committee, the Community Action Senior Opportunities and Services Division.

1979 SCAT bus service provided by the Community Action Agency started service between Parole and several south county towns funded by a two-year federal grant.[157]

2016 the Anne Arundel County Office of Transportation began operating service and took over the Gold and Yellow routes (based at Westfield Town Center) from Annapolis Transit and began the South County Call'N Ride Service.

CITY OF BALTIMORE

The primary provider of local public transportation in the City of Baltimore is the Maryland Department of Transportation – Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT-MTA). The City of Baltimore also offers the Charm City Circulator and Harbor Connector ferry service, which are both services of the City's Transportation Department.

Early History

1830 B&O service began between Baltimore and Ellicott City; included part of what is now the Camden Line.[158]

1859 Baltimore's first public rail service started with Baltimore City Passenger Railway.[159]

1885 The first commercially operated electric streetcar in America began operation in Baltimore.[160]

1935 Baltimore Transit Company formed from United Railways[161].

The Baltimore Transit Company operated street cars, buses, and trackless trolleys in Baltimore City and into Baltimore County.

Several private bus companies served Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and other suburban locations, based on an article printed in 1969:

- McMahon Bus Service
- Dundalk Bus Lines
- Lake Shore Bus Company
- Rosedale Passenger Lines
- Ruxton Bus Company
- Suburban Transit Company
- Clyde's Charter Bus Company
- Moulsdale Bus Line
- Woodstock Bus Line[162]

Modern History

1968 There was a reverse commute route supervised by Baltimore Department of Transit and Traffic and operated by the Baltimore Transit Company that brought workers from inner-city Baltimore locations to jobs in Woodlawn, Towson, East Baltimore, and Rosewood State Hospital in Owings Mills. The service was called Job Express Transportation (JET). [163] The service was a federally funded project and ended in 1971, with the routes absorbed into the MTA system.

1970 Baltimore Transit Company replaced by Metropolitan Transit Authority (later renamed Maryland Transit Administration).[164] Details regarding the MTA are highlighted separately.

1984 The SSTAP study (1984) indicated that in 1975 the Baltimore City Urban Services Administration provided free bus service to seniors and people with disabilities in the City of Baltimore.

January 11, 2010 Charm City Circulator begins service.[165] CCC is a service of the Baltimore City Department of Transportation and is operated by a contractor. The CCC currently operates four routes in the central business district using a fleet of 24 vehicles. The service is fare-free and is funded primarily through parking revenue.[166] In recent years, the City has also received federal and state grant funding in support of the program including the following:

- Operating funds annually through the ATP process ($3M in LU funds in 2018; $3M in 2019; and $2M in 2020).
- The City is slated to receive $11.9M in FTA CARES Act funding.
- Four Capital Projects received funding directly from FTA (2016 for Intermodal Bus Terminal, Westport TOD/Kent St Transit Corridor, Highlandtown Transit Stop Improvements and Cherry Hill Light Rail Improvements[167]).

BALTIMORE COUNTY

Local public transportation in the urbanized areas of Baltimore County is provided by MDOT-MTA. Baltimore CountyRide provides demand-response services for the rural areas of Baltimore County and is planning on implementing a fixed route circulator service in the Towson Area. MDOT-MTA also provides commuter bus service along the I-95 corridor, along with MARC commuter rail service.

Early History

1827 Feb. 28. Baltimore & Ohio Railroad chartered168.

1828 Feb. 13. Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad chartered.169

1837 Carroll County created from Baltimore County.170

1851 July 1. Baltimore City, as a governmental unit, separated from Baltimore County.171

The Baltimore Transit Company operated street cars, buses, and trackless trolleys in Baltimore City and into Baltimore County from 1935 to 1970.

Several private bus companies served Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and other suburban locations, based on an article printed in 1969:

- McMahon Bus Service
- Dundalk Bus Lines
- Lake Shore Bus Company
- Rosedale Passenger Lines
- Ruxton Bus Company
- Suburban Transit Company
- Clyde's Charter Bus Company
- Moulsdale Bus Line
- Woodstock Bus Line[172]

Modern History

1970 MTA took over the system in 1970. Details regarding the MTA are highlighted separately.

CountyRide provides specialized transportation services for seniors, people with disabilities, and people who live in the rural areas of Baltimore County. The service is demand response and began as a senior-based service, operated out of the Baltimore County Office on Aging.

- **CountyRide** recently transitioned from the Office on Aging to Department of Public Works (July 2020). They are currently looking to expand services.

CARROLL COUNTY

Public transportation in Carroll County is administered through the County's Department of Public Works, with service provided by a contractor. Five Trailblazer deviated fixed routes are operated, along with Countywide demand-response service. There are no commuter or intercity bus services in Carroll County currently.

