



Transit Choices

September 29, 2016



LINKING YOU
MTA Maryland Maryland Department of Transportation



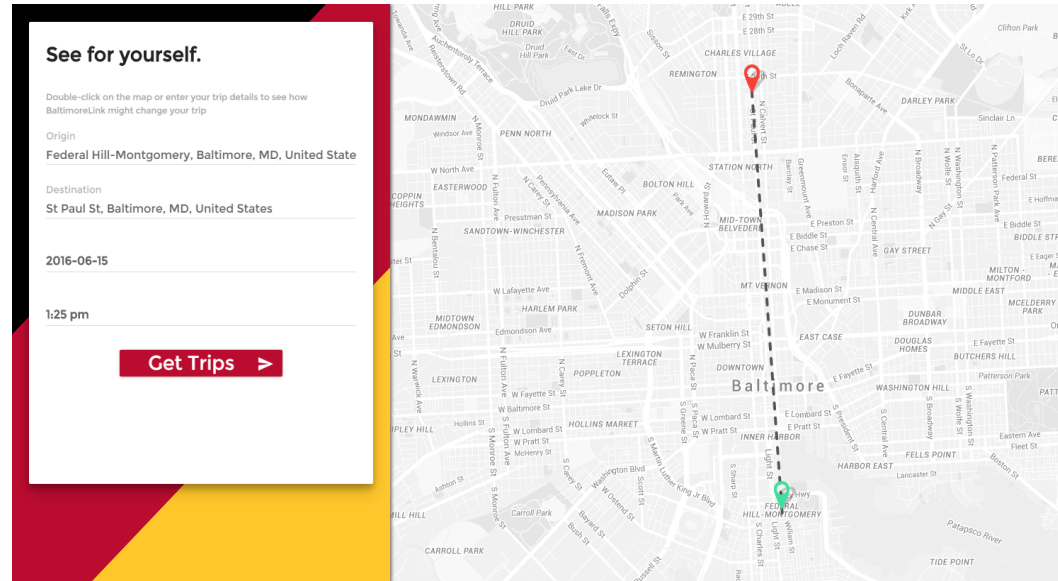
Concern: Pulling Buses and Run Cuts

- Designing a network that accurately reflects MTA resources
- Additional Resources
 - 10 new buses
 - 60 new operators
- MTA Absenteeism Initiative
 - Phase 1: Absenteeism Working Group with representatives on FMLA and Workers Comp
 - Phase 2: Absenteeism Recommendations to provide consistent methods for tracking absenteeism across divisions
 - Phase 3: New Absenteeism Policy for Transportation Employees
 - Since the initiative started in May 2016, there have been reductions in absenteeism in key divisions throughout the MTA. From May 2016 through September 2016 to date, there has been an overall decrease in absenteeism by 13%



Concern: Trip Time Calculations

- Trip Planner tool compares existing routes to BaltimoreLink replacement routes.
- The tool will be updated to include accurate travel time as routes are finalized and schedules are built



Concern: Transfers

- We recognize the mistrust that exists when it comes to the transfer experience
- What we are improving for transfers:
 - Transfer facilities and amenities, such as real-time signage
 - Bus Stop Signage with wayfinding information will support the rider
 - TSP and Dedicated Bus Lanes will move buses through the network faster
 - Safety and Security improvements, like lighting and CCTV



Concern: How the MTA Builds Accurate Schedules

- From the Automatic Passenger Counter (APC) data, running times were calculated for BaltimoreLink using the average velocities (speed), distance of each bus route segment, and dwell time. The running times were first calculated using the average velocities per segment per time of day, since traffic patterns affect bus speeds differently at different times of the day.
- For segments not on an existing route alignment, run time estimates were calculated based on average velocity and distance of the segment.
- Running times are being verified using MTA bus operators and 40-foot buses. The MTA field checked running times by conducting round trips during the morning and mid-day time periods (9AM to 3PM). The main summer months were skipped due to variations in traffic (i.e. vacations, no school). Run time checks will continue in the fall and winter as needed to verify new segments and changes that are proposed.



