

Why the Red Line is more than just the Red Line

Transportation Justice and Economic Benefits

Urban Land Institute

February 20, 2024

RED LINE

MDOT MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

Agenda

- Historic Context
- Transit, Health, and Equity
- Red Line 2.0
- Development & Investment Patterns
- Investment in Transit is Equitable
Investment in People
- Creating an Equitable Transportation
Future

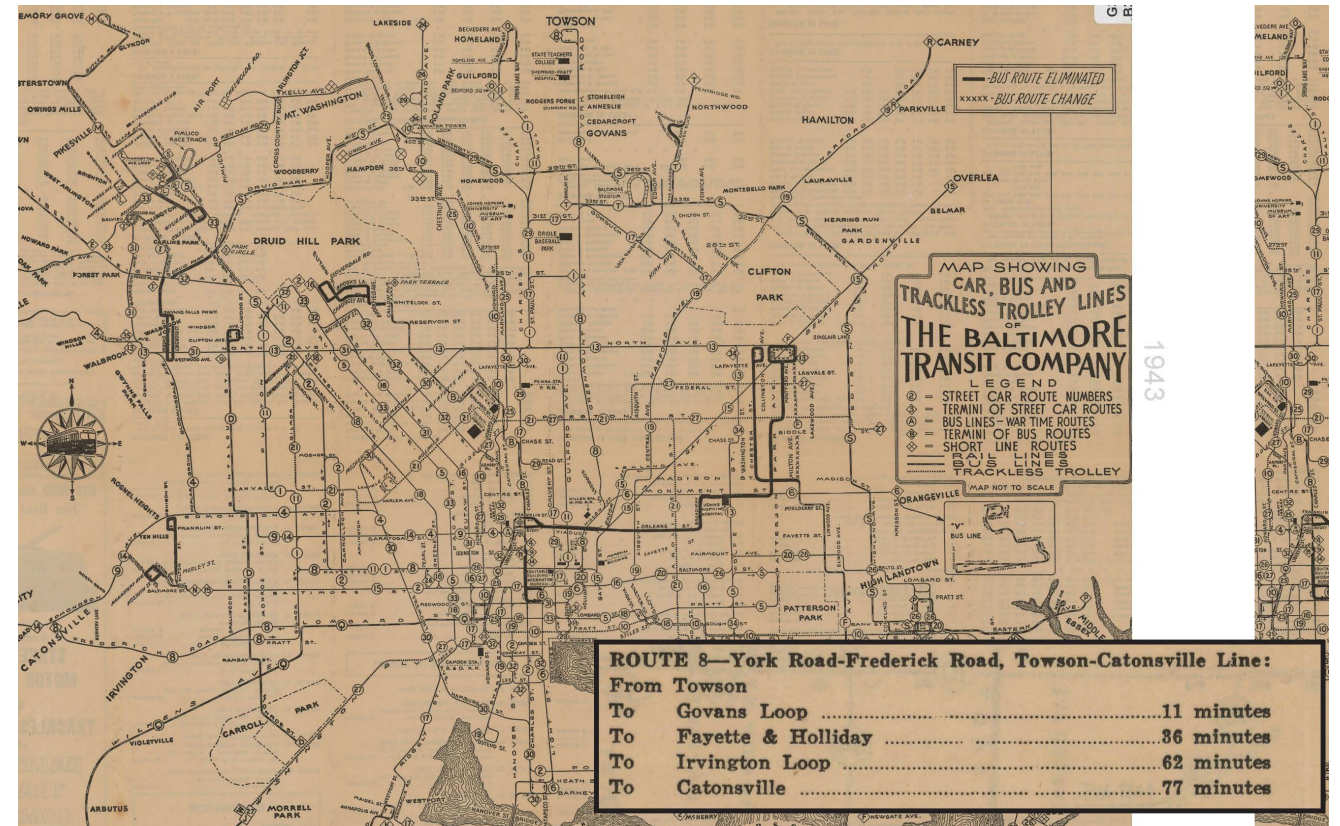


Historic Context

A Century of Disinvestment

We are grappling with a century of policies and actions that have divided us, not lifted us together:

- Redlining & Disinvestment
- Collapse of the Streetcar System
- Highway Construction & Urban Renewal
- Bus System Service Inequities
- Red Line Project Cancellation



Redlining & Disinvestment

1930s-1960s

- Introduction of redlining practices by federal agencies, restricting mortgage lending in predominantly Black neighborhoods.
- Resulted in disinvestment, limited economic opportunities, and inferior public services, including inadequate transportation infrastructure.



RED LINE

Image credit: Baltimore Magazine (Feb. 2023)

Collapse of the Streetcar System 1940s-1960s

- Dismantling of the streetcar system
 - Disproportionately affected low-income neighborhoods
 - Disproportionately affected predominantly Black populations
- Minority communities experienced
 - Less efficient service
 - Longer commutes
 - Reduced access



