

# MTA Service Planning

**Baltimore Regional Transit Commission**  
**June 7th, 2024**

**MDOT**  
MARYLAND DEPARTMENT  
OF TRANSPORTATION

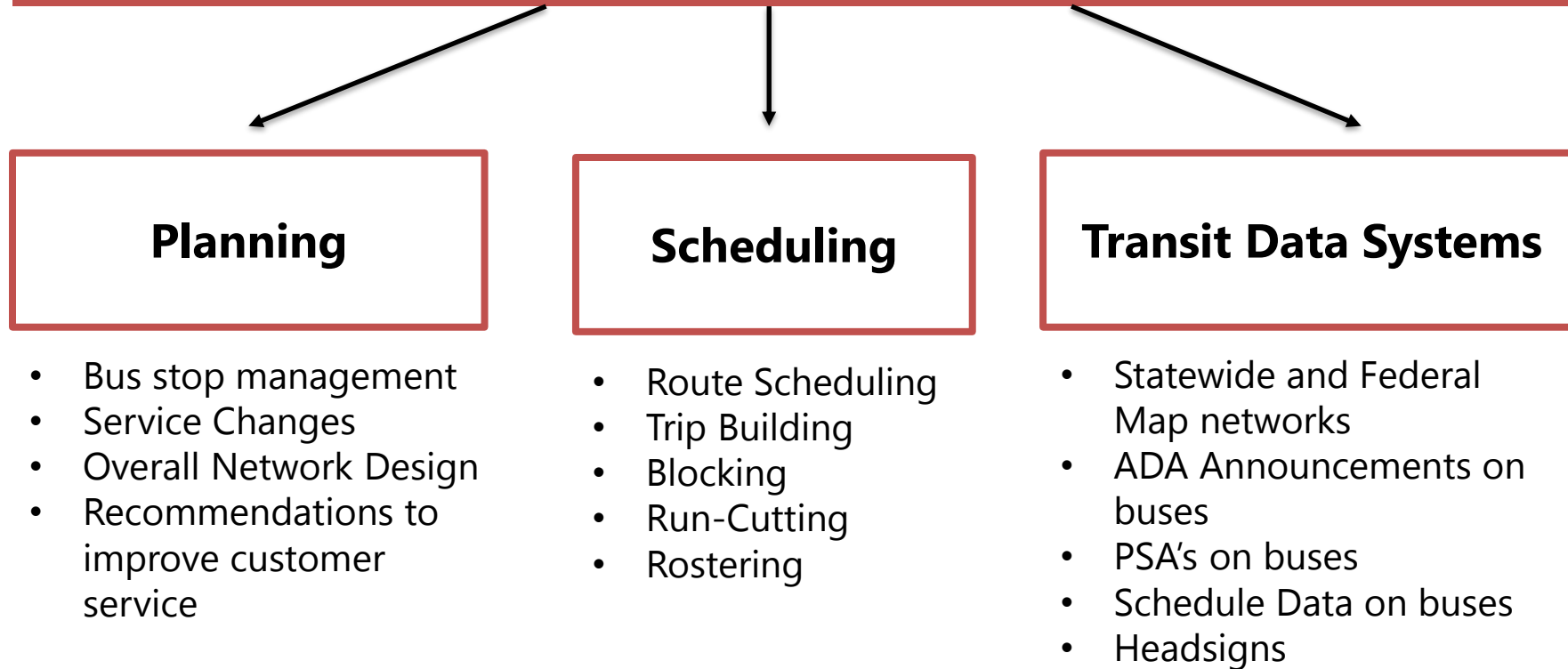
MARYLAND TRANSIT  
ADMINISTRATION

# Office of Service Development (OSD)



- MTA's Office of Service Development has primary responsibility for developing the routes and schedules of MTA service, including:
  - Network level planning
  - Bus stop management
  - All announcements and signs on buses and associated data
  - Creating the schedules that are assigned to operators

# The Office of Service Development (OSD)



# Annual Service Plan

Ongoing Service Assessment & Comment Period	Summer Service Change (Minor)	Winter Service Change (Minor)	Fall Service Change		12-Month Timeline
			(Minor)	OR (Major)	
Aug					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Major Milestone</li> <li>□ Minor Milestone</li> </ul>
Sep		Service Assessments: Performance Evaluation		Service Assessments: Performance Evaluation & Unmet Needs Assessment	
Oct	Winter Cutoff				
Nov		Schedule Development		Proposal Development	
Dec					
Jan		Service Assessments: Performance Evaluation	Finalize Minor Service Changes	Approve & Finalize Proposal	
Feb	Summer Cutoff		Service Change Implementation		
Mar	Fall Cutoff (Major)	Schedule Development		Public Hearings	
Apr			Service Assessments: Performance Evaluation	Finalize Major Service Changes	
May	Fall Cutoff (Minor)	Finalize Minor Service Changes		Major Service Change Implementation	
Jun		Service Change Implementation	Schedule Development		
July				Major Service Change Implementation	
Aug			Finalize Minor Service Changes		
Sep			Service Change Implementation		

# MTA Service Planning Goals

- Increase Access and Equity
  - Improve access and equity by identifying new and better ways to connect people who depend on transit with jobs and services
- Improve Reliability & Travel Time
  - Reduce travel times on transit to improve customer journeys by adding more direct connections between routes and destinations
- Adapt Service to Meet Rider Needs
  - Adapt service to changing travel patterns and rider needs



