



April 2026

RED LINE

ABOUT THE BALTIMORE RED LINE

Connecting Communities, Expanding Opportunities for All



What is the Baltimore Red Line?

The Baltimore Red Line (Red Line) will be a high-frequency, high-capacity premium transit line that will run through downtown Baltimore and fill a critical gap in east-west transit service between Woodlawn and Bayview. For more information on the history of the project, visit this section of the website: [Background - Red Line \(redlinemaryland.com\)](https://www.redlinemaryland.com).

Project Update

Due to federal funding uncertainty, the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) needs to determine a fiscally responsible path forward for the Baltimore Red Line. Alternative delivery strategies, including project phasing and revisiting transit mode, need to be evaluated to help ensure the long-awaited east-west connector continues moving forward toward construction. Recent changes at the federal level have introduced increased uncertainty for transit projects in communities across the nation, related to funding availability, evolving scope requirements and extended timelines for approvals. Additionally, in recent years, rising material costs, labor shortages and supply chain disruptions have significantly increased uncertainty around large infrastructure budgets nationwide. With limited funding flexibility requiring careful, fiscally disciplined planning for major new investments, financially sustainable paths forward for the Red Line are critical.

Why the Red Line?

According to a 2024 Johns Hopkins Baltimore Area Survey, 42% of residents along the Red Line corridor currently miss opportunities for jobs, healthcare and recreation due to transportation challenges.

The Red Line will:

- Improve transit reliability
- Grow ridership
- Connect to regional transit
- Improve access to jobs
- Reduce emissions and improve air quality
- Expand access to healthcare
- Encourage transit-oriented development (TOD)

Major transit improvements like the Red Line offer broader economic benefits including the development of new residential, commercial, and retail destinations. According to a 2024 study conducted by the Greater Washington Partnership (GWP) and Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC), the Red Line is expected to generate \$10-\$19 billion in economic activity, with 16,000 temporary and 1,650 permanent jobs, resulting in \$6-\$11 billion in labor income.

Engineering Updates

Since November 2024, preliminary engineering and design has progressed for the Baltimore Red Line. Three alternatives are being compared with each other, evaluating factors including travel times and ridership, safety, community impacts, as well as construction cost and timeline. Traffic counts for roadways and intersections, including pedestrian counts, have been conducted along the proposed routes for the Red Line, preparing for a traffic impact analysis as the project advances. Surface and subsurface conditions have been investigated for soil composition, depth of groundwater, presence and types of utilities, underground obstructions, and other crucial information necessary to implement the Red Line. Next steps for the project include



selecting the end-to-end alignment and completing the NEPA process, which will position the project to seek federal grants to advance to the next phase.

Funding the Red Line: Challenges and Opportunities

Project funding is typically a federal, state and local partnership. State and local funding for construction is still being identified and must be committed before design is complete. Maryland's Transportation Trust Fund (TTF), is constrained and federal priorities have shifted significantly since the project relaunch in 2023.

The Federal Transit Administration discretionary Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program funds transit capital investments, including heavy rail, commuter rail, light rail, streetcars, and bus rapid transit. Federal transit law requires transit agencies seeking CIG funding to complete a series of steps over several years. Funding is highly competitive with no certain outcome, heavy administrative burden, and is subject to Congressional approval. *Currently, 33 of the 48 projects in the CIG program are Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects.*