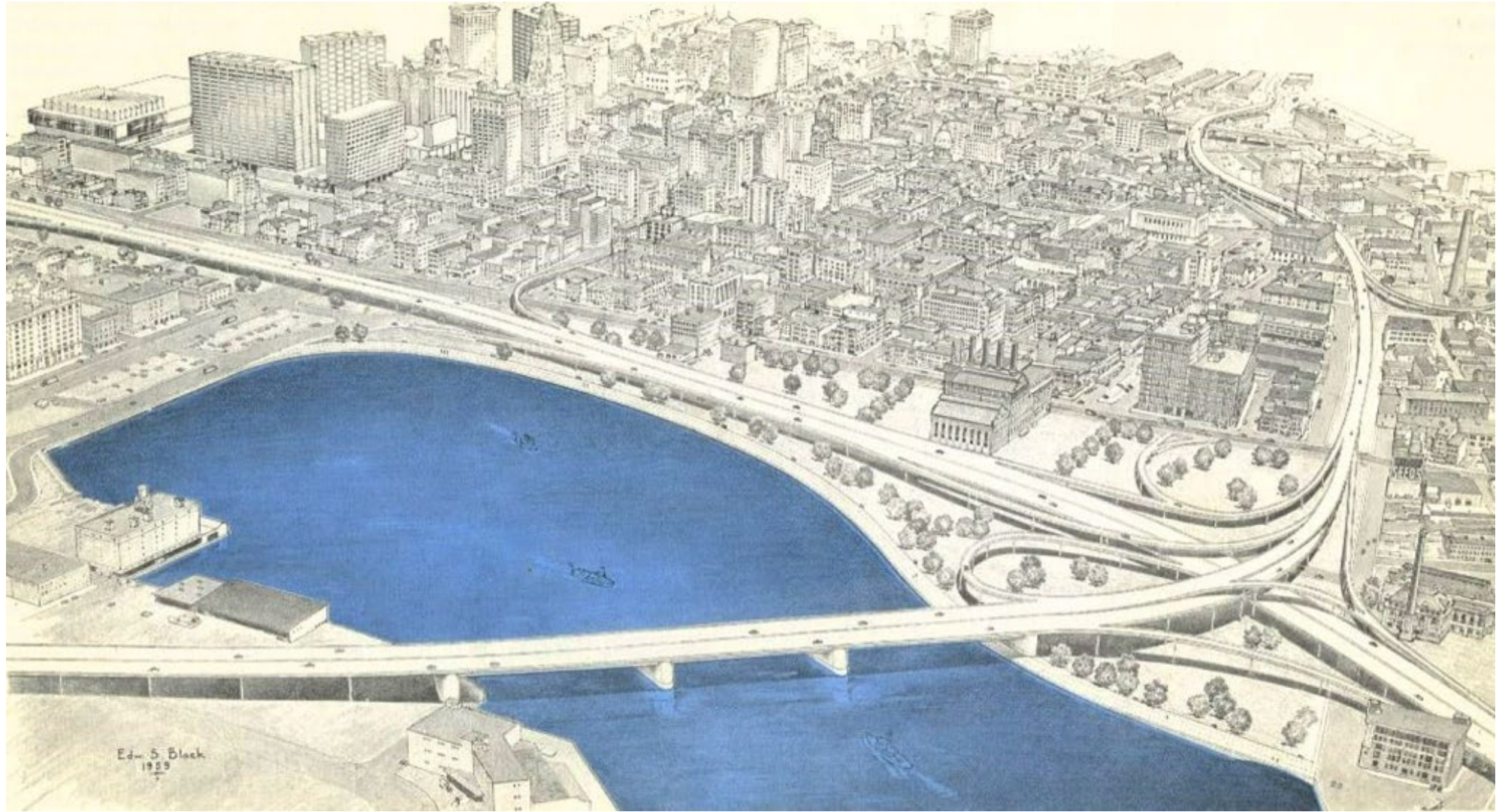
Highway Construction & Urban Renewal

1950s-1970s

- “Urban renewal” projects often targeted minority neighborhoods, leading to further transportation inequities.
- Construction of highways (e.g., I-95 and I-83) disproportionately displaced Black communities, disrupted local transit networks, and perpetuated segregation.
- The “Highway to Nowhere” (I-70) displaced thousands of Black residents and destroyed businesses, churches, schools, and cultural institutions.



Stop the Road



RED LINE

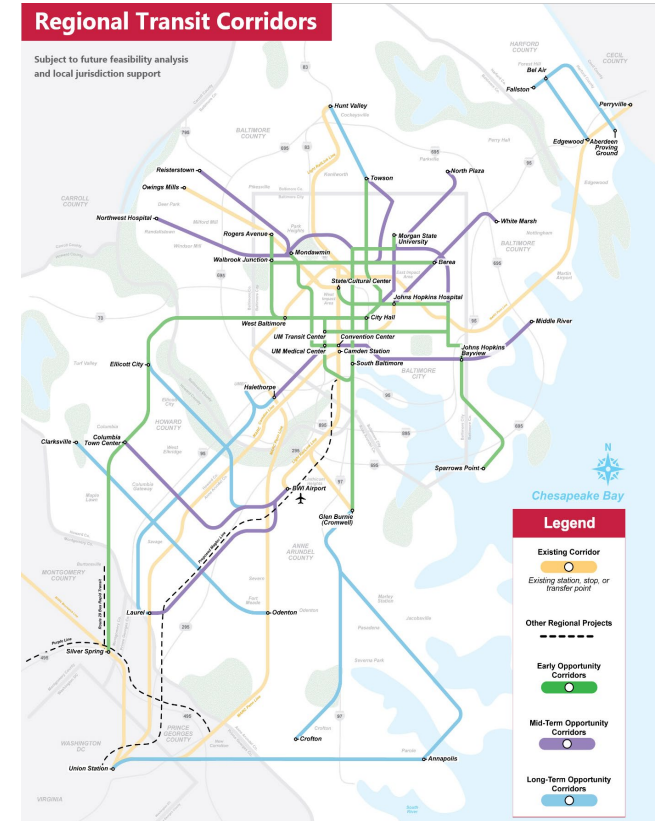
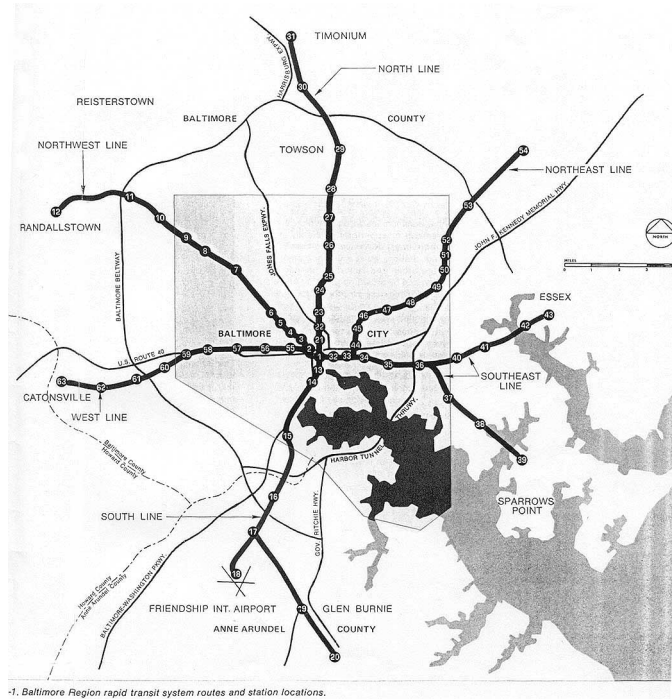
Bus System Service Inequities

1950s-1980s

- Segregated buses and bus stops, with Black neighborhoods receiving limited/inferior service
- Discriminatory practices within the bus system limited access to employment opportunities
- 1968 “Baltimore Regional Rapid Transit” plan never fully realized.