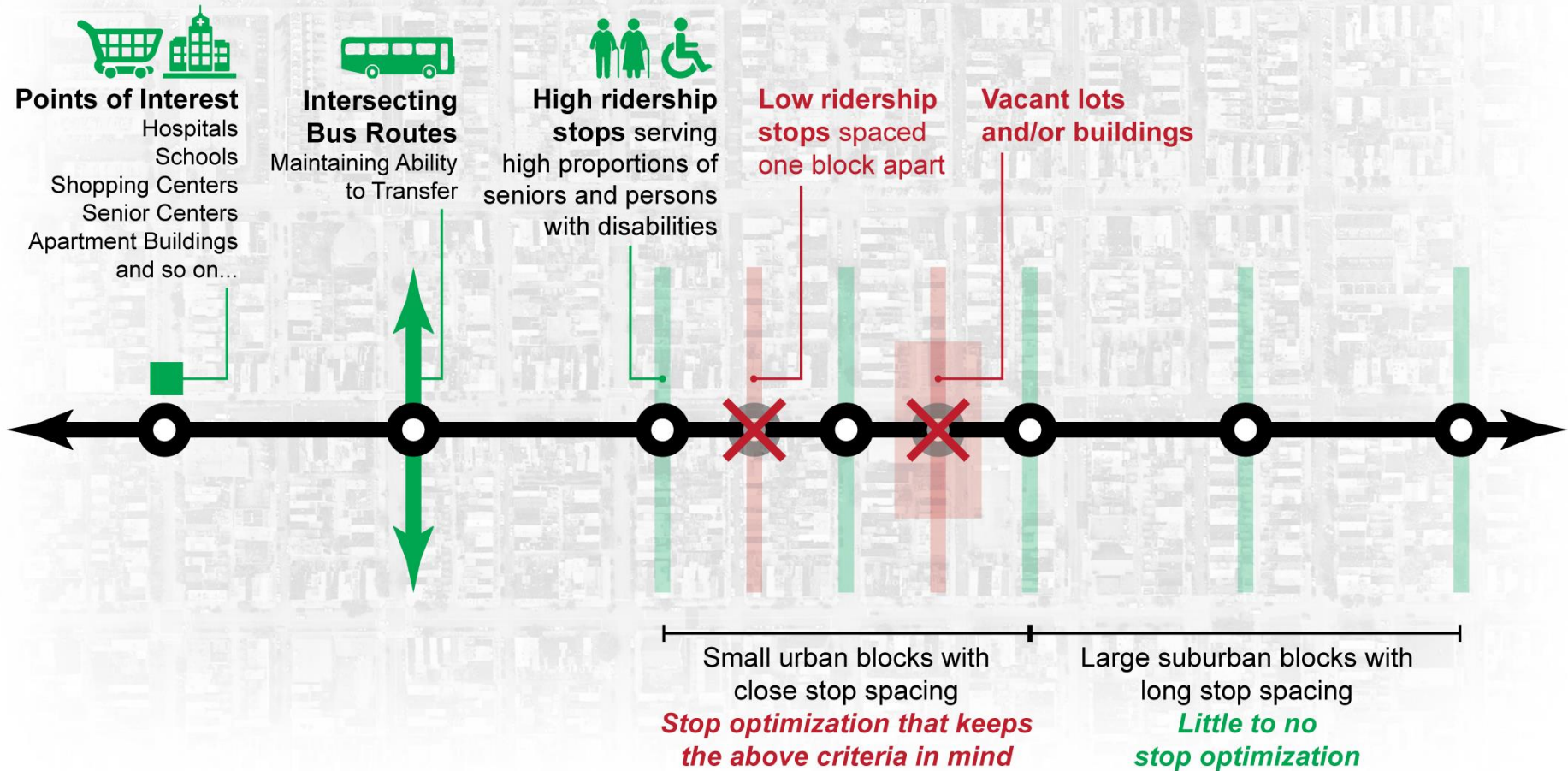
Concern: Bus Stop Locations

- Bus Stop Locations will be released in November
- Current spacing (often every block) contributes to unreliability
- Proposed Spacing
 - Industry standards corresponding with density, land use and route type
 - Exceptions based on trip generators (medical centers, assisted living facilities, etc.)
 - Example: CL Red's spacing won't be as frequent as the 8's, but neither will it be as sparse at the 48's (in-between compromise will balance need for speed with easy pedestrian accessibility)
- Pedestrian Safety
 - Examining curb ramps, crosswalks, sidewalks, lighting, etc.
 - ADA compliance
- Amenities
 - Shelters: 200 new shelters are proposed to be added to system
 - Collaboration with partners (City for benches, SHA for trash cans)

MTA is currently performing field assessments of existing and proposed bus stops. Pending network modifications, a list of optimized stops will be available in November.



Bus Stop Optimization



Concern: Specific Routes

Number of Public Outreach Comments

- Canton/Fells Point/Harbor East connection to downtown: 17 Comments
- LocalLink 53/33rd Street: 28 Comments
- Express BusLink 103: 3 Comments
- Waverly/Ednor Gardens: 99 Comments
- Maryland Avenue/Cathedral: 4 Comments
- LocalLink 51: 53 Comments
- LocalLink 24: 14 Comments
- LocalLink 53 (all concerns, not just Waverly/33rd Street): 22 Comments
- LocalLink 36: 6 Comments