**Improve**  
service quality  
& reliability



**Maximize**  
access to high  
frequency transit



**Strengthen**  
connections  
between MTA's  
bus & rail routes

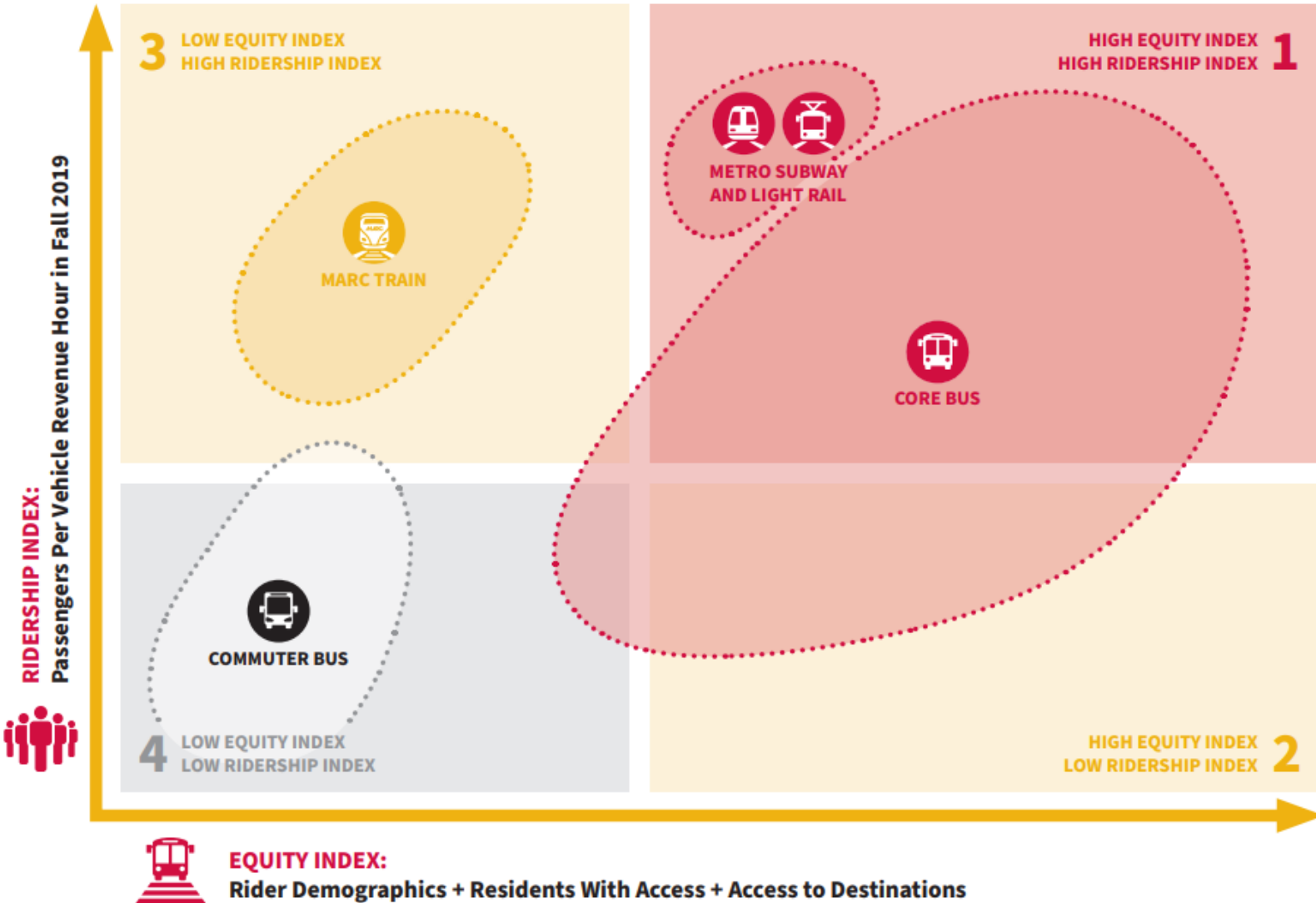


**Align**  
the network with  
existing & emerging  
job centers



**Engage**  
riders, employees,  
communities, & elected  
officials in the  
planning process

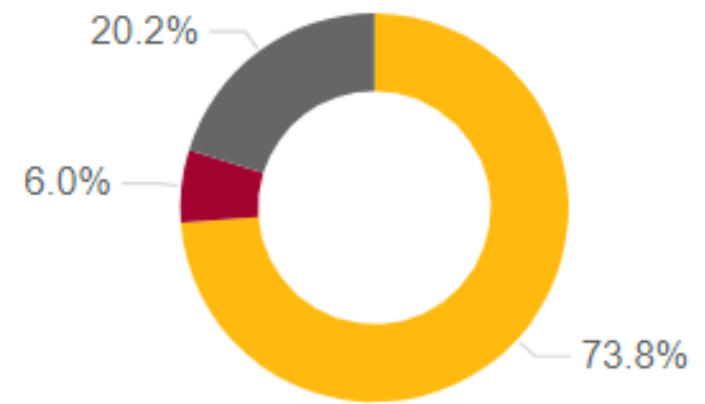
# Tools for Service Planning



Route

Direction

Time of Day



● On-Time % ● Early % ● Late %

# Benefits of Good Scheduling



- General plan and goals must be translated into individual operator schedule
  - Assigned to operators through a “pick” system
- When the generated schedules are accurate and thoughtful this can:
  - Increase on-time performance
  - Increase the efficiency of MTA’s resources by minimizing out of service time, and setting appropriate layovers
  - Increase operator satisfaction by creating more regularized and desirable work hours

# Schedule Example



**31 peak buses**    **396.9 platform hours**  
 18 peak pull outs    287.3 revenue trip hours  
 12 peak pull ins    85.4 layover hours  
                               24.1 deadhead hours

05:11 - 05:21 (10 min)

✓  
Check bus





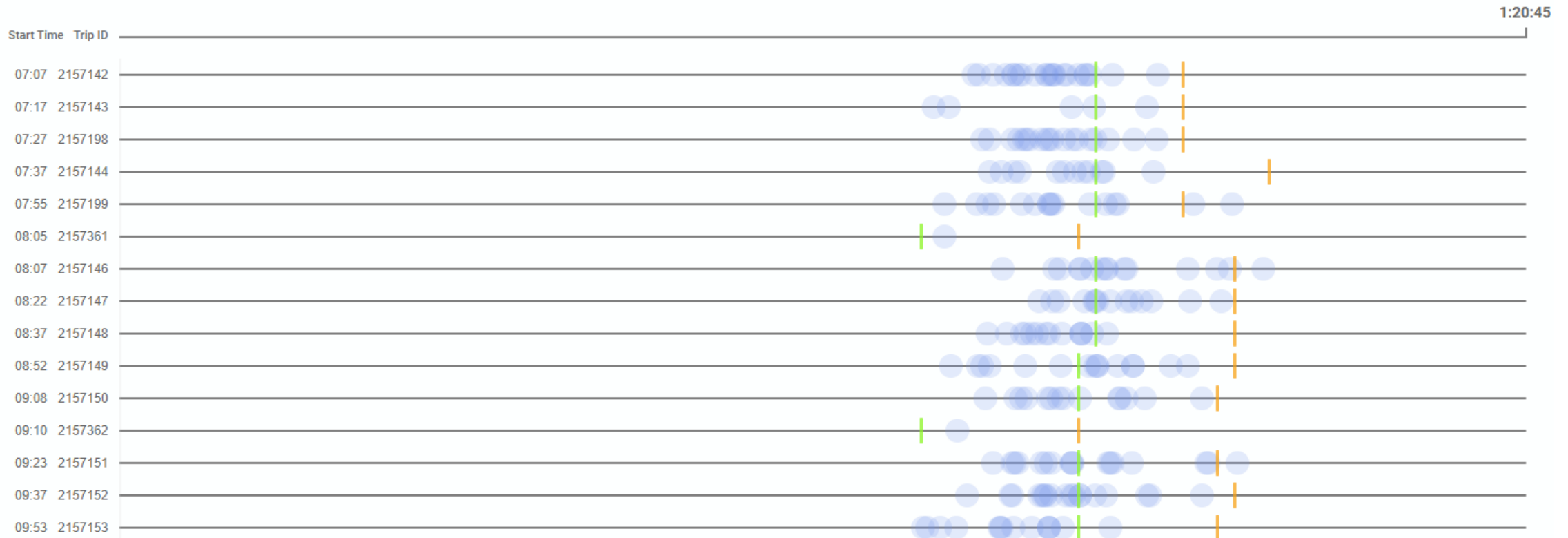
# Improving Reliability – Runtime Adjustments