Early History

1839 Baltimore & Ohio Railroad extended line through Mount Airy Cut.[173]

Clyde's Charter Bus Service, a private operator, served the following corridors in Carroll County: US 140; US 26; and US 32 and served Fort Meade.[174]

The Roland S. Heiner Bus Company, a private operator, provided service between Westminster and an industry in Pleasant Valley.[175]

Modern History

1974 Service begins as Carroll County Senior Overland Service (SOS) and was operated by the Carroll County Bureau of Aging and Disabilities. The service was primarily for seniors and people with disabilities.

1984 SOS transitioned from the Bureau of Aging to form a non-profit.[176]

1987 "Trolley Connection" started by SOS to connect with Westminster Trolley Works "Shopper Shuttle." The Westminster Trolley Works was operated by a private citizen for about six months in 1987 and was cited as the first intra-city public transportation in Westminster.[177] Service did not continue into 1988.

- SOS re-branded to CATS, continuing as a non-profit coordinated transportation provider. The County contracted with CATS to provide public transportation services. County oversight was provided by the Carroll County Department of Planning and then the Department of Citizen Services.

2014 As a result of a competitive procurement, CATS lost the County contract to provide public transportation and subsequently ceased operations. Butler Medical Transport was awarded the contract.

2015 County oversight shifted to the Carroll County Department of Public Works.

Currently "Ride With Us" is the contractor for Carroll Transit and oversight is provided through the Carroll County Department of Public Works. Ride With Us is a non-profit arm of Butler Medical Transport

HARFORD COUNTY

Harford County provides public transportation through the County's Harford Transit Link Service. Fixed route service is provided, along with ADA complementary paratransit. Seven fixed routes were operating prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. Harford Transit Link has since suspended two of these routes. MDOT-MTA commuter bus service (Routes 410, 411, and 420) and MARC service (Penn Line) are also available in Harford County.

Early History[178]

The Baltimore and Annapolis Railroad (B & A) provided service to Aberdeen in Harford County.

McMahon's Bus service, a private operator, provided service between Darlington, Bel Air and Baltimore.

Moulsdale Bus service, a private operator, provided service from Baltimore to the Bata Shoe Company in Belcamp (Harford County).

Inter-County Bus Lines provided service between Havre de Grace and Aberdeen, and to Edgewood Arsenal.

Modern History[179]

1970ʹs

1973 - Harford County Government began transportation services through the Office on Aging with the opening of the senior nutrition program's first sites. Originally, transit services were only for persons age 60 and over, providing transportation to senior centers, doctor's appointments and to grocery stores. As the need for additional services grew, the County established Harford Transit as a unit within the Office on Aging.

1980ʹs

1986   The state's SSTAP program enabled the County to expand services to younger passengers with disabilities. Harford Transit also began providing fixed route public transportation services in Bel Air on an experimental basis. There were no fares; passengers were expected to drop a donation into a box on the bus.

1989   On April 3, 1989 Harford County began weekday bus service with two fixed routes (Route 1 and 2) with 25 planned bus stops, linking the southern and central parts of the County along the Route 22, Route 24, and Route 40 corridors.

1989   Harford Transit operations moved to the DPW facility in Abingdon, off Route 7, working out of a 60-foot trailer with one bathroom. Vehicles were parked outside on a gravel and dirt lot.

1990ʹs

1992 - Harford Transit added complementary paratransit services as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

1995 - Harford Transit began to emphasize access to employment. The Route 6/6A Purple Line was added to provide entry-level workers transportation to the industrial parks between Aberdeen and Edgewood.

2000ʹs

2001 - Continuing emphasizing workforce transportation, the Route 5 Red Line was implemented serving the Edgewood area.

2005   Harford Transit became a separate agency within the Department of Community Services and moved to its current location at 1311 Abingdon Road in Abingdon, a refurbished volunteer firehouse originally built in the 1930s.

2009   Harford Transit underwent a rebranding campaign, complete with a new logo and new name   Harford Transit LINK.

2010's

2011   The newly implemented Route 7 Silver Line continued the workforce transportation goal and provided express service to the growing Riverside/Belcamp and Perryman Peninsula employment areas.

2014   Harford Transit LINK became an agency within the Office of Economic Development.

2018   Harford County combined the Office of Community Services and the Office of Economic Development to form the Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED). Harford Transit LINK became a department within OCED.