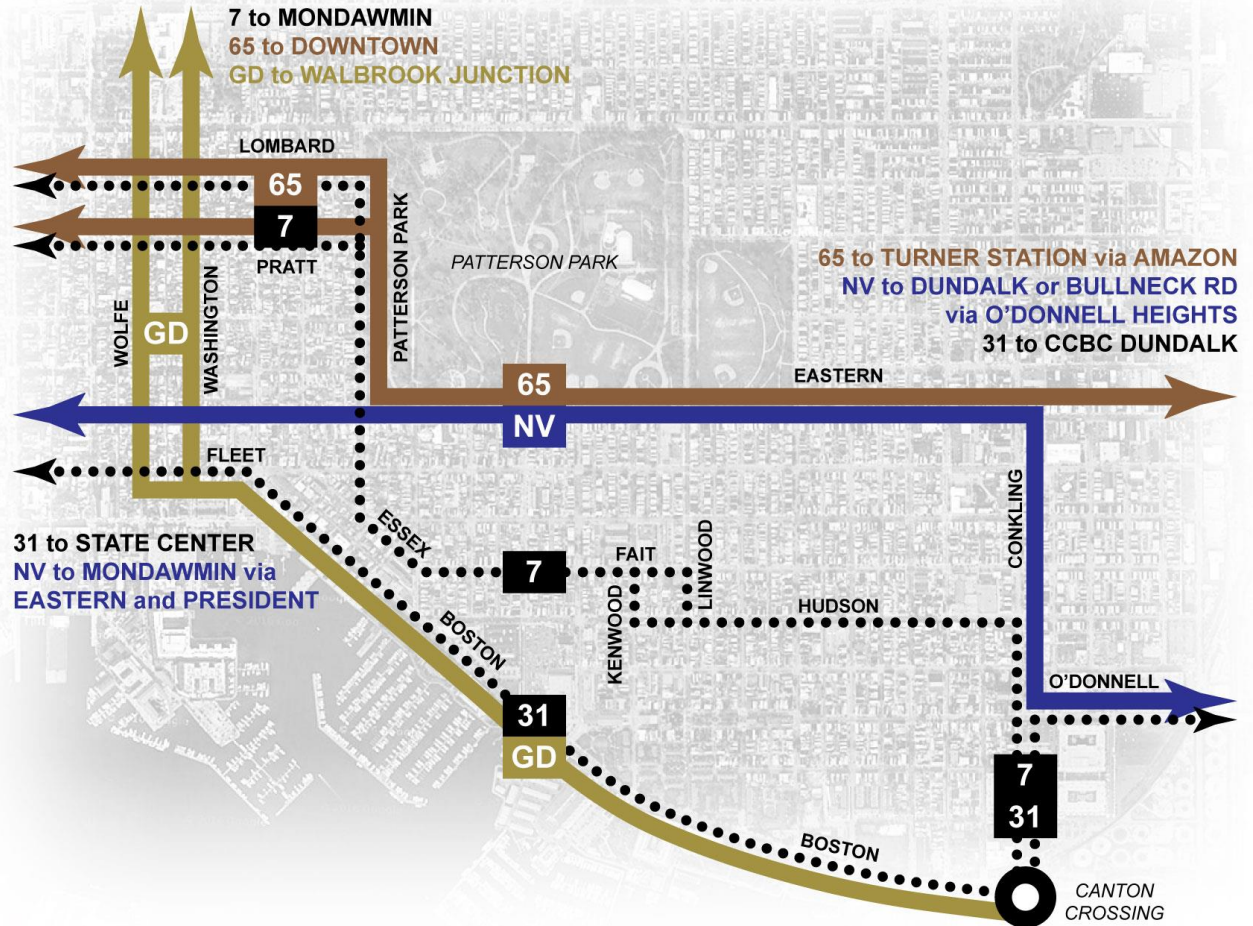
Concern: Southeast Baltimore

Draft 2 Reasoning:

- Bulk of ridership is along Eastern Avenue (Fleet-Boston ridership is very light despite current 20-minute headways)
- CityLink service was therefore placed along Eastern and route was modified to serve Harbor East on the way downtown
- *Tradeoff:* Walk further and transfer to more frequent service, or have infrequent, front-door, one-seat service?

Proposed Alternatives:

MTA is currently exploring several alternatives to possibly reintroduce downtown service to the Fait-Hudson and/or Fleet-Boston corridors.