Potential Approaches to Advance the Red Line

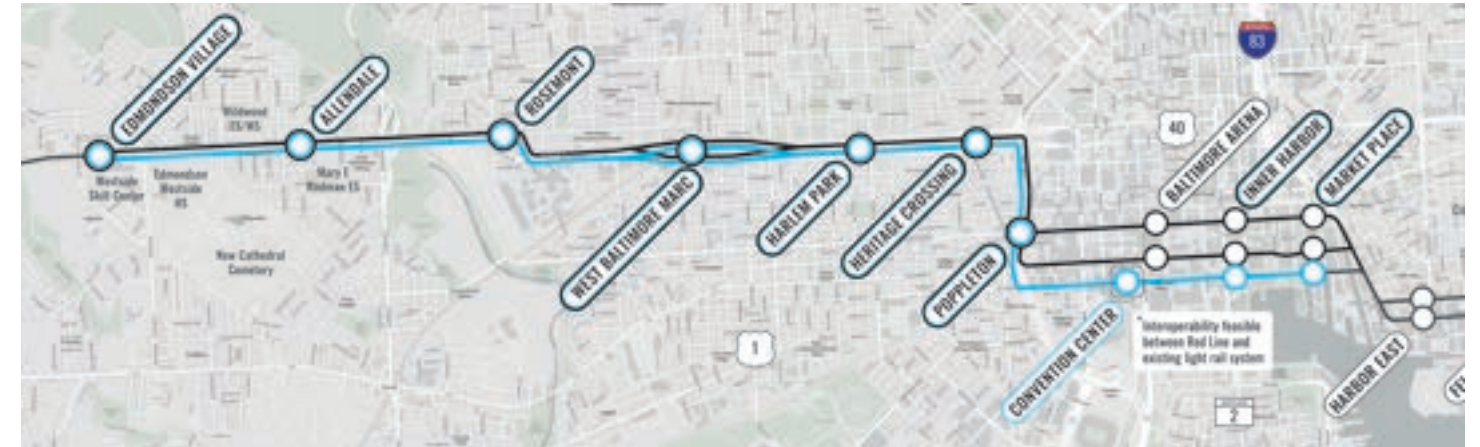
Full Light Rail Transit (LRT): Design and construct the Red Line as currently planned: a 14-mile LRT line, which is the costliest option and would take the longest to construct. Tunnels at Cooks Lane and Downtown are not financially feasible. The remaining alternatives compared are surface LRT options.



A 14-mile LRT would offer:

- ✓ Highest ridership option
- ✓ Lower annualized cost per trip
- ✓ Slightly faster travel times than BRT
- ✗ Highest cost option; Limited state and federal resources to fund the project
- ✗ At least 9 years until completion; longer mega-projects are prone to risks such as inflation and policy/political changes
- ✗ With the tunnels being cost prohibitive, remaining surface alignments have substantial parking, property and operational impacts

Phased Construction of Light Rail Transit (LRT): An initial segment from Edmondson Village to Market Place could be designed and constructed for a lower capital cost, and future phases could be designed, funded, and constructed independently. However, there is no guarantee if, and when, future phases would be added on.



Compared to a 14-mile LRT, this strategy would offer:

- ✓ Similar redevelopment potential along the Phase 1 segment
- ✓ Highest ridership segment of the full corridor
- ✓ Maintains same capacity per vehicle compared to full 14-mile LRT
- ✓ Slightly faster travel times than BRT No clear path to advance the rest of the corridor
- ✗ Carries higher level of risk compared to BRT
- ✗ More costly to implement all phases due to inflation
- ✗ Includes cost of full operations facility
- ✗ Less efficient to operate due to required staffing and maintenance capacity

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): Design and construct a high-quality BRT line with similar features of LRT.



Compared to a 14-mile LRT, this strategy would offer:

- ✓ Lower construction cost
- ✓ Lower cost to operate and maintain annually
- ✓ Shorter construction duration
- ✓ Less right-of-way acquisition
- ✓ Less impact to parking and traffic
- ✓ Opportunity for 4 additional stations
- ✓ Could share maintenance facilities constructed for BMORE Bus initiative
- ✗ Lower ridership and vehicle capacity
- ✗ Longer travel time due to mixed traffic segments
- ✗ Projected higher annualized cost per rider

Cost of Delay

Each year the project is delayed, the more expensive it becomes. The least expensive LRT option for the Red Line would cost \$4.7B. If the start of construction was delayed 5 years, inflation alone would add \$882M in costs.

Red Line + Regional Transit: Connecting Communities. Growing Opportunities.

In light of fiscal constraints, now is the time to rethink the Baltimore Red Line project and recommit to strengthening the Baltimore region in ways where we can make the most positive and immediate impacts.