CityLink GREEN - Downtown - Towson: All Trips

Sorting: Trip Order

Components Distribution Percentile

Scheduled run-time | Next trip start | Trip run-time

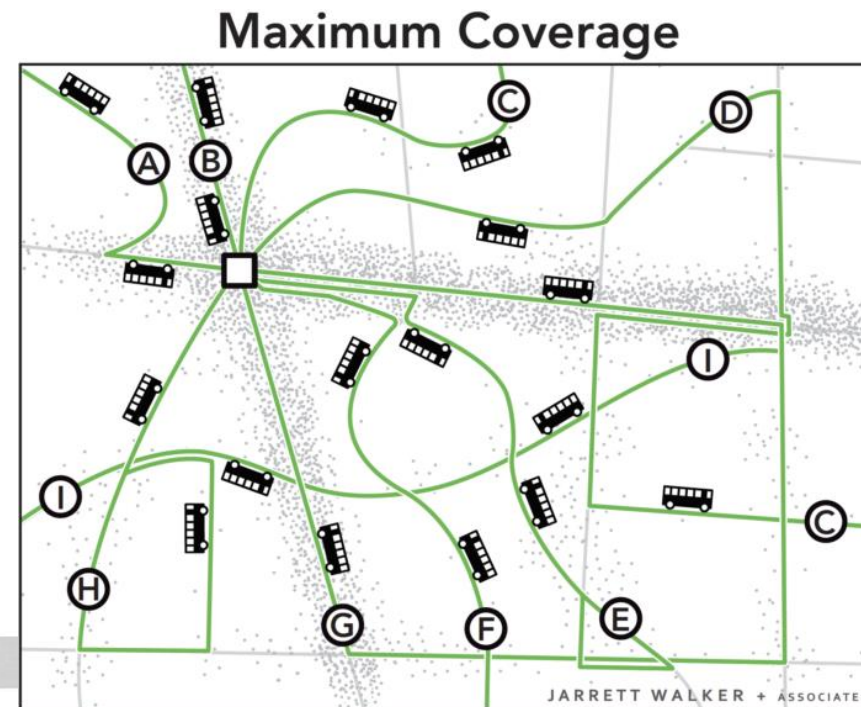
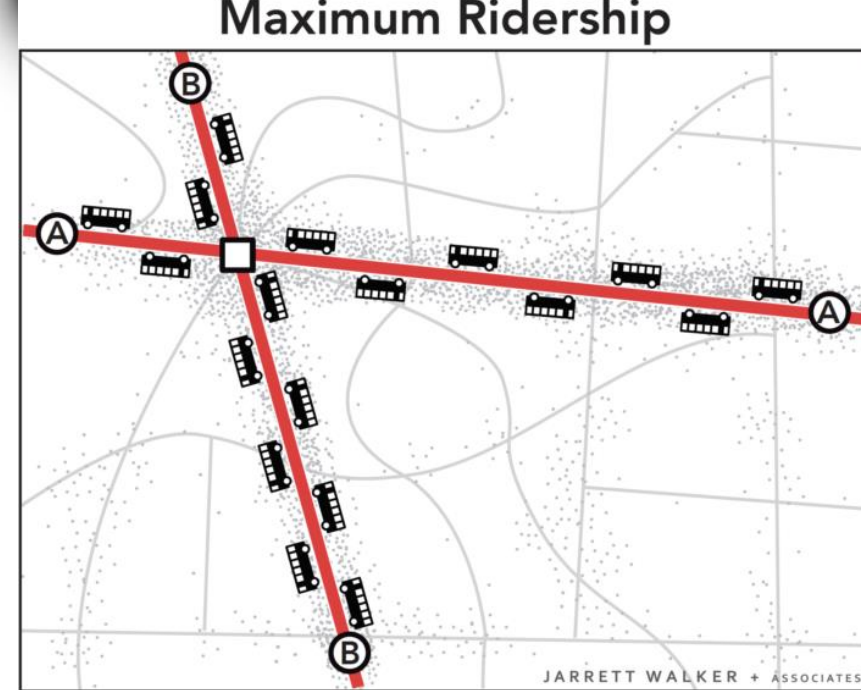


# Service Planning Constraints

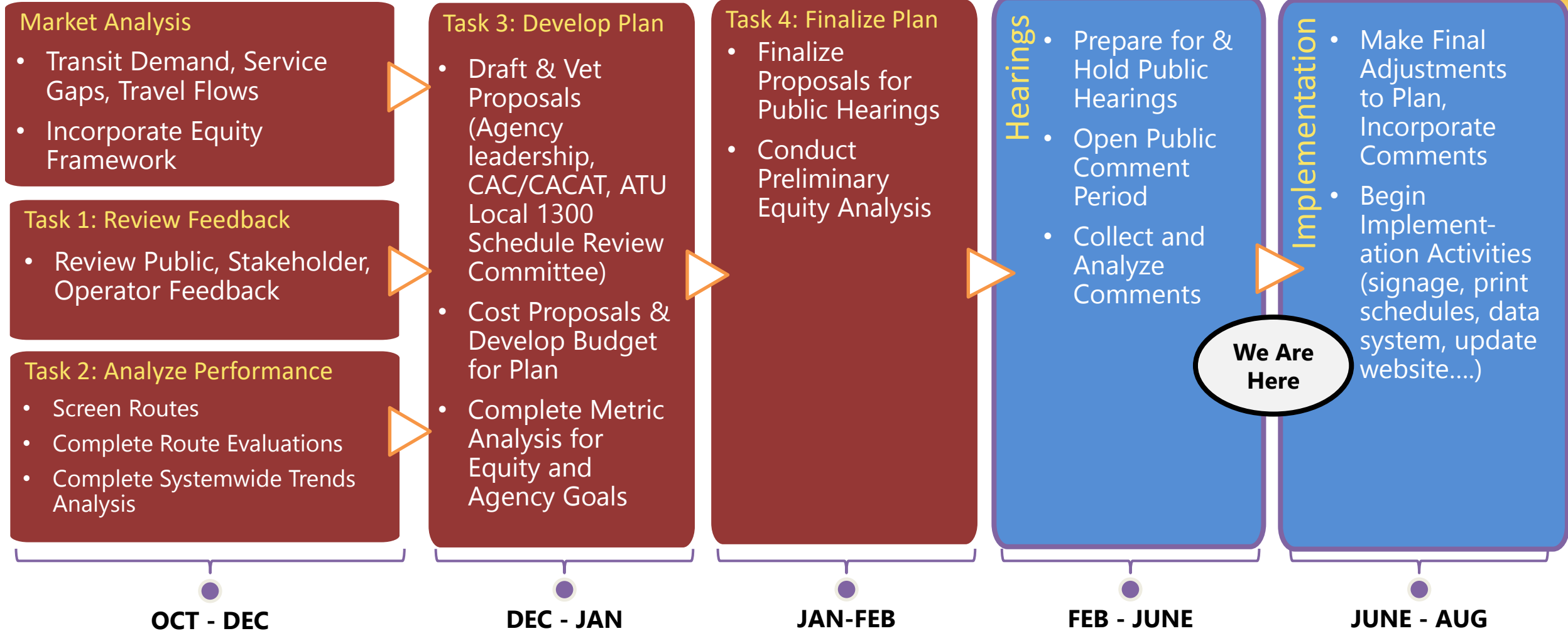
- Limited resources and extensive needs
  - MTA's service is capped by the number of buses and operators available
- Collective bargaining agreement lays out parameters for when and how we can make changes
- Physical constraints to roadways and available stop space

# Service Planning Constraints

- Additionally, some transit goals will always have to be balanced against each other
  - Frequency on high ridership routes has to be balanced with a desire to provide coverage
  - Providing more stops has to be balanced with route performance



# Annual Service Plan Tasks



# Public Outreach Process

## STRATEGIES FOR REACHING OUT TO THE PUBLIC:

### POSSIBLE PRINT MATERIALS



### DIGITAL MATERIALS

### PUBLIC MEDIA



### STATION INFORMATION

### STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION



### DIRECT RIDER OUTREACH

### PUBLIC MEETINGS



- Print materials
  - Car cards, rider notices, schedules and maps
- Digital materials
  - MTA website, social media, mobile apps
- Public media
  - Radio, television, newspapers
- Station information
  - Visual display and audio announcements
- Stakeholder communication
  - Advisory groups, elected officials, and civic organizations, rider outreach
- Public hearings