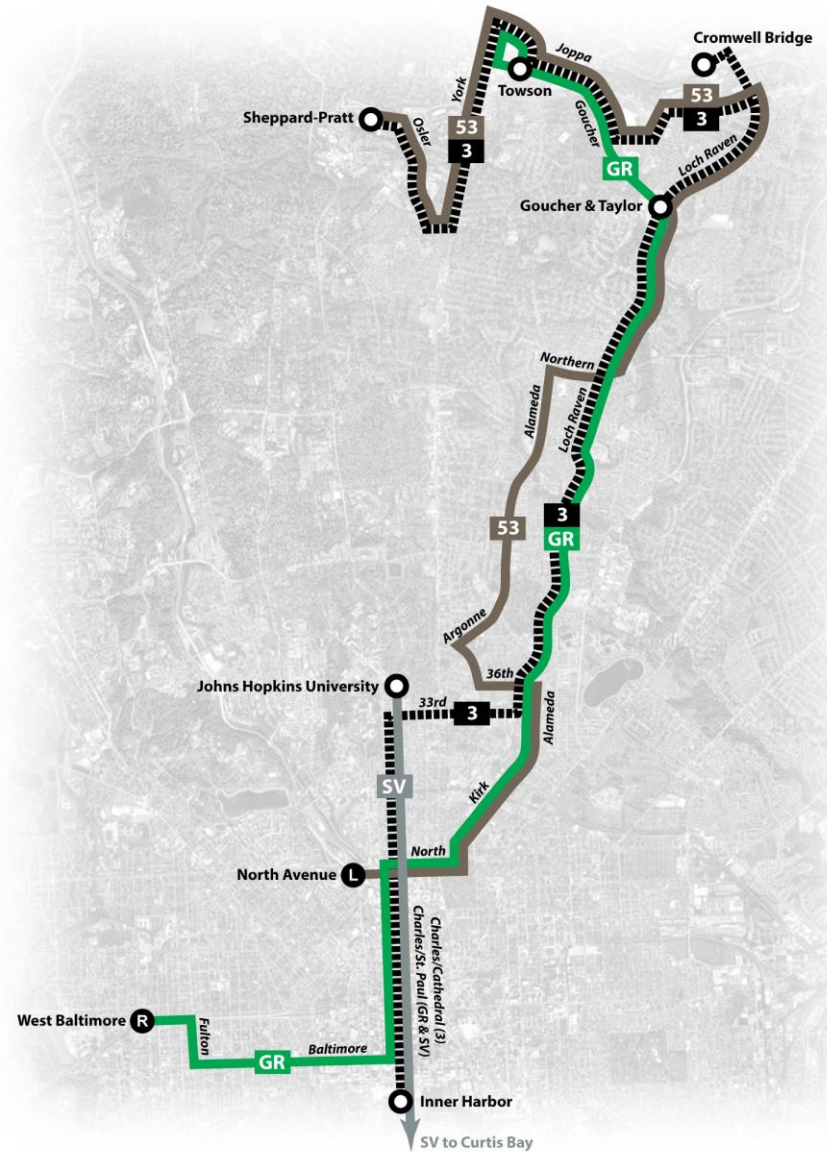
Concern: LocalLink 53

Draft 2 Reasoning:

- Same tradeoff as in southeast Baltimore: Walk further and transfer to more frequent service, or have infrequent, front-door, one-seat service?
- If every route is brought back downtown as in the current system, we'll continue to have the same reliability problems (spread-out service that dilutes resources that could have been dedicated to frequency, and continued bunching downtown)
- While LL 53 will require a transfer to go downtown, we strive to make the transfers at convenient locations, such as light rail stations (North Avenue station will also see improvements under *North Avenue Rising* to make the transfer experience easier).

Proposed Alternatives:

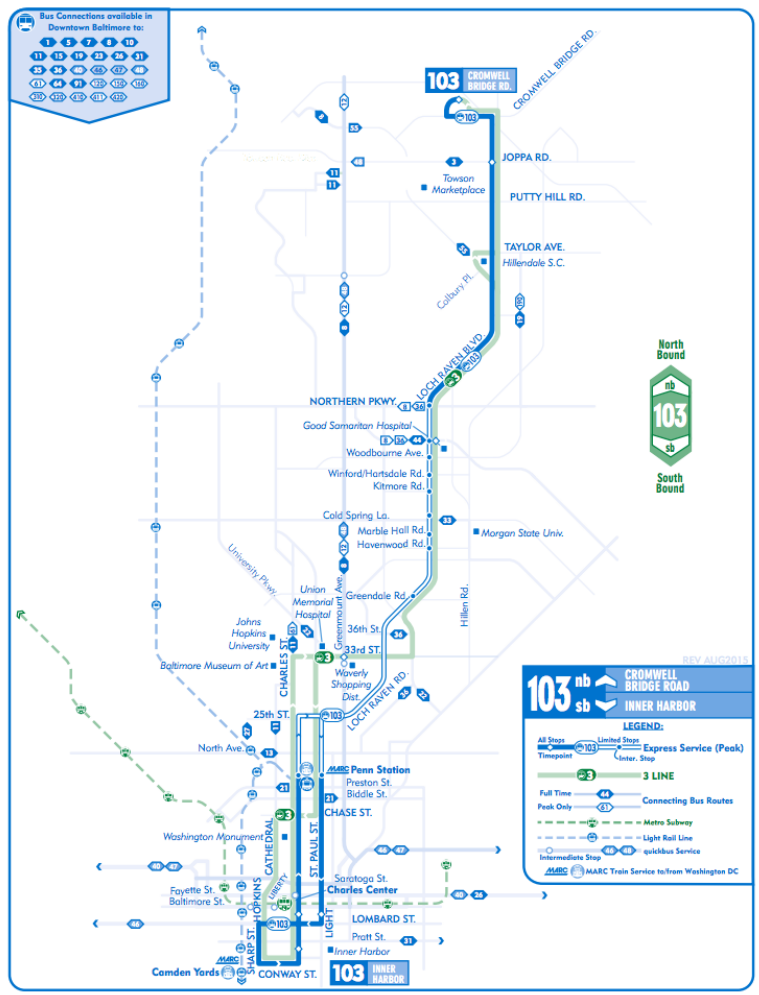
MTA is currently exploring several alternatives to possibly reintroduce downtown service to LL 53.



Concern: Express BusLink 103

No Changes Proposed:

- The 103 is currently a peak-only express route that runs from the Cromwell Bridge P&R to downtown and bypasses Charles Village by traveling along Loch Raven and 25th Street. It currently offers 9 inbound AM trips and 7 outbound PM trips.
- Under BaltimoreLink no changes are proposed to this route.
- Impractical for Waverly and Charles Village to have express service - they aren't far enough away from downtown, and modifying the 103 to operate via 33rd would make it just as slow and unreliable as the current 3, negating any benefits of the current express routing.
- Under BaltimoreLink the replacement for the 3 in Charles Village (the CL Silver) would be only slightly more distant from State Center (St. Paul vs. Cathedral southbound), so riders will continue to be able to walk, or they will be able to transfer to the frequent CL Lime (much better than the current 21) at Preston/Biddle to get to State Center.