HOWARD COUNTY

Local public transportation in Howard County is provided by the Regional Transportation Agency of Central Maryland (RTA). Howard County contracts with the RTA for local bus service (with oversight provided by the Howard County Office of Transportation. Eleven fixed routes are provided, along with ADA complementary paratransit. General paratransit services (GPT) are also provided for Howard County residents who are unable to use the fixed routes due to a disability or age. The GPT services are not restricted to within ¾ mile of the fixed routes, but each rider is only permitted to use the service for one trip per day.

MDOT-MTA offers seven commuter routes that serve Howard County origins, including five that provide service to Washington, DC and two that provide service to Baltimore. MARC's Camden Line also serves Howard County with stops in Dorsey and Savage.

Early History

1831   Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Station at Ellicott's Mills, the nation's first railroad terminal, constructed.[180]

1835   Baltimore & Ohio Railroad's Thomas Viaduct, first multi-span masonry railroad bridge in country, crossed Patapsco River from Elkridge to Relay[181]

Intercity bus service provided along the Route 1 Corridor.[182]

Modern History

1967   Transit service was initiated in Columbia and operated by the Columbia Association for the village.[183] Additional research indicates that the system did not actually open in 1967, but closer to 1970-1971.

July 1971   Easy Rider service suspended due to low ridership. An article from the Baltimore Evening Sun states that the service operated for only six months.[184]

1971   Transit service in Columbia, which had been operating as a Call-A-Ride service, initiated fixed-route service (ColumBus), and significantly cut back the Call-A-Ride service, which had been named Easy Rider. The Easy Rider program had lost about $20,000 in the second quarter of 1971.[185]

Urban and Rural Transportation Alliance (URTA) – began ca. 1977. Provided coordinated paratransit services in Howard County.

1987   Corridor Transportation Corporation (CTC), a private non-profit organization affiliated with the Baltimore- Washington Chamber of Commerce was formed to provide transit management services for a new network of transit services centered on Laurel, linking central Maryland. The first services were called Connect-A-Ride and served Laurel (Prince George's County), but with extensions into Howard and Anne Arundel Counties.

July 1996   Howard County took over Columbus services and re-branded as Howard Area Transit – HATS.[186]

1996   CTC became contract manager for services in Howard County[187]

2000   HATS re-branded as Howard Transit.[188]

2010   CTC re-organized as Central Maryland Regional Transit, remaining as a non-profit agency.[189]

The Regional Transportation Agency of Central Maryland (RTA) was established in 2014, taking over management of the public transit services previously operated by Central Maryland Regional Transit. The RTA services linked Howard County, northern and western Anne Arundel County, northern Prince George's County, and the City of Laurel. Howard County's Office of Transportation is the fiscal agent for the RTA, utilizing funds from Howard County, Anne Arundel County, and MDOT.

Regional Transportation Commission formed with representatives from Howard, Anne Arundel Counties to provide oversight of regional services, and coordination.

Anne Arundel County Office of Transportation creates new shuttle between Arundel Mills and BWI replacing RTA service, subsequently takes over operation of RTA routes in Anne Arundel County (AA-201, AA-202, Crofton Connector)—RTA increasingly a Howard transit program.

QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY

Local public transportation in Queen Anne's County is provided by County Ride, which is a service of the Queen Anne's County Department of Aging. Three deviated fixed routes are offered, along with demand-response service. While the County is on the Eastern Shore and is primarily rural, parts of the County were officially included within the Baltimore Urbanized Area after the 2010 Census. These areas are just over the Chesapeake Bay Bridge in the U.S. 50 Corridor and include the Kent Island communities of Stevensville, Chester, Kent Narrows. Grasonville, just east of Kent Island is also part of the Urbanized Area. Queen Anne's County became a full member of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council in 2017, following passage of state legislation that provided for an additional member to the Council.[190] Queen Anne's County had been informally participating in BMC activities since 2015.

Queen Anne's County also participates with Dorchester Community Transit (DCT) in the Maryland Upper Shore Transit (MUST) program, which offers a coordinated network of routes in Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties.

In addition to local transit services, Queen Anne's County is also served by commuter bus service is provided by MDOT-MTA to Baltimore and to Washington, DC. BayRunner also provides intercity bus service, with a stop on Kent Island.

Early History

- There was a railroad in the early 1900's
- There was intercity bus service along the Route 50 corridor, providing service from both Washington and Baltimore to Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Modern History

1981   Queen Anne's County pulled out of the regional Upper Shore Aging, Inc. and began offering senior services under the Queen Anne's County Department of Aging.[191]

Public transportation service was expanded in 1989 from Kent Island and the northern part of Queen Anne's County to also include Grasonville, Queenstown, and Centerville. [192]

Queen Anne's County-Ride is a member of Maryland Upper Short Transit, a regional coordinating agency.

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