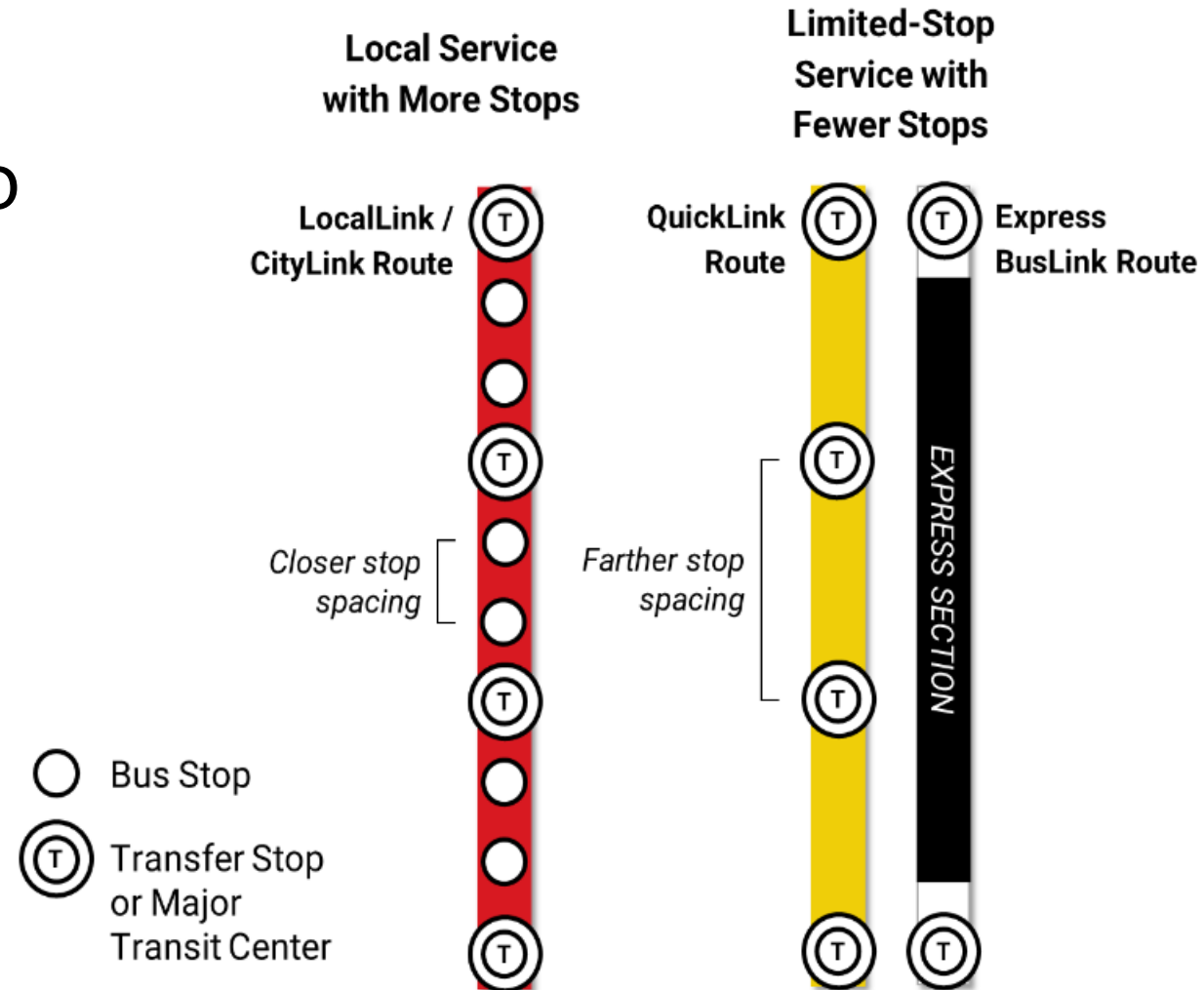
# Proposed Service Changes

- After analyzing the data and feedback, proposed changes in the Annual Service Plan fall into general categories:
  - Increasing or decreasing frequency on a given route
  - Consolidating or adding stops
  - Splitting a route or creating a short turn
  - Creating a new route or route extension



# Adding or Consolidating Stops

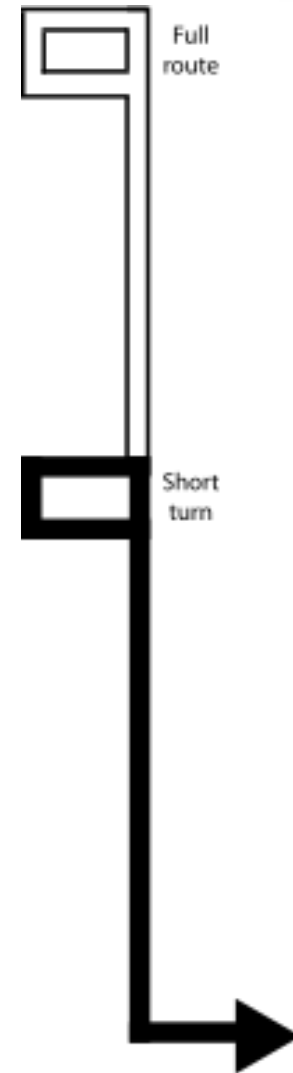
- The following factors could trigger a frequency change to stop locations/service type:
  - Difficulty maintaining on time performance due to stop frequency
  - Geometric or safety issues
  - The distribution pattern of boarding and alighting





# Splitting or Short Turns

- The following factors could trigger a short turn or to split a route:
  - Ridership/load drops off abruptly after a certain point in the route
  - A lot of trips on the route are short, as opposed to through-trips



# Adding Service

- Since MTA's resources are highly utilized, adding or extending service is done only when there is a known need/demand
  - Additional development or jobs
  - Lots of public feedback on a given connection