1968, 2002, 2020



Red Line Project Cancellation

2015

- Gov. Hogan cancelled the Red Line in 2015 after over a decade of technical work, environmental analysis, and community involvement
- Federal funds were revoked, and state funds reallocated to projects elsewhere in the state
- Disproportionately affected low-income and predominantly Black neighborhoods in West Baltimore.
- The cancellation raised concerns about perpetuating existing inequities in public transportation.

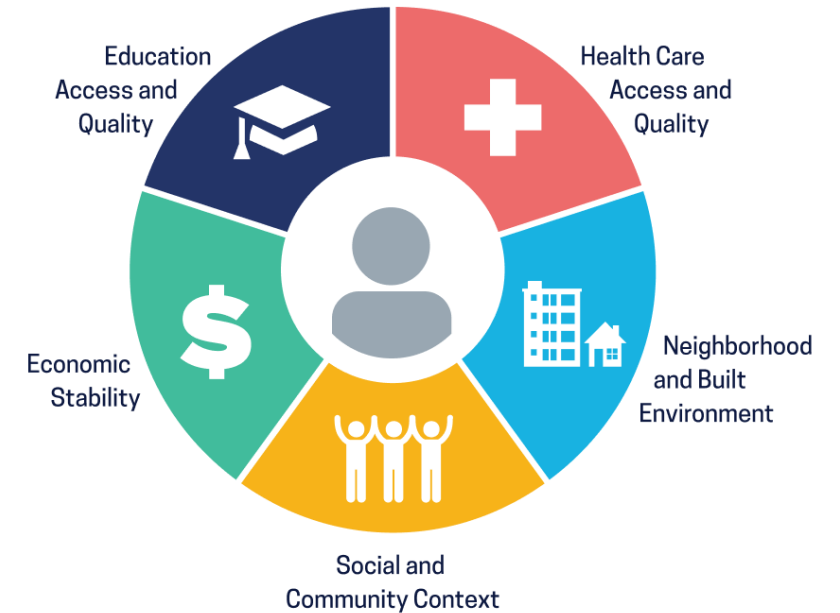
CANCELLED

Transit, Health & Equity

Social Determinants of Health

- Social Determinants of Health are: “the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.”*
- **If we cannot access or experience these determinants, we cannot thrive to our full potential**

Social Determinants of Health



Social Determinants of Health
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 Healthy People 2030

*Healthy People 2030, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Retrieved [date graphic was accessed], from <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/social-determinants-health>

Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)

- Examples of SDOH

- Access to safe housing and neighborhoods
- Access to safe transportation
- Racism, discrimination, and violence
- Education, job opportunities, and income
- Access to nutritious foods and physical activity opportunities



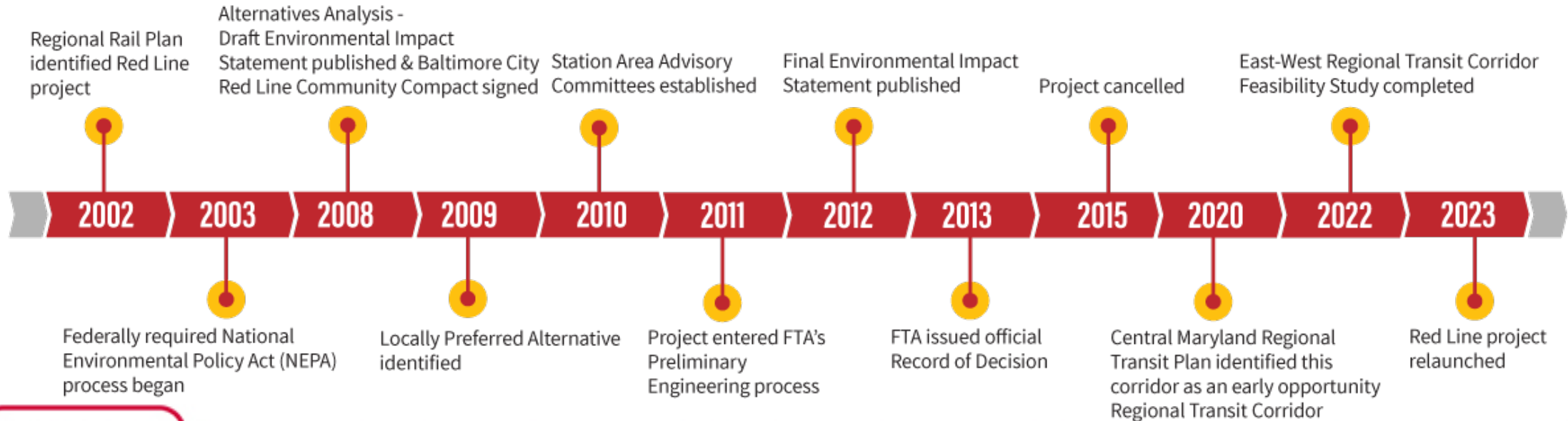
- How the **Red Line** can enact change

- Economic opportunities and housing choices
- Safe, reliable, frequent transit service
- Investment in underserved communities
- Between 137,000 and 141,000 jobs are within ½ mile of the Red Line
- Increased access to healthcare and grocery stores

Red Line 2.0

Project Background

- East-West Feasibility Study (2022) reaffirmed the needs along the corridor.
- The Red Line Project addresses a major gap in east-west transit services between Bayview and Woodlawn, through downtown.
- The project has been shaped by over 10 years of work and input:
 - Studies
 - Engineering
 - Environmental Analysis
 - Community Participation



Developing the Red Line Preliminary Alternatives

MTA worked with jurisdictional partners, stakeholders, and the public to develop Preliminary Alternatives to explore:



Transit mode

- Light Rail Transit (LRT)
- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)



Alignment adjustments due to development changes

- Highlandtown/Bayview
- Canton/Brewer's Hill
- Downtown Baltimore
- Woodlawn



Surface running vs. Tunneling

- Cooks Lane
- Downtown Baltimore



Adjacent Projects




- West Baltimore United Reconnecting Communities Study
- RAISE East-West Priority Corridor project
- Frederick Douglass Tunnel: West Baltimore MARC Station

Preliminary Alternatives Under Consideration




Six Preliminary Alternatives are under consideration, which combine three alignment options (mapped below) and two modes:







- Light Rail Transit (LRT)
- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Light Rail Transit (LRT)

-  **Alternative 1**
(LRT-Tunnel)
-  **Alternative 2A**
(LRT-Surface North)
-  **Alternative 2B**
(LRT-Surface South)