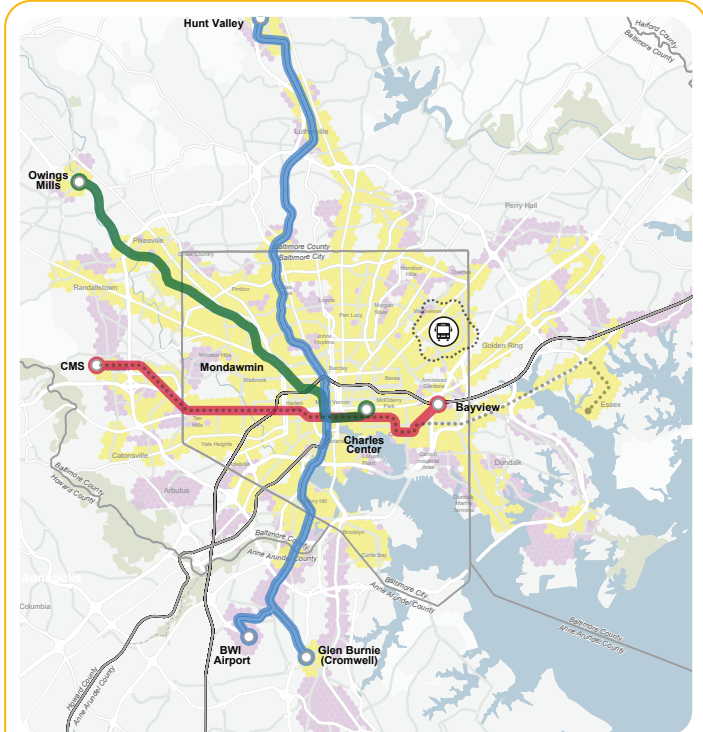
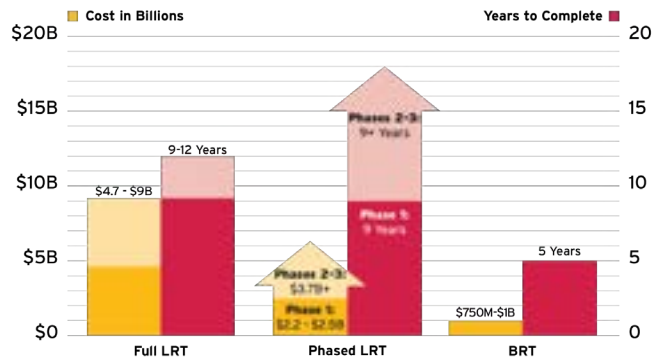
Transit is a key driver of economic development in the Baltimore Region. The 2025 Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan identifies five Major Project RTP Corridors with strong ridership potential, and unmet mobility needs, with the Red Line as the first ready to advance. The project could spur up to \$12 billion in transit-oriented development and strengthen connections to major redevelopment areas. Together, these efforts advance early progress toward the RTP's long-range goals and help anchor more than \$1.5 billion in planned regional development.

A proposed robust program of transit investments over the next 10 years will modernize existing infrastructure, expand the premium transit network and directly connect multiple transit-oriented development (TOD) sites across the Baltimore region, making it easier for residents and worker to access housing, schools, jobs, and services efficiently.

To view more details about the information presented here, including a comparison of all three approaches in each segment of the Red Line corridor, please refer to the full set of information boards from the May 2-9, 2026 Open Houses:

<https://bit.ly/RL-open-house-boards>

Cost and Years to Complete by Approach



Funded Projects:

- Metro Subway Rail Car Replacement (\$400M)
- Light Rail Modernization Program (\$1.4B)
- East-West RAISE (\$50M)

Proposed Projects:

- Red Line LRT (\$4.7 to \$9B) or BRT (\$750M to \$1B)

Proposed BMORE Bus Plan Implementation (\$1.1 Billion):

- BMORE BUS Very Frequent (10 min or better)
- BMORE BUS Frequent (15 min or better)

Ways to Stay Engaged

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