# Title VI and the ASP

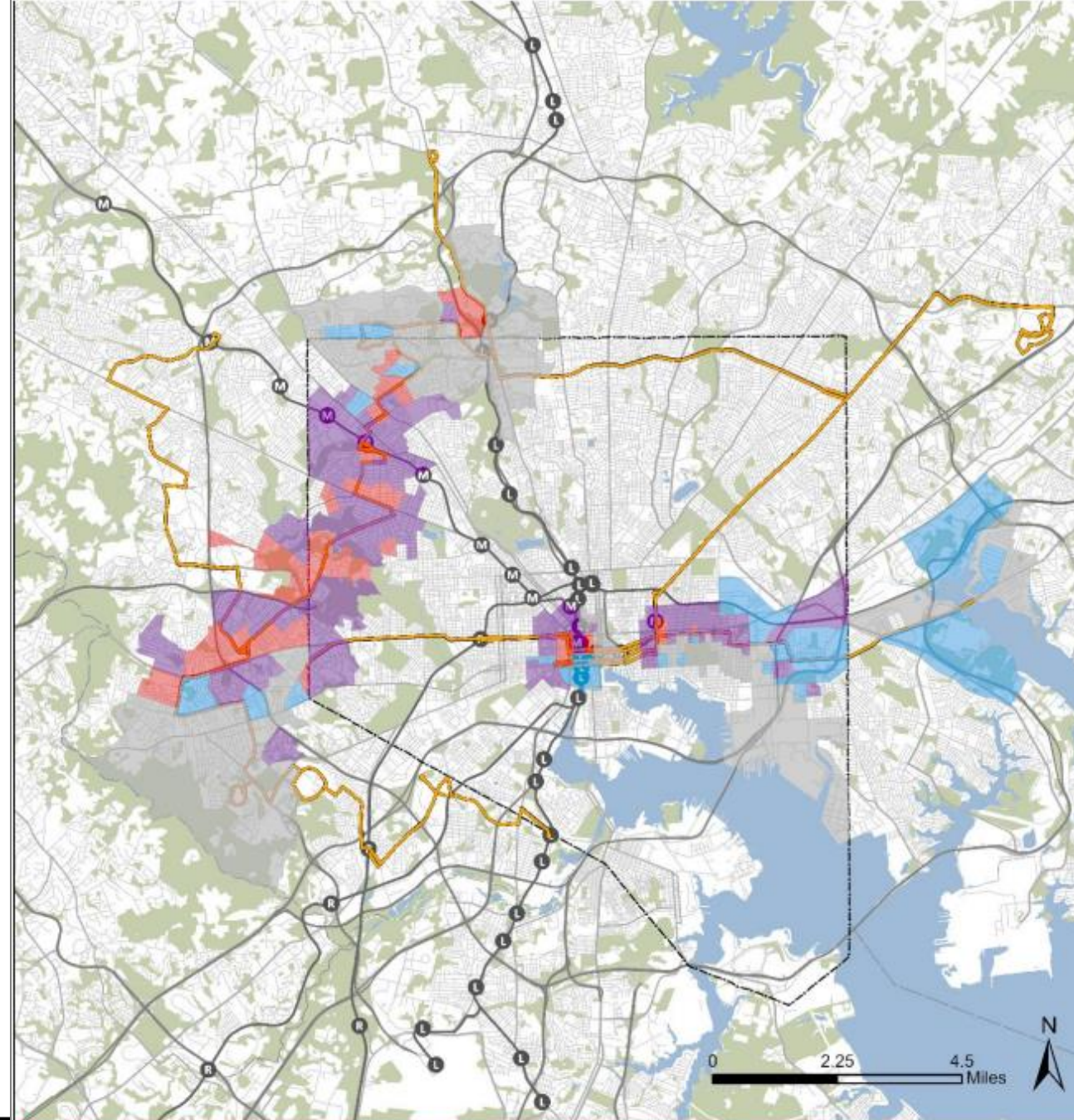
- All ASP proposals have a Title VI analysis performed to ensure that they do not create a disparate impact or disproportionate burden on protected communities

<https://www.mta.maryland.gov/title-vi-civil-rights-act-1964>

## Legend

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  Major Service Change Routes                            |  Metro, MARC, Light Rail   |
|  Block Group Exceeds Minority Threshold                 |  Metro SubwayLink Stations |
|  Block Group Exceeds Low-Income Threshold               |  Light RailLink Stations   |
|  Block Group Exceeds Low-Income and Minority Thresholds |  MARC Stations             |

Source: American Community Survey, 2019



# Performance Monitoring



- Each year we look at the performance of each route for potential changes using these key performance indicators:
  - Ridership retention
  - Equity value
  - On-time performance
  - Non-revenue trip efficiency (to and from the bus division)
  - Capacity
  - Productive/unproductive or duplicated segments
- Using these factors, we determine if we should:
  - Expand
  - Continue to monitor
  - Reduce service, shorten, or short turn

# Fall 2024 Service Change



## **Service Enhancements**

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The following section proposes enhancements to four routes. Proposed enhancements are based on MTA's goals for this service plan. These adjustments are tentative as MTA seeks public input.

The enhancements are as follows:

- **LocalLink 73: Extension to Wagners Point**
- **LocalLink 85: Extension to North Avenue Light Rail**
- **LocalLink 67: All Day Service**
- **Express BusLink 105: Additional Trips**

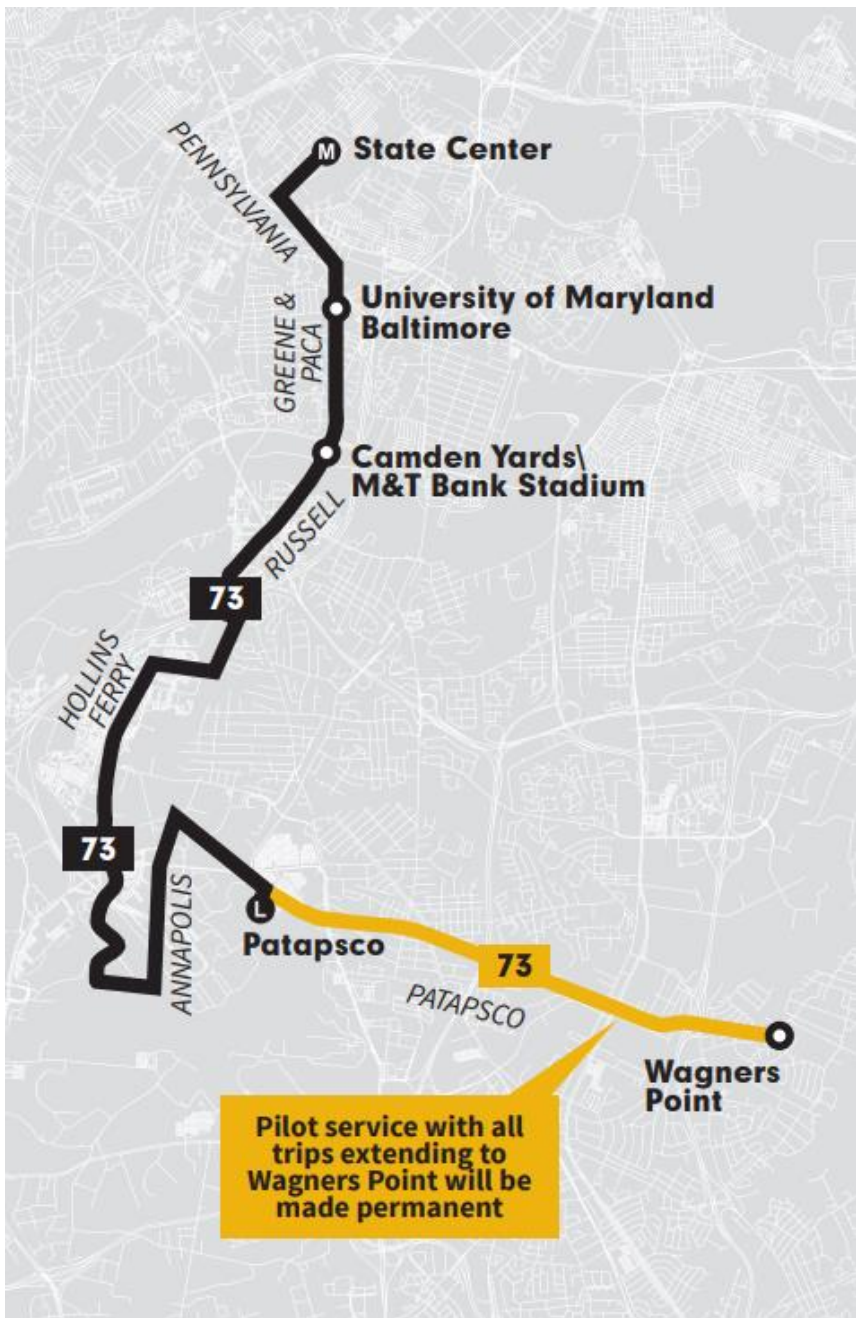
## **Service Adjustments**

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The following section proposes adjustments to eleven routes in six scenarios. Adjustments are proposed to adjust service and stop locations due construction activity and fix operational issues for MTA buses. These adjustments would increase the efficiency of route operations but will not have significant impacts for riders.