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

-  **Alternative 3**
(BRT-Tunnel)
-  **Alternative 4A**
(BRT-Surface North)
-  **Alternative 4B**
(BRT-Surface South)

- 2A** 
- 4A** 
- 2B** 
- 4B** 
- 1** 
- 3** 

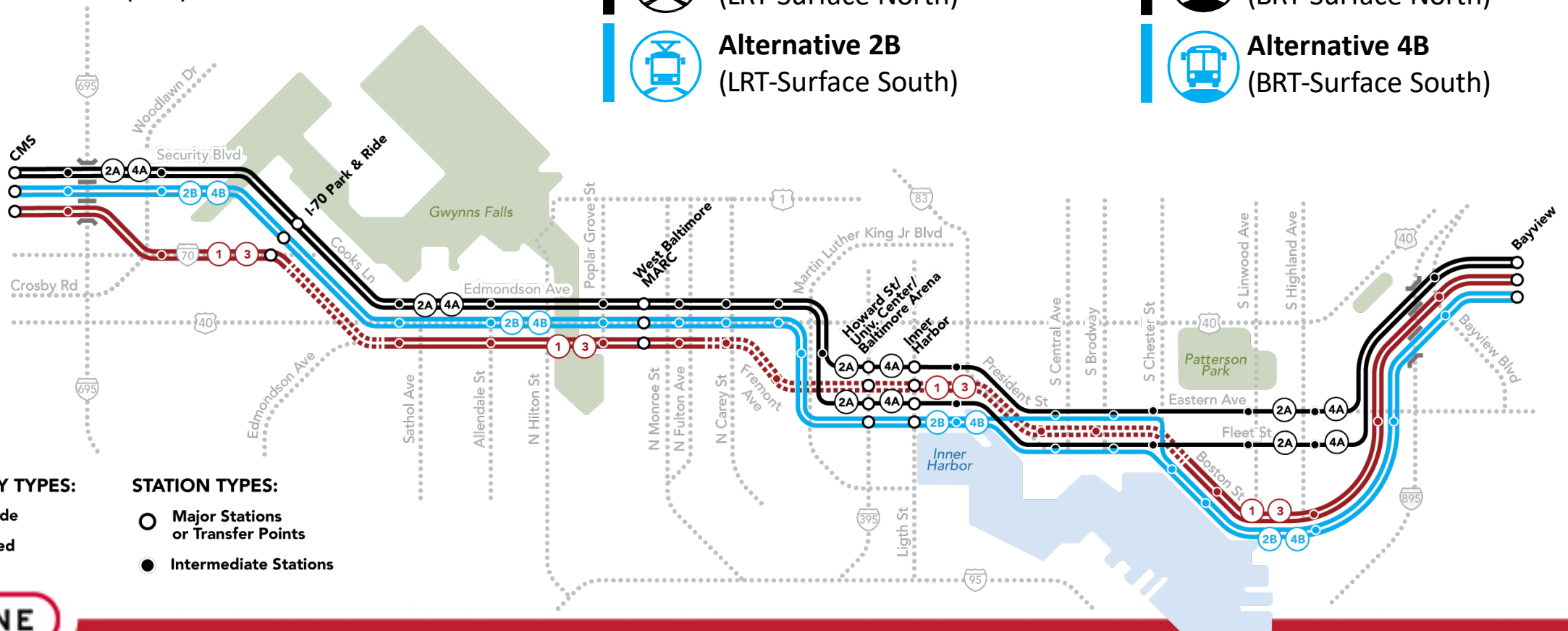
GUIDEWAY TYPES:

-  At Grade
-  Elevated
-  Tunnel

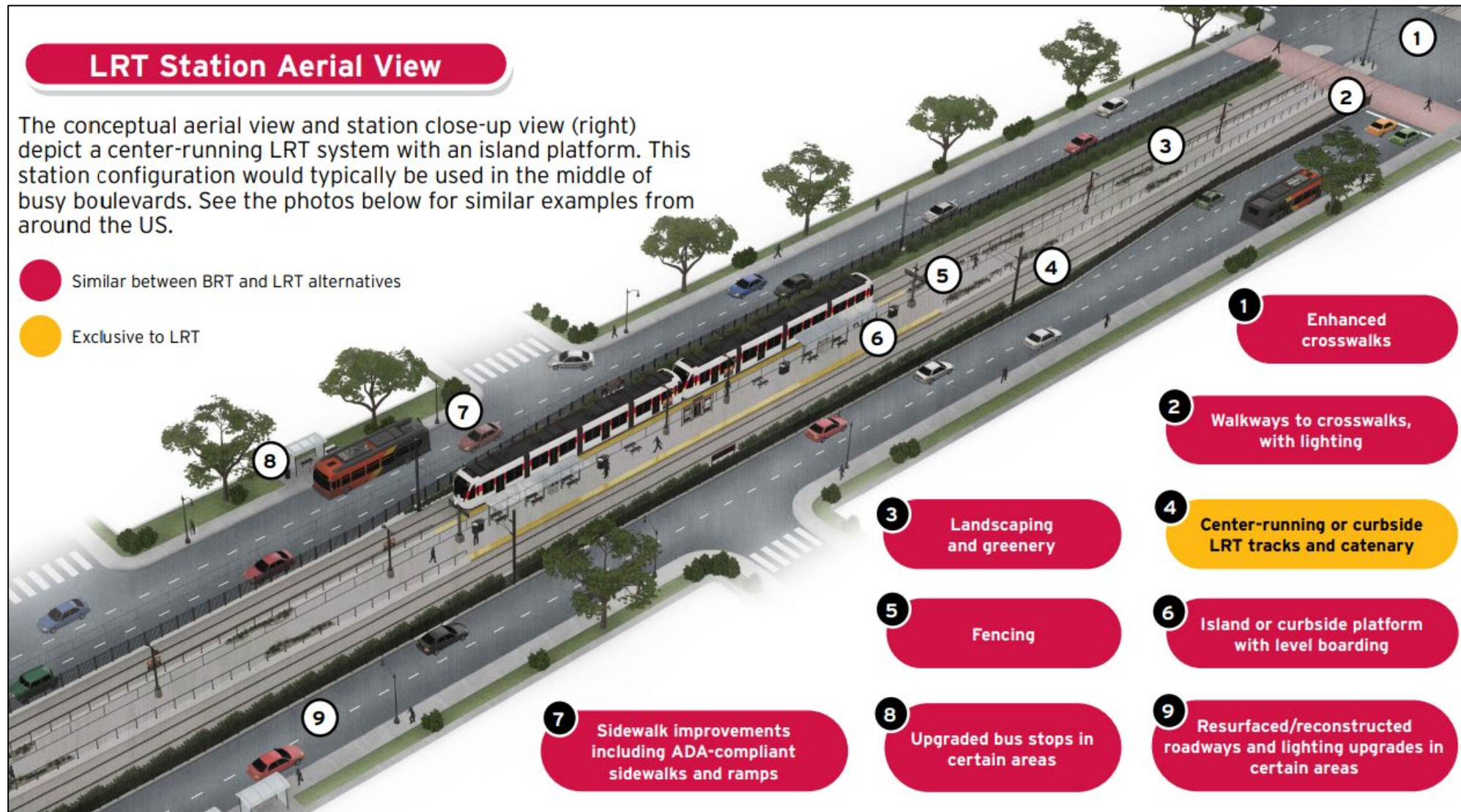
STATION TYPES:

-  Major Stations or Transfer Points
-  Intermediate Stations

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Preliminary Alternatives Street Sections



Measures of Effectiveness Results Matrix

 **1** (LRT-Tunnel)
  **2A** (LRT-Surface North)
  **2B** (LRT-Surface South)
  **3** (BRT-Tunnel)
  **4A** (BRT-Surface North)
  **4B** (BRT-Surface South)

Average daily total projected trips	33,000 - 35,500	29,500 - 31,500	28,500 - 30,000	17,500 - 24,000	12,000 - 16,500	11,500 - 16,000
Average daily projected trips from zero-car households	12,000 - 13,500	11,500 - 12,500	11,000 - 12,000	6,000 - 8,000	4,500 - 6,000	4,000 - 6,000
Access to transit critical populations (within 1/4 mile of stations)	136,000	151,000	143,000	136,000	151,000	143,000
End to end travel time (min)	44 - 47	55 - 58	56 - 59	45 - 48	56 - 59	57 - 60
Percent dedicated guideway	95 - 100%	90 - 95%	90 - 95%	95 - 100%	90 - 95%	90 - 95%
Years to implement project	9 - 12	7 - 9	7 - 9	9 - 11	6 - 8	6 - 8
Capital costs (2023 \$, Billions)	\$5.9 - \$7.2	\$3.4 - \$4.6	\$3.2 - \$4.3	\$4.1 - \$5.7	\$2.0 - \$2.7	\$1.9 - \$2.6
Annualized capital cost per trip (\$/trip)	\$21	\$14	\$14	\$26	\$18	\$18
O&M costs (2023 \$, millions)	\$46	\$39	\$39	\$26	\$19	\$19
Connections to rail stations within 1/4 mile	4	6	5	4	6	5
Connections to frequent bus	35	46	44	35	46	44

Take-Aways from the Analysis | Key Differences

The greatest differentiators between Preliminary Alternatives are:

- **Ridership:** Preliminary estimates show LRT will attract almost double the ridership.
- **Travel Times:** Tunnel options (Alts 1 and 3) see an additional 11-15 minutes of travel time savings end to end. [note: most trips in the corridor are short trips 2-3 miles].
- **Costs:** Tunnel options (Alts 1 and 3) are 70% more expensive than surface, with Surface LRT having the lowest cost per user trip. O&M costs for LRT are higher than BRT.
- **Time to Implement, Risk, and Complexity:** Overall range of 7-12 years driven by mode and tunnel decisions. Implementation time, risk, and complexity increase with Light Rail (vs. BRT), and Tunnel (vs. Surface) options.

Take-Aways from the Analysis | Consistent Improvements

All six Preliminary Alternatives improve:

- **Access:** Substantial increase access to employment opportunities, as well as for school-age youth (age 5-17) and households
- **Reliability:** By operating in physically separated dedicated lanes for 90-100% of their length and implementing TSP
- **Opportunities for TOD and Economic Growth:** BRT and LRT attract investment and development



2023 Engagement Snapshot

SUMMER 2023

Reintroduce the Red Line Project



Connected with
over 1,500 people



5

Open Houses



20

Pop-Ups



300

surveys



*Institutions,
Elected Official Meetings*



*Community
Association Meetings*

RED LINE

FALL 2023

Red Line Alternatives Review

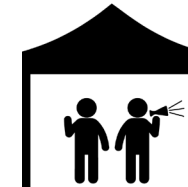


Connected with
over 4,000 people



4

Open Houses



22

Pop-Ups

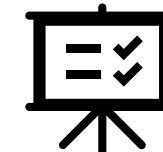


3,400

surveys



*Elected Official
Meetings*



*Community
Association Meetings*



*Door to Door
Canvassing*

2023 Engagement Snapshot

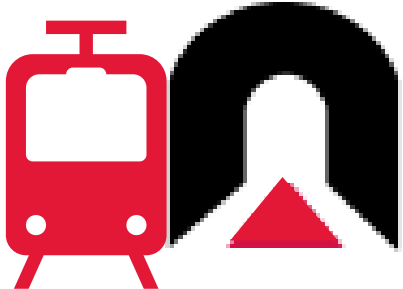
Community Priorities



Overall **support for the Red Line** and desire to see project **completed as soon as possible**



Make seamless **connections to existing transit** to advance a regional transit network



Support for **Light Rail & Mixed Input on Tunnel Preferences** (e.g., Cooks Lane tunnel/surface alignment)



Support for **economic development** and desire to **increase local jobs** and access to key destinations

Community Questions & Concerns



Concerns about Red Line impacts to **traffic, congestion, and parking**



Concerns about **traffic safety at Red Line crossings** as well as **personal safety**



17 Geographic focused community meetings after open houses to further explore questions & concerns

Project/ NEPA Timeline

- **Preliminary Alternatives Development (Summer 2023 – Spring 2024)**
 - Comments received on the Preliminary Alternatives will help narrow the range of Project alternatives and options for further evaluation in a NEPA document.
- **NEPA Documentation Determination (anticipated Spring 2024)**
 - FTA to confirm the NEPA Documentation approach.

Process Timeline



Development & Investment Patterns

Stimulating New Economic Development Patterns

- **Economic Benefits of Public Transit:**

- Nearly 9 out of 10 trips on public transit directly impact **the local economy**
- For every \$1 billion invested in public transportation, nearly **50,000 jobs are created** or sustained across the entire economy
- Public transit is a key factor in **business site selection**

The Red Line connects **different markets across the city.**

Major transit investment and high-quality service will:

- **Bring thousands of jobs to the region**
- Advance the region's **economic development**
- **Encourage new development** around transit stations.