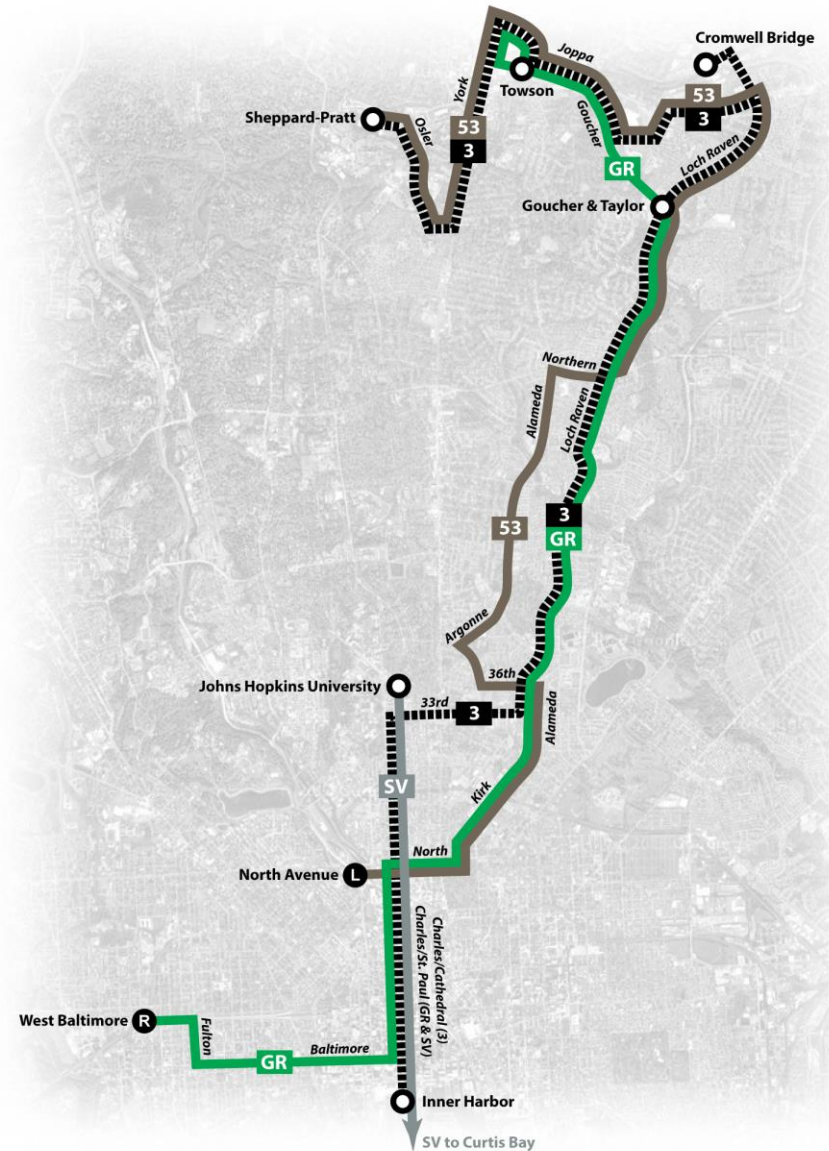
Concern: Current 3

Draft 2 Reasoning:

- While downtown service would be dropped along 33rd Street, passengers would have the ability to walk to shorter (more reliable) frequent north-south routes to get downtown:
 - The CL Silver along Charles/St. Paul
 - The CL Red along Greenmount
 - The CL Green along Alameda
- Penn Station connection will be maintained on both the CL Green and CL Silver.
- Same tradeoff as discussed earlier: Walk further and transfer to more frequent service, or have infrequent, unreliable, front-door, one-seat service?

Proposed Alternatives:

MTA is currently exploring several alternatives to possibly reintroduce downtown service to 33rd Street.