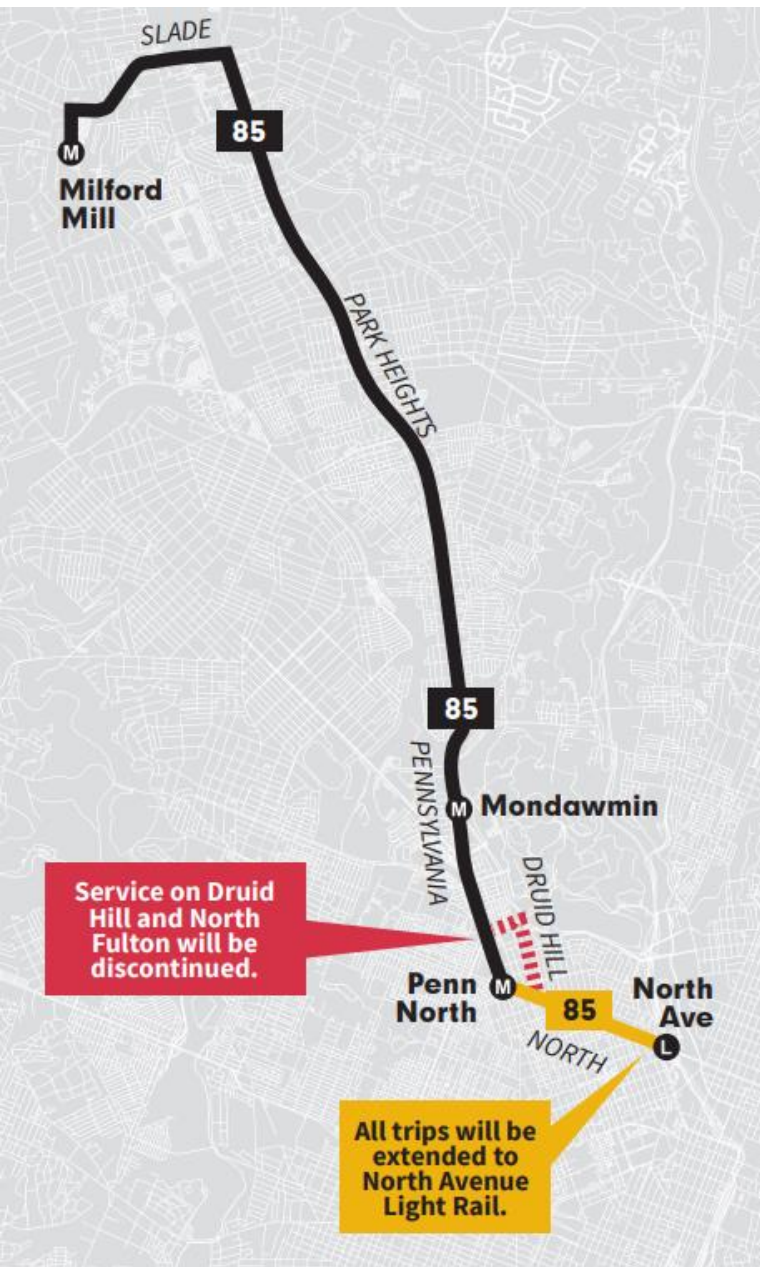
The six service adjustments are:

- **CityLink Silver**
- **CityLink Lime**
- **LocalLink 71**
- **Tradepoint Atlantic: LocalLink 63 and Express BusLink 163**
- **Whispering Woods: LocalLink 59 and Express BusLink 160**
- **Dundalk: LocalLink 62, LocalLink 63, LocalLink 65, and Express BusLink 163**



## LocalLink 73: Extension to Wagners Point

Pilot service with all trips extending to Wagners Point on the LocalLink 73 is proposed to be made permanent. The proposed service extension is intended to provide service to new employment opportunities at Wagners Point. No changes are proposed to be made to service frequencies or span of service. This extension would provide a one-seat ride from State Center in Downtown Baltimore to Wagners Point via E Patapsco Ave.



## Locallink 85: Extension to North Avenue Light Rail

Locallink 85 is proposed to extend to North Avenue Light Rail station on all trips to improve connections to the Light RailLink from Northwest Baltimore. Stops at Fulton Avenue & Reisterstown Road (#8554) and Druid Hill Avenue & Retreat Street (#12520) would be discontinued. Instead, the route would turn from Pennsylvania Avenue onto W North Avenue and continue to the North Avenue Light Rail station. No changes are proposed to weekday or weekend service frequencies or span of service.



## **LocalLink 67: All Day Service**

LocalLink 67 is proposed to run without interruption through the midday time period between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m., creating all day service on the route. Outside the midday time period, there are no proposed changes to weekday or weekend service frequencies or weekend span of service.

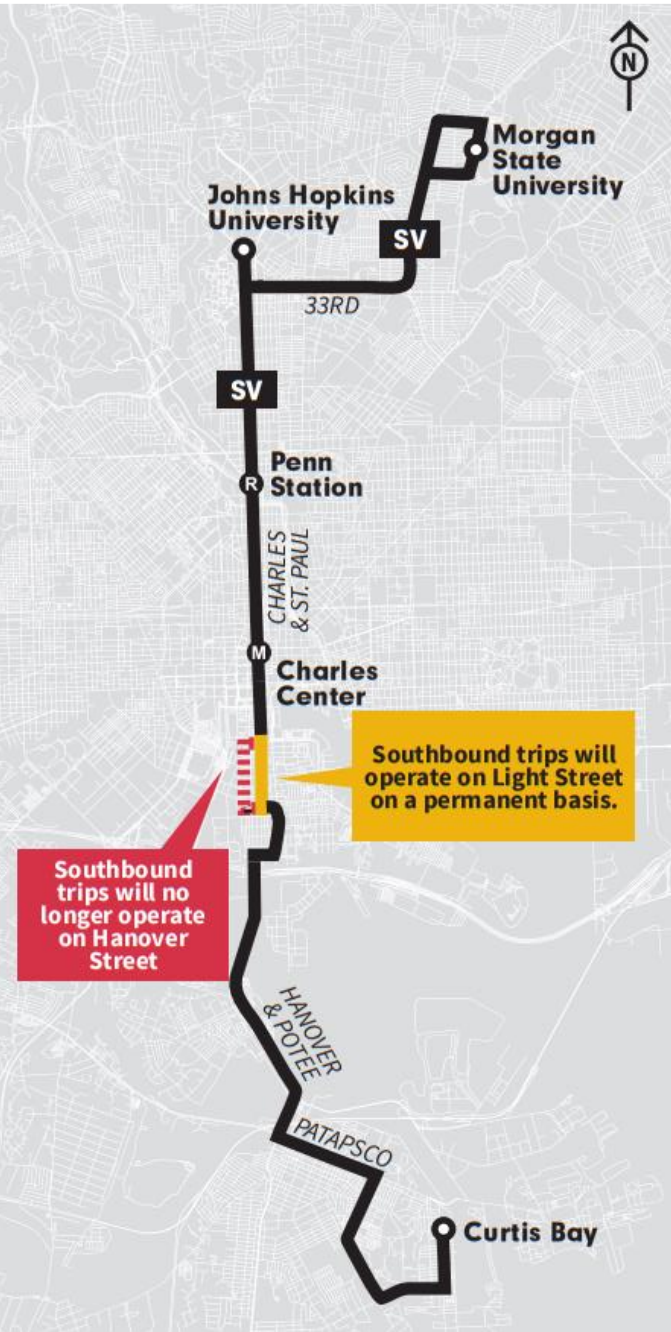
<b>Current and Proposed Service Level for LocalLink 67</b>		
<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
<b>Weekday A.M. Peak</b>	<b>30 minutes</b>	<b>No Change</b>
<b>Weekday Midday</b>	<b>No Service</b>	<b>60 minutes</b>
<b>Weekday P.M. Peak</b>	<b>30 minutes</b>	<b>No Change</b>