And has the potential to:

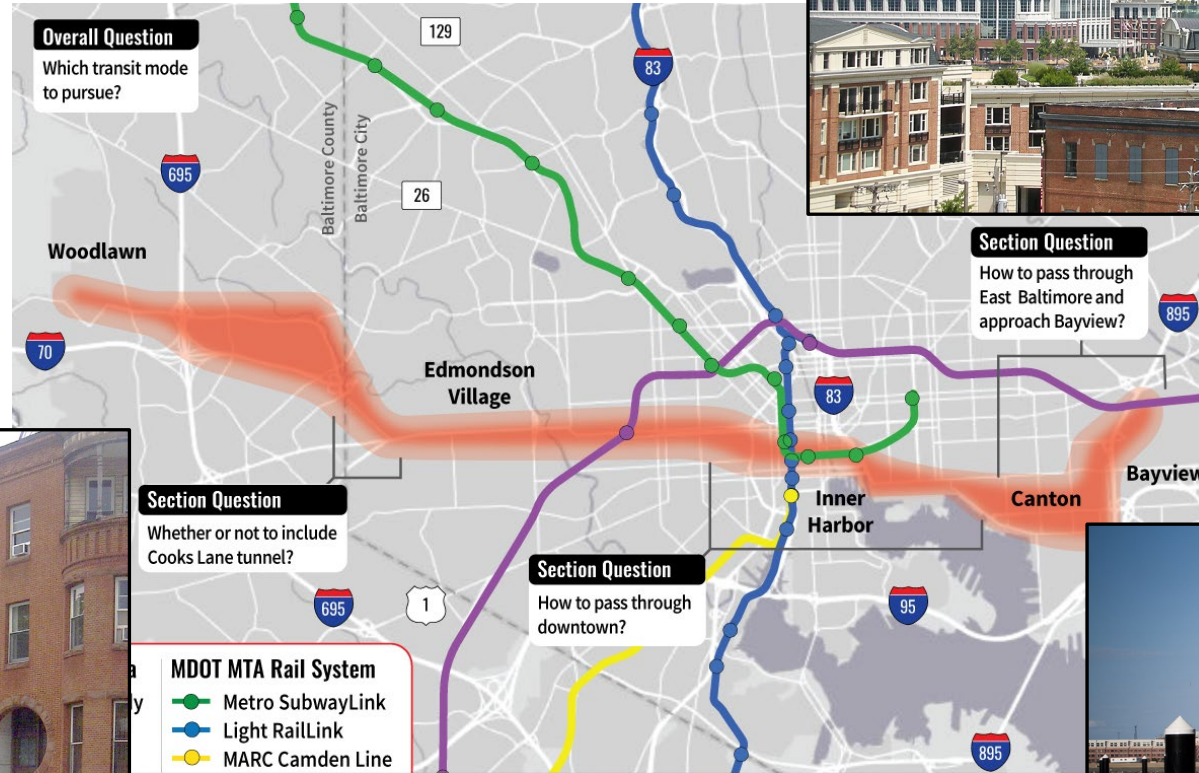
- **Revitalize surrounding neighborhoods.**

RED LINE



Toward Completing the System

Across the region's highest concentration of jobs, education, entertainment, culture, and urban beauty




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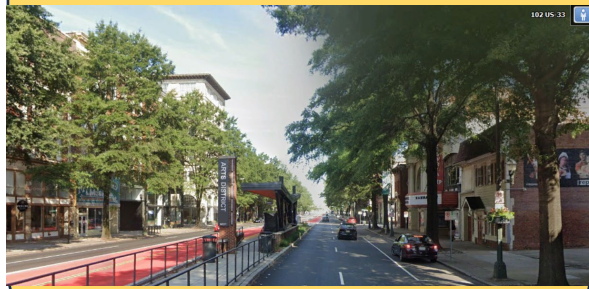
The Red Line can expand Revitalization and New Development

Both BRT and LRT attract reinvestment and new development in other cities. MTA's peers have found that:


An existing strong market is necessary; once successful, transit can help expand and strengthen the market.
Kansas City's development incentives were unnecessary once the KC Streetcar service proved to be desirable.




Visible permanent high-quality infrastructure is valued by investors, partners and riders.
Richmond's Pulse BRT has surpassed ridership expectations, encouraging the City to prioritize station area affordable housing and Henrico County to invest more in infrastructure including a Park and Ride.



Promotion of transit line's design quality and unique destinations foster redevelopment.
Portland's isolated industrial zone emerged as the new Pearl District neighborhood connecting to downtown and eventually a new hospital/job center on the waterfront beyond the interstate.



Local government incentives and infrastructure tailored to each station area's opportunities influence private investment and avoid displacement.
Cleveland's success included building-face to building-face investment downtown, partnerships with major institutions, and new bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in end-of-line suburban neighborhoods.



Development & Investment Patterns

Expanding market strengths

- Corridor's development and investment is building on surrounding amenities and access:
 - **Waterfront reclamation and expansion moving into former industrial zones**
 - Canton expanding north toward Brewers Hill and Highlandtown along freight rail
 - Harbor East, Harbor Point expanding northeast of Little Italy
 - **Region's institutions/employment districts stabilize and revitalize**
 - East Side's Yard 56 at Hopkins Bayview
 - West Side's UM BioPark and Walbrook Mill @ Coppin State
 - **Public Housing transforming as mixed use walkable**
 - West Side's Uplands, LaCite and Poe Homes
 - East Side's Perkins Homes



Transit Oriented Economic Development Opportunities

Location and Market Synergies

The Red Line corridor is:

- A wealth of regional destinations
- Built in historic and dense development patterns
- A potential catalyst to expand revitalization and investment beyond the waterfront



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Baltimore's economy is growing faster than almost anywhere else in Maryland