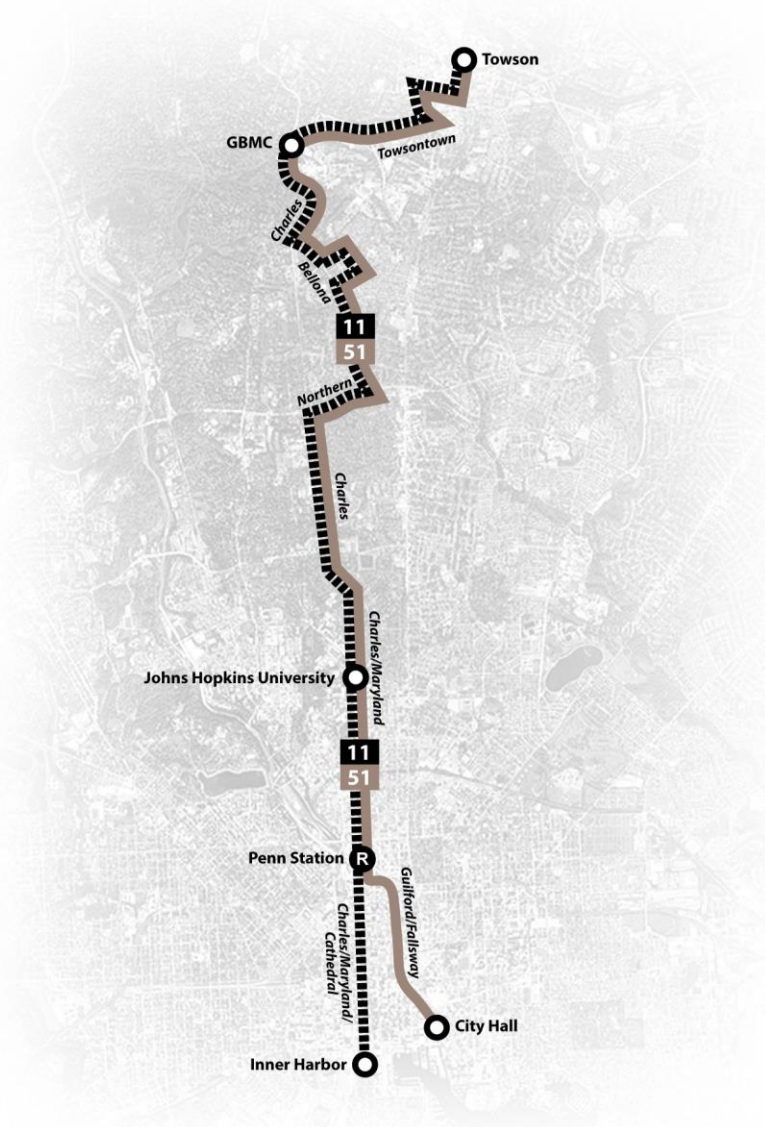
Concern: Current 11

Draft 2 Reasoning:

- Passengers traveling from North Baltimore to downtown will actually have a faster, more reliable trip, since Guilford/Fallsway tends to be faster than Maryland/Charles during peak periods (this will be even more so the case when the Maryland Ave cycletrack is installed).
- Penn Station connection will be maintained via Charles/Maryland (we could also look into improving transfer ability by shifting Maryland service to St. Paul).
- Riders desiring to access points of interest along Cathedral Street may wish to transfer at Penn Station to either the CL Silver or CL Green (which will offer a combined 5-10 minute frequency) and then walk two blocks over from any stop along St. Paul Street.

Proposed Alternatives:

MTA is currently exploring several alternatives to possibly reintroduce downtown service along Maryland/Cathedral.



Concern: Frequencies on the 8/48, 22, and 27

- BaltimoreLink's replacement Red, Green, Silver, LL 24, and LL 94 will actually be more frequent and reliable than the current routes (even if they appear less frequent "on paper") by:
 - Hiring more operators and street supervisors so it's easier to substitute and thus cut fewer trips
 - Improving schedule adherence and reducing bunching by:
 - ❑ Calculating new travel times that take today's traffic conditions into account and build new schedules with these travel times (i.e. more accurate schedules)
 - ❑ Increasing use of Charm Cards to reduce dwell time at stops
 - ❑ Optimizing stops so the bus isn't stopping every block
 - ❑ Splitting routes and occasionally requiring transfers and a little more walking on some routes so we can combine current long, spread-out, infrequent routes into fewer compact, more frequent routes (frequency – not one-seat rides – is freedom)
 - ❑ Transit Signal Priority: Loch Raven and York/Greenmount will be pilot corridors
 - ❑ Dedicated Bus Lanes downtown and on North Avenue
 - ❑ Prioritizing articulated buses on heavy-ridership corridors like York/Greenmount
 - ❑ Also looking at potentially adding frequency to the Red, Green, LL 24, and/or LL 94



Route Concerns: Summary and Takeaway

Various changes already under consideration:

- MTA is already looking at numerous ideas for addressing the issues identified by Transit Choices, District 14, and other transit advocacy stakeholders

There are always tradeoffs to consider:

- While MTA is already adjusting the proposed system to accommodate the above feedback, these adjustments will in turn have drawbacks and tradeoffs:
 - Given fixed resources, we can either dilute one-seat access across as many streets as possible (current system) or we can concentrate service on fewer streets but require a little more walking and transferring (the proposed BaltimoreLink system).
 - The first draft of the BaltimoreLink system concentrated service on fewer streets and required more transfers and walking, but the concentrated bus-served streets offered much more frequent service.
 - The second draft of the BaltimoreLink system made many compromises in response to community feedback, primarily by providing service across more streets and reducing transfers, but this came at the cost of frequency on many routes.
 - The more we ask for spreading service out, reducing transfers, and bringing back one-seat downtown access, the more we will have a compromised system too similar to today's unreliable system.



Concern: Feedback from Legislative Districts

- Briefed Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake (6/22)
- Briefed City Council President Jack Young (6/22)
- Other City Council Meetings:
 - District 7 Council Candidate Pinkett (7/6)
 - District 3 Council Candidate Dorsey (7/6)
 - District 13 Council Candidate Sneed (7/6)
 - District 9 Council Candidate Bullock (7/13)
 - District 5 Council Candidate Schleifer (7/13)
 - District 8 Council Candidate Burnett (7/26)
 - District 1 Council Candidate Cohen (9/20)
- Bus Workgroup14!!
- Letters with BaltimoreLink information and district specific maps were sent to each district
- Provided materials to advertise the meetings
- Held meetings in their districts at their request

PROPOSED BALTIMORELINK CHANGES IN BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 5

EXISTING BUS NETWORK
 Existing Local Buses
 47 Existing Culex Bus routes
 103, 104, 115, 119 Existing Express Bus routes

PROPOSED BALTIMORELINK NETWORK (AUG 2014)
 Existing Buses
 103, 104, 115, 119 Connecting Local Bus routes
 103, 115, 119 Connecting Express Bus/Link Routes

PROPOSED BALTIMORELINK CHANGES IN BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 5

Please note that the proposed route changes below apply only to Baltimore City Council District 5. To learn about proposed changes to these routes in other districts, please consult the maps for those districts.