## Express BusLink 105: Additional Trips

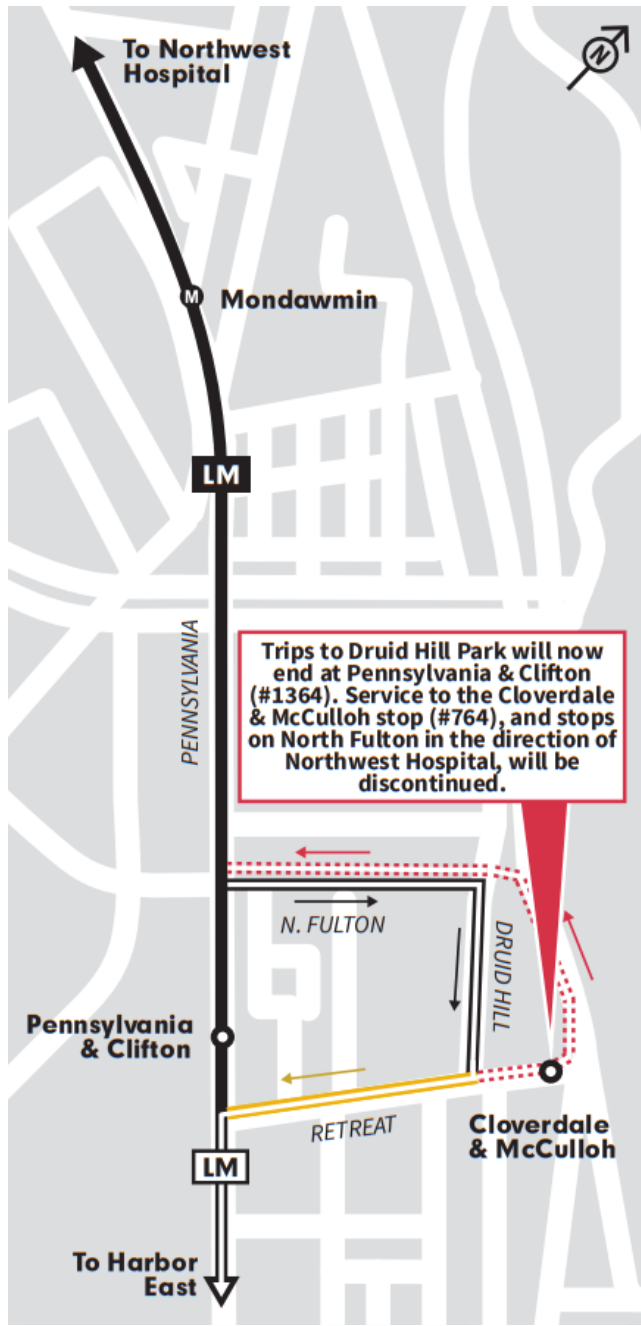
Additional trips are proposed to be added during the A.M. Peak and P.M. Peak time periods for the Express BusLink 105. The additional trips would alleviate crowding on the CityLink Pink and Express Bus Link 105 during peak travel periods. There are no proposed changes to weekday span of service.

Current and Proposed Service Level for BusLink 105		
Time Period	Current	Proposed
A.M. Peak	4 trips	4 trips
P.M. Peak	3 trips	6 trips



## CityLink Silver

The return of northbound service on CityLink Silver along Light Street from S Charles Street to Light Street through the Federal Hill neighborhood is proposed to be made permanent. Riders who accessed stops at Charles Street & Henrietta Street (#117) and Charles Street & Ostend Street (#114) would be able to access the route by walking 2 blocks east. There are no proposed changes to frequency or span of service.



## CityLink Lime

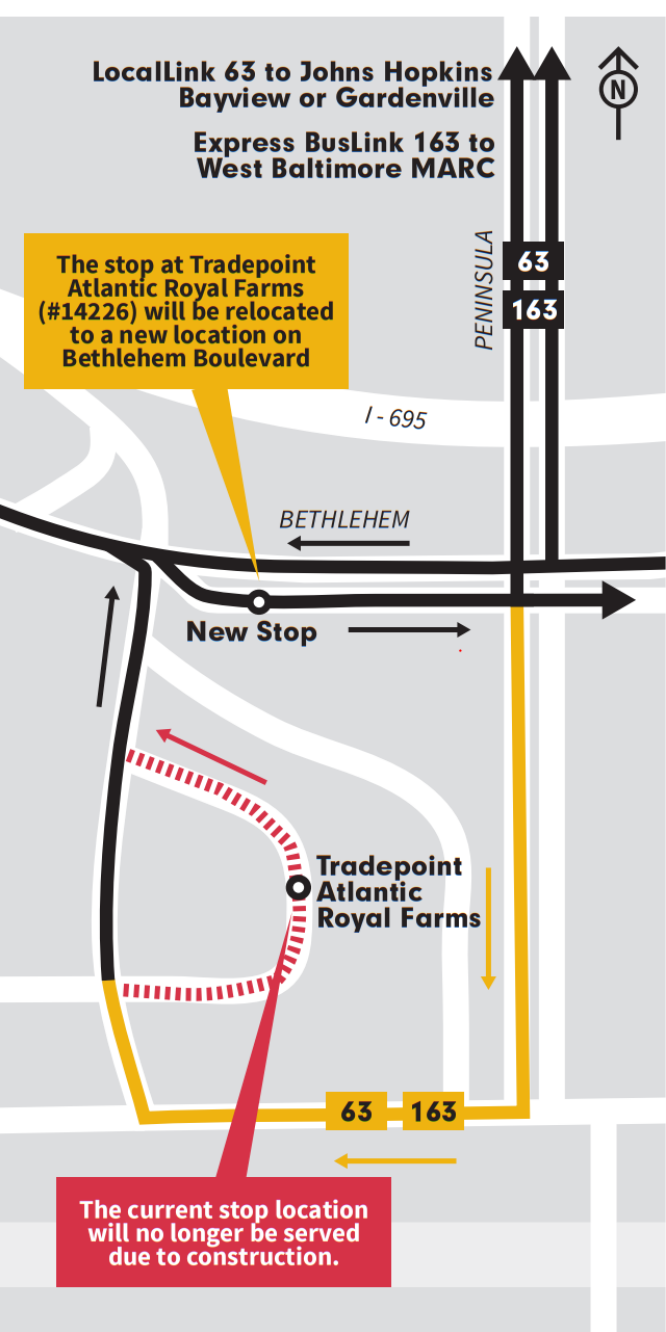
Trips on the CityLink Lime to Druid Hill Park are proposed to terminate at Pennsylvania Avenue & Clifton Avenue (#1364). CityLink Lime would no longer serve the stop at Cloverdale Road and McCulloh Street (#764) due to conflicts with freight loading operations. Weekday and weekend frequencies and span of service are not proposed to be changed.