Ramsey Archibald Published 12/7/2023 5:17 p.m. EST

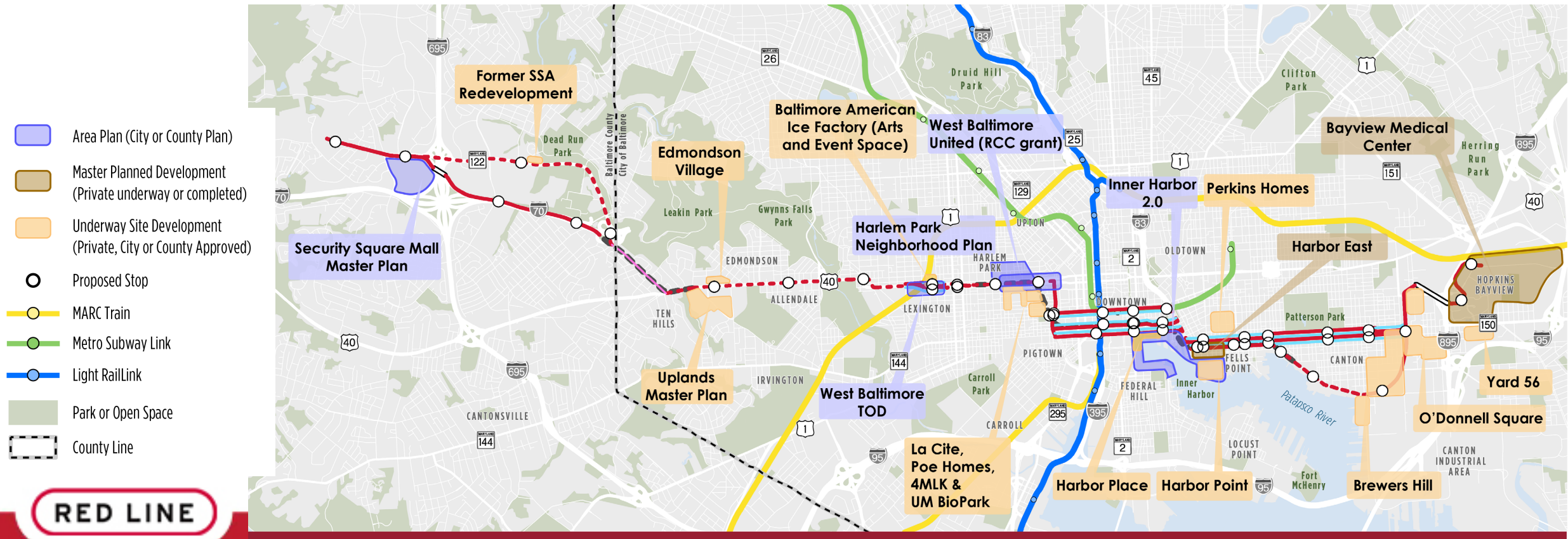


File photo of the Inner Harbor and downtown Baltimore as seen from the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront hotel. (Atlantide Phototrav/Getty Images)

Transit Oriented Economic Development Opportunities

Agency Partnerships, Plans and Tailored Strategies

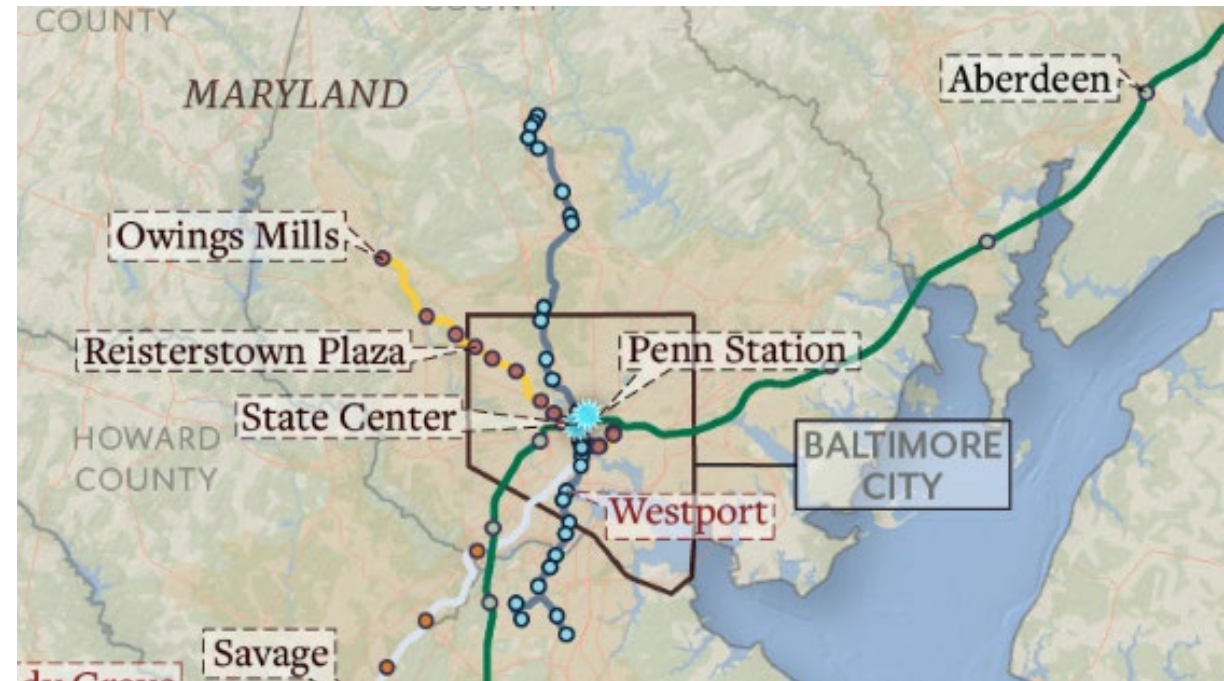
- Smaller single-family sites in West Baltimore neighborhoods will need investment tools that support existing and new homeowners
- Larger parcels mostly industrial sites in E. Baltimore and commercial sites Downtown and along Security Blvd introducing new mix of uses
- City and County partners already planning with/working to support institutional and private investors



Successful Transit Development Response must have

- ❑ A Strong Market, not only Quality Transit
- ❑ Synergy in Station Location, Physical Context, Site Ownership
- ❑ Transit-Supportive Public Policy Coordination
- ❑ TOD Strategies tailored to physical and market conditions
- ❑ Strong system brand with unique places/districts celebrated through design and messaging
- ❑ Other Factors
 - Land Assembly at the Station Area
 - Land Ownership at the Station Area
 - Land Use Economics