EXISTING ROUTE	PROPOSED BALTIMORELINK ROUTE
3 Inner Harbor to Cromwell Bridge or Sheppard Pratt Replaced by CityLink Green (Blue Station to Towson)	103 Inner Harbor to Cromwell Bridge Replaced by Express BusLink 103 but otherwise unchanged.
15 Woodlawn or Walbrook Junction to Overlea or Perry Hall Replaced by CityLink Green (Blue Station to Towson)	104 Johns Hopkins Hospital to Cromwell Bridge Discontinued. Service on Loch Raven changed into Express BusLink 103.
19 State Center to Hillendale or Carney Replaced by localLink 19 (State Center to Hillendale or Carney)	115 Downtown to Perry Hall Replaced by Express BusLink 115 but otherwise unchanged.
29 Mondawmin to Bayview Medical Center Replaced by localLink 29 (Mondawmin to Bayview Medical Center)	119 Downtown to Hillendale or Carney Replaced by Express BusLink 119 but otherwise unchanged.
33 Rogers Avenue to Meravia Replaced by localLink 33 (Rogers Avenue to Meravia)	
35 Subverde Square to Metro Station or Sheppard Pratt Replaced by localLink 35 (North Avenue to Hillendale or Sheppard Pratt)	
44 Woodlawn to Rosedale Replaced by localLink 44 (Rogers Avenue to Rosedale)	
55 Towson to Fox Ridge Replaced by localLink 55 (Downtown to Fox Ridge). Service on northern shifted to Taylor.	
59 Risterstown Plaza to White Marsh Replaced by localLink 59 (White Marsh to Towson)	
47 Walbrook Junction to Overlea Replaced by CityLink Green (Blue Station to Towson)	

Major Changes Since Draft 1 in Response to Community Feedback

- Express Bus 103 reintroduced to operate along Loch Raven between Cromwell Bridge and downtown.
- Express Bus 104 between Johns Hopkins Hospital and Cromwell Bridge discontinued.
- Express Bus 115 reintroduced to operate along Baldr Road between downtown and Perry Hall.
- Express Bus 119 reintroduced to operate along Market Road between Hillendale or Carney and State Center via downtown, and the 11 is reintroduced to operate exactly as it historically does.

WHAT IS BALTIMORELINK?
 BaltimoreLink is a proposed rebranding of the MTA bus system into a unified network of CityLink, localLink, and Express BusLink routes. CityLink routes will be color-coded, run 24 hours, offer frequent daytime service, and connect to Metro SubwayLink, light railLink, and MARC Train stations. It also includes the proposed construction of transfer facilities, dedicated bus lanes and signal priority, and improved bus stop signs, among many other improvements. Learn more at baltimorelink.com

BALTIMORELINK TIMELINE

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BALTIMORE LINK



Concern: Marketing & Communication

- Produced on-mode announcements in English and Spanish and installed car cards advertising workshops
- **800** individual WTTZ-FM 93.5 BaltimoreLink announcements/mentions
- **50** BaltimoreLink video packages and interviews for *Commuter Connections*
- **100** social media posts since January to broaden awareness of BaltimoreLink
- Coverage from WJZ-TV, WBAL-TV, WMAR-TV WBFF-TV, Baltimore Sun, Maryland Daily Record, Baltimore Business Journal, WBAL Radio, East County Times, Avenue News



Concern: Marketing & Communication

- Launched monthly column for Administrator in Baltimore Afro American and Latin Opinion newspapers
- Radio interviews for Morgan State Radio and Heaven 600
- Hosted workshops and attended community meetings (including in-depth analysis) at a variety of locations including:
 - Northwest Baltimore – Pimlico, Park Heights, and New Psalmist Baptist Church
 - West Baltimore – Perkins Square Baptist Church and Coppin State University
 - East Baltimore – American Brewery and McElderry Park
 - South Baltimore – Cherry Hill, Brooklyn, and Brooklyn Park
 - Northeast Baltimore – Morgan State University, Northwood and Hamilton
- We're also reaching out to Baltimore City students and student governments



Measuring the New System

- Intensive six month process with bi-weekly meetings reviewing results
- Partners:
 - Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
 - Method: Regional travel demand model
 - Measured: Transfers, travel time and access to jobs
 - Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)
 - Method: GIS mapping
 - Measured: Frequent Transit Network and population group access to human services



CMTA Report

Different Software, Different Assumptions, Different Results

- Assumptions like walking access (walking speeds, distance thresholds), transfer penalties (time, transfer distance), and geographies measured lead to varied results
- The CMTA tool looks at all possibilities of access to points of interest (jobs, schools, etc) and does not include travel data. BMC's analysis used actual travel data for the region, comparing our network to actual trips people make everyday.
- BMC coded the current system and the BaltimoreLink system in the same way, while CMTA compared two different types of GTFS, causing data-reliability loss and increasing the margin for error



CMTA Report

Reduction in Weekend Service?