## LocalLink 71

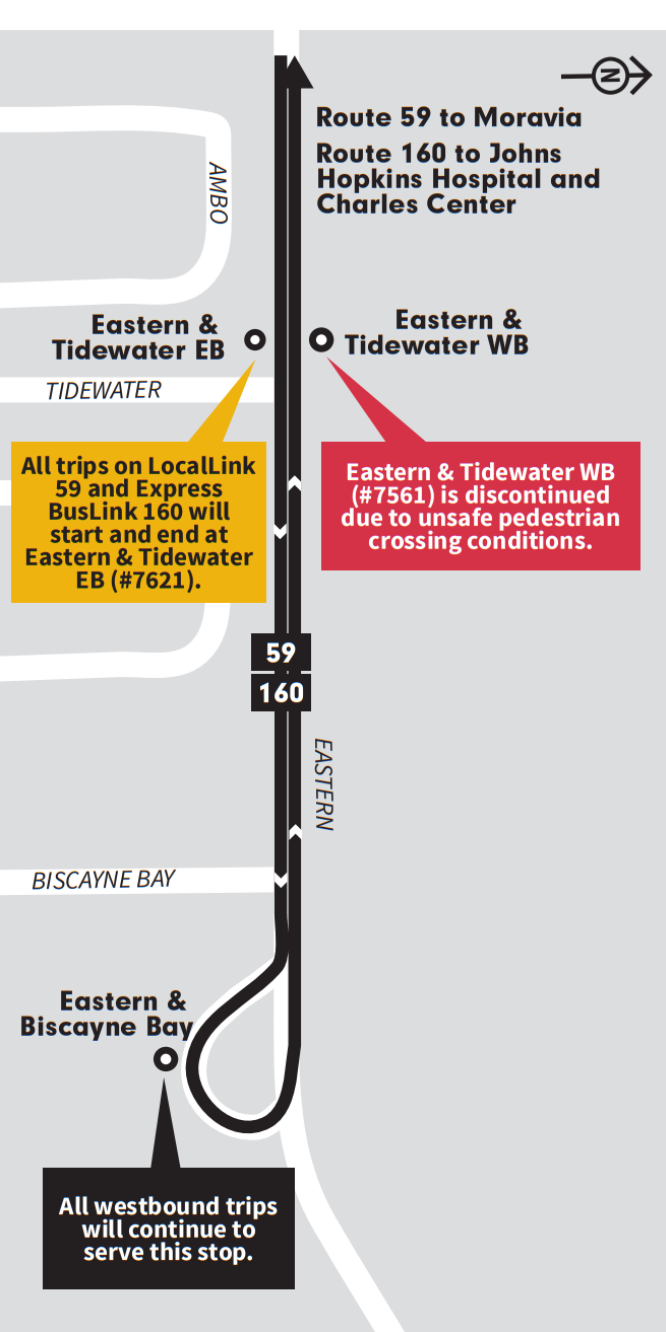
Changes to the route alignment of LocalLink 71 through the Baltimore Peninsula is proposed to be made permanent due to changes in the street grid. All trips would run along Mission Boulevard in the Peninsula and continue to Patapsco Light Rail Station. Beyond route alignment, there would be no changes to frequencies or span of service.

LocalLink 71's alignment through Baltimore Peninsula will be made permanent due to changes in the street grid around new development.



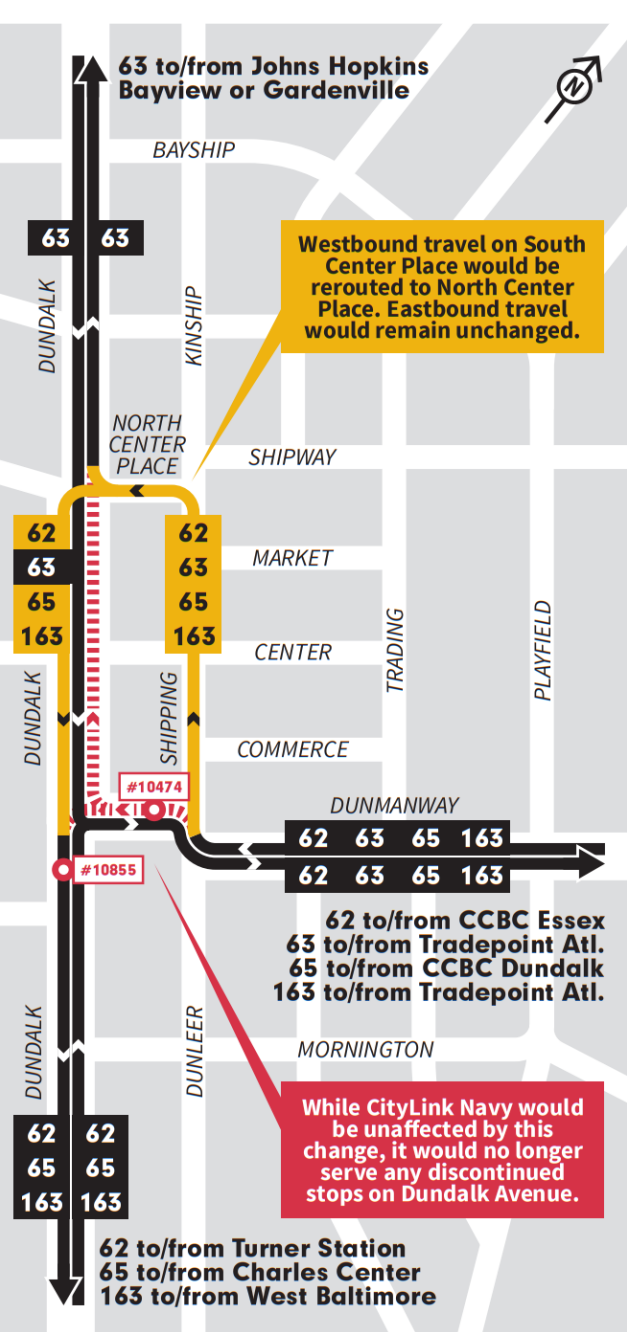
## Tradepoint Atlantic: LocalLink 63 and Express BusLink 163

The final stop on LocalLink 63 and Express BusLink 163 at Tradepoint Atlantic Royal Farms (#14226) is proposed to be moved to a new location on Bethlehem Boulevard due to construction at the current stop. Both routes will continue to serve both sides of Tradepoint Atlantic on all trips. No adjustments to frequency or span of service are proposed for weekday or weekend service.



## Whispering Woods: LocalLink 59, Express BusLink 160

LocalLink 59 and Express BusLink 160 are proposed to move their final and first stop to Eastern Avenue and Tidewater Lane (#7621) in the eastbound direction due to unsafe conditions for pedestrians crossing at the intersection. The westbound stop at Eastern Avenue and Tidewater Lane (#7561) would be discontinued. All westbound trips would continue to serve the Eastern Avenue and Biscayne Bay Boulevard (#4760) stop. No adjustments to frequency or span of service are planned.



## Dundalk: LocalLink 62, LocalLink 63, LocalLink 65, and Express BusLink 163

LocalLink 62, 63, 65, and Express BusLink 163 are proposed to be rerouted through Center Place in Dundalk due to narrow roadway conditions on S Center Place. Buses running in the westbound direction would turn north onto Shipping Place from Dunmanway, west onto N Center Place, and continue on to the direction of their routes on Dundalk Ave. Travel in the eastbound direction would remain unchanged.

Due to the change in alignment, the stop at S Center Place & Shipping Place (#10474) in the westbound direction would be discontinued.

The CityLink Navy would be unaffected by this change and would continue to operate as usual. No other changes to service or proposed for any of these routes.

# Next Steps

- 
- JULY 8, 2024**  
Public comment period closes at midnight.
  - AUGUST 12, 2024**  
Final service changes announced after review and incorporation of public comments.
  - AUGUST 25, 2024**  
Service changes go into effect.