Transit-Oriented Development Stations and Designated Sites

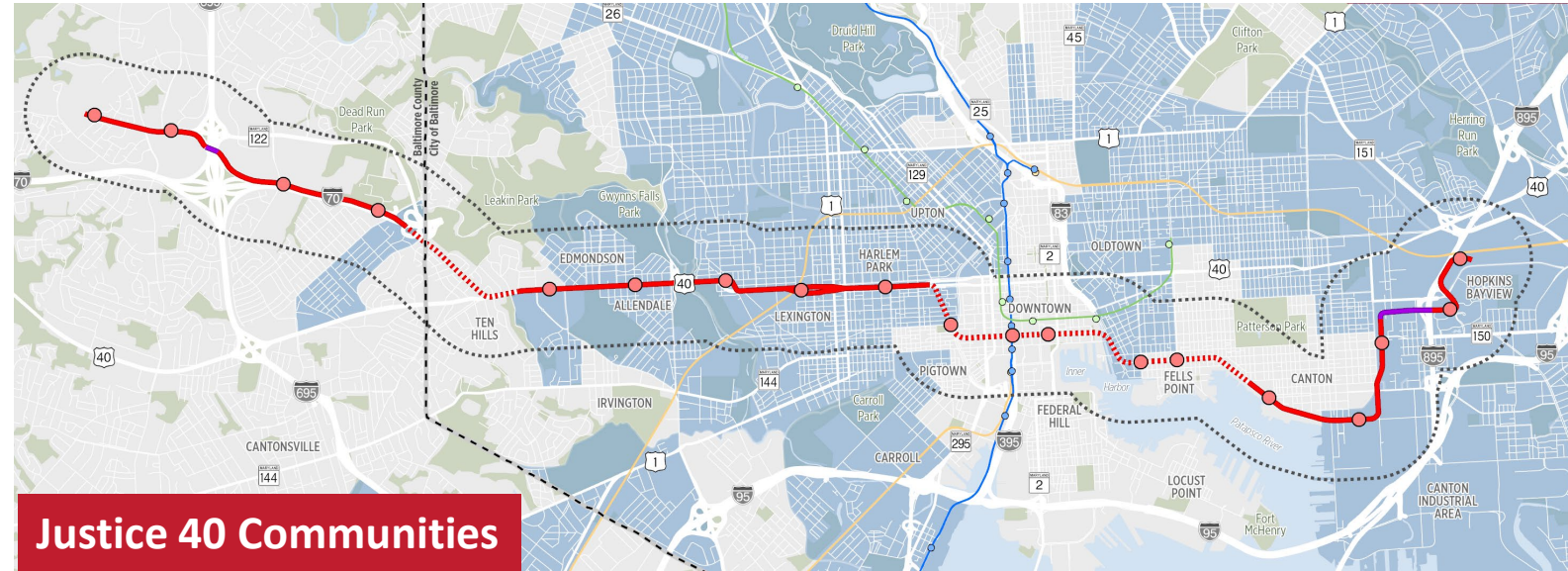


[TOD Map 2023.jpg \(1650x1275\) \(maryland.gov\)](#)

Investment in Transit is Equitable Investment in People

Investment in Transit is Investment in People & Community

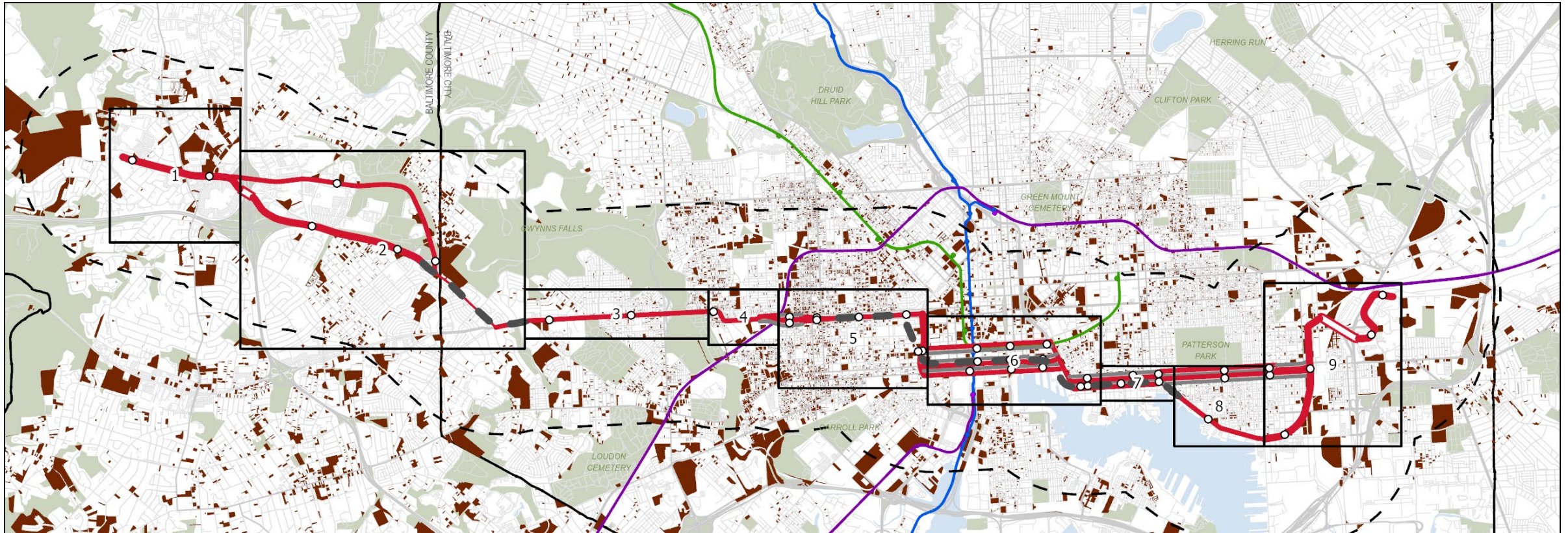
- ~30% of Baltimore households have no access to a vehicle
- Over 1/3 of MTA Core bus riders have a household income less than \$25,000
- ~27,000 middle and high school students rely on public transit to get to school
- A typical transit trip emits 55% fewer greenhouse gas emission than driving



Investing in transit cannot solve all issues: Unemployment, vacant housing, school attendance, income, addiction. But without investing in transit, we cannot solve any of them.

Getting the Red Line Designs and Partnerships on track

- What would healthy growth look like **without** high capacity, high quality transit?
- How can areas with higher investment hurdles support the region's housing supply?
- What is needed to bring transit-oriented developers into this once in a generation investment?



Thank you!

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