- Uses arbitrary timeframe Sunday 7am-10am to evaluate weekend service
 - Light Rail is not running
 - Bus service is not ramped up until 11am and does not include supplemental service
- Error in GTFS does not include service downtown on the existing 14 and 17 (and proposed LL 75,69,70 replacements) on Sunday mornings
- More service hours will be provided on weekends, with a 14% increase in hours on Sundays

	Sat Hours	Sun Hours
BaltimoreLink Daily Rev Hours	3,985	2,967
Current System (FY15) Rev Hours	3,502	2,602
Difference	483	365



CMTA Report

Reduction in Access to Jobs?

- Our results do not confirm the report's findings for access to jobs
- BMC off-peak modeling is based on mid-day weekday headways, which most closely resembles Saturday daytime service

	Average Peak	Average Off Peak
Current Network	64,765	51,707
BaltimoreLink	69,935	56,460
Difference	5,171	4,753
% Change	8.0%	9.2%



CMTA Report

Reduction in Access to High Opportunity Jobs?

- The reduction in weekend access to high opportunity jobs is also not confirmed by our findings. There is an increase in peak and off-peak access to all job types

Peak			
	Retail	Office	Industrial
Current	25,570	130,277	15,281
BaltimoreLink	28,749	142,309	17,572
Difference	3,180	12,032	2,291
% Change	12%	9%	15%

Off-Peak			
	Retail	Office	Industrial
Current	23,735	121,215	13,162
BaltimoreLink	24,958	128,132	14,630
Difference	1,223	6,917	1,468
% Change	5%	6%	11%



CMTA Report

Reduction in Access to Jobs for Low Composite Opportunity Neighborhoods?

- Our results do not confirm the report's findings
- Geographic boundaries are likely different

		Peak (Weekday)				Off-Peak (Weekend)			
		Current	BaltimoreLink	Difference	% Change	Current	BaltimoreLink	Difference	% Change
CMTA All Jobs	Sandtown-Winchester	292,856	277,656	-15,201	-5%	259,130	251,029	-8,101	-3%
	Harlem Park	255,978	270,364	6,478	3%	242,401	225,633	-16,769	-7%
CMTA High Opportunity Jobs	Sandtown-Winchester	97,634	103,155	5,521	6%	84,213	82,585	-1,627	-2%
	Harlem Park	83,024	95,857	12,833	15%	77,510	75,088	-2,422	-3%
MTA	Sandtown- Winchester/Harlem Park	269,505	293,898	24,393	9%	247,646	262,699	15,053	6%



CMTA Report

Reduction in Access to Employment Centers?

- Our results do not confirm the report's findings
- CMTA analysis used residents, MTA used households

	CMTA (by residents)				MTA (by households)			
	Current	Baltimore Link	Difference	% Change	Current	Baltimore Link	Difference	% Change
Annapolis	32,883	38,673	5,790	18%	9,915	9,915	-	0%
Downtown	654,345	611,307	-43,038	-7%	40,591	43,650	3,059	8%
Towson	213,464	223,062	9,598	4%	77,516	84,387	6,871	9%
Woodlawn	139,139	97,307	-41,832	-30%	9,412	14,807	5,395	57%



CMTA Report

Reduction in Access to Employment Centers?

Transit Choices and CMTA requested that MTA focus on employment centers identified in the Opportunity Collaborative:

- Amazon
- Annapolis
- Annapolis Junction
- Columbia
- Downtown Baltimore
- Hanover
- Hunt Valley
- Nursery Road
- Owings Mills
- Riverside Business Park
- Towson
- White Marsh
- Woodlawn

Employment Centers that the MTA was evaluated on in the CMTA report:

- Annapolis
- Cockeysville
- Columbia
- Downtown Baltimore
- Halethorpe
- Linthicum Heights
- Pikesville-Owings Mills
- Rossville-White Marsh
- Towson
- Woodlawn



CMTA Report

Reduction in Access to Schools?

- Our methodology differs but supports the conclusion that: “The analysis showed marginal or no improvements from existing MTA service for a resident’s ability to access middle and high schools within 45 minutes”
- However, an additional 15 schools have access to frequent transit under BaltimoreLink



CMTA Report

Reduction in Access to Food Stores?

- CMTA uses a 15 minutes trip in analysis, which does not account for existing trip patterns or transfers. These short home-based trips may not be convenient if a rider stops for groceries on the way home from work or has to transfer with their groceries
- CMTA's analysis shows marginal improvements to travel times and access to grocery stores within a quick trip of a grocery store from home
- MTA's analysis shows a 15.6% increase in the number of grocery stores within a ¼ mile when accounting for existing trip patterns



CMTA Report – Our Recommendations

- Compare assumptions for walking access, transfer penalties and geographies
- Further evaluate frequency-based vs schedule-based GTFS
- MTA will provide CMTA with updated Sunday service GTFS, but recommends re-running CMTA's model on Saturday mid-day per industry standard
- Explore boundaries of neighborhoods used to calculate Low Composite Opportunity Neighborhoods (TAZ v Census Block)



CMTA Report – Our Conclusions

- There are known data errors in the analysis that need to be explored further and that have led to inaccurate results
- The study draws large, sweeping conclusions from this data – despite known issues:
 - “Our independent analysis of BaltimoreLink shows that it doesn’t deliver the promised improvements.”
 - “BaltimoreLink will not deliver on promises to transform the way people in the Baltimore region get to jobs and other destinations.”
- More research and exploration of the data is needed before such conclusions can be drawn



Thank You!



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