





Transportation systems have two basic functions:

(1) moving people from one point to another and (2) enabling people to reach places where they need or want to go (for example: job, school, the grocery store, the doctor's office). The first function emphasizes mobility, or the ability to move safely, reliably, and efficiently within and through the region. The second function emphasizes accessibility, or the ability to access specific destinations safely and conveniently.

Here is one way to look at this: mobility means interstate highways and major roads for drivers and commuter buses for transit users. Accessibility means local streets for drivers and bicyclists, sidewalks for pedestrians, and local buses for transit users.

An effective transportation system balances both of these functions and provides choices and connections.



**BALTIMORE
METROPOLITAN
COUNCIL**



Transportation Choices and Connections

A variety of social and economic factors, including fluctuating gas prices, environmental awareness, the aging of the “Baby Boom” generation, and changing consumer preferences, are driving increases in public demand for more transportation choices and connections.

In addition, all people - those who drive as well as those who can't or prefer not to drive for some or all of their trips - need convenient, reliable, and safe alternatives. These include roadways that are safe and accessible for all users, public transit service for both local and commute trips, walking and bicycling facilities for shorter trips and for exercise, and paratransit service to meet the needs of people who are not able to drive or use traditional transit services.

Recent additions to the range of choices available to travelers are ridesharing and ride hailing services as well as personal electric vehicles (shared e-bikes and e-scooters).





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Transit Services

Transit services in the Baltimore region - bus, subway, light rail, commuter rail, and private services - play a major role in moving people, alleviating congestion, improving air quality, and reinforcing supporting land use and development goals. The MDOT Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA) provides core bus, commuter bus, light rail, commuter rail, and on-demand transit service in Baltimore City and some of the surrounding counties. In addition, local agencies provide transit service within their own jurisdictions and, in some cases, provide connections to MDOT MTA service and to other local service.



The BRTB provides a regional perspective on transit issues. Transit operators are represented on the BRTB. Operators also work together to share best practices for improving short-term operations and to highlight long-term funding needs.

The BRTB, through BMC staff, provides services to support transit in the region. These focus on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the current transit system and can help to identify opportunities to increase transit services in the region. Areas in which BMC staff support transit in the region include:

- General coordination among state and local transit services
- Support to local transit providers in the region when they update their Transit Development Plans
- Access studies
- Analyses of regional transit ridership trends and development of forecasts
- Coordination of long-term planning of major transportation improvements
- Programs to promote greater use of travel alternatives for residents and visitors to the region
- Population and employment forecasts
- Travel demand modeling



BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSIT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In 2015, BMC's board of directors charged the staff with developing a regional transit needs assessment. This involved conducting a comprehensive assessment of the region's multimodal transit network and developing a set of recommendations for a regional transit system that reflects local priorities and supports economic growth. The regional transit needs assessment contains:

- Information on the existing transit system and its users
- An analysis of regional transit issues and challenges
- Recommended actions, projects, and products to improve the regional transit system

MDOT MTA REGIONAL TRANSIT PLAN

Building on these efforts, in coordination with the BRTB and its members, in 2019 the MDOT Maryland Transit Administration developed a new Regional Transit Plan (RTP) for central Maryland that defines public transportation goals over the next 25 years. The vision for this document is to address traditional transit (buses and trains) as well as to explore new mobility options and technology.

COORDINATED HUMAN SERVICE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

The BRTB, through BMC staff, is responsible for facilitating the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Planning process for the Baltimore region. This process seeks to enhance and extend safe mobility for the region's elderly and

disabled populations. This work includes coordinating with MDOT MTA to develop and periodically update the Regional Human Service Coordination Plan.

Federal guidance emphasizes regional coordination of investments made to improve transportation access by disadvantaged populations. Consistent with this federal guidance, BMC staff continues to participate in coordination, outreach, and technical assistance efforts with the Maryland Department of Disabilities, the Maryland Department of Aging and local aging agencies, the Maryland Research Consortium, local governments, and community organizations.

Other important work includes participating with MDOT MTA in the review and selection of grant applications for funding under the Maryland Senior Rides Program as well as providing support services to MDOT MTA related to human service transportation programs. Staff will coordinate this work with a consultant task examining elderly trip characteristics and patterns that can inform policy makers and planners.





Biking and Walking

Biking and walking promote individual health, help ease traffic congestion, and reduce emissions that contribute to air pollution.

The BRTB, through its subcommittee, the Bike/Pedestrian Advisory Group (BPAG), promotes biking and walking as safe and efficient alternatives to motor vehicle travel. The BPAG serves as the region's forum for planners and engineers to exchange information and coordinate work to develop plans and programs to accommodate bikers and walkers and to encourage biking and walking across the region.

The BPAG also supports a variety of pedestrian and bicycle safety programs, and Complete Streets plans and projects around the region. Some of this work includes identifying policies that promote bicycling and walking as well as necessary infrastructure improvements such as sidewalks and separated bicycle lanes. The BPAG has also worked to map existing and planned bicycle facilities throughout the Baltimore region.





BPAG will support efforts surrounding the collection and reporting of data related to alternative transportation options. BMC will provide support in three key areas identified by BPAG members: developing a menu with costs for a range of facility types, providing training on Complete Streets and facility design, and assisting in advancing Transportation Alternative Program grants in the region.

In addition, the BRTB routinely sponsors and encourages a variety of programs, such as Bike to Work Day and trail/greenway planning. The Concept Plan for a Patapsco Regional Greenway, completed in 2017, proposes a 10- to 12-foot-wide shared-use trail running through the Patapsco Valley from Baltimore's Inner Harbor to Sykesville in Carroll County. This trail, if completed, would pass through or near the communities of Cherry Hill, Baltimore Highlands, Halethorpe, Elkridge, Catonsville, Ellicott City, Oella, Daniels, Woodstock, Marriottsville, and Sykesville.

pace 

Market House/City Dock

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Non-traditional Options for Reaching Specific Destinations

As noted, ridesharing and ride hailing services, as well as e-bike and e-scooter services, provide additional options for reaching specific destinations. Planners and service providers continue to address issues such as coordination, safety, and equity with respect to these non-traditional options.

The BRTB and BMC staff continue to track technology development and deployment to understand and take full advantage of the benefits, and to minimize the disadvantages, of new and emerging technologies. Efforts include investigating how to use available data to enhance transportation planning, working with stakeholders to manage expectations and perceptions, minimizing future problems, and leveraging opportunities to build technical, institutional, and policy capacity and to include new partners as necessary.







Environmental Justice - Access to Specific Destinations

Environmental Justice (EJ) analysis seeks to ensure that the benefits and burdens of transportation investments are shared as equitably as possible among all affected communities. Specifically, EJ considers whether low-income and minority populations bear disproportionate impacts resulting from governmental decisions.

BMC staff conducted a comprehensive analysis of the EJ impacts of the 2019 regional long-range transportation plan, *Maximize2045*. *Maximize2045* contains a list of the major surface transportation projects the region expects to implement in the period from 2024 to 2045. These investments will affect the travel patterns and transportation decisions of people living in and traveling through the Baltimore region. Some of these impacts will be positive (benefits) while others will be negative (burdens).

In coordination with BRTB committees, BMC staff identified a series of accessibility and mobility measures of interest, including accessibility to jobs and shopping opportunities, travel times to work, and proximity to key destinations such as hospitals and supermarkets. This effort is consistent with the federal emphasis on performance-based planning and programming. The EJ analysis discusses the impacts of the investments in *Maximize2045* on EJ and non-EJ areas in the context of these accessibility and mobility measures.



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