

Transit Development Plan Draft Final (January 2018)

Highlights for Howard County (3-1-18)

Summary

The Transit Development Plan provides a policy framework to accomplish the following:

1. Basic performance and service improvements for the existing transit system

- More buses to reduce older, unreliable buses that are outdated and expensive to maintain
- Simpler fare structure
- Better bus stops and bus shelters

2. Bus routes system reconfiguration and service expansions within 18 months – after public hearings on specific proposals

- Routes that better align with riders’ needs.
- More shorter routes versus fewer longer routes within the same service area; no one loses service.
- Routes that are more direct and reduce travel times.
- More weekend and evening service, shorter headways

3. 3 plus years vision for service expansions

- Local service to Maple Lawn (via APL); Elkridge (via Long Reach); River Hill (via HCPSS headquarters); Turf Valley
- Bus Rapid Transit to Silver Spring.
- Downtown Columbia to Gateway transit corridor

4. Mobility

- Options to address the high cost and rising demand for demand-response services.
- Ideas suggested to focus mobility services to where needs are greatest.
- Discussions with affected communities beginning in spring/summer of 2018

Purpose:

The Transit Development Plan (TDP) is a plan to implement short-term transit objectives within a 5-year horizon. This TDP also includes longer-term transit concepts. The TDP is regional, covering portions of Anne Arundel, Howard, and Prince George’s Counties.

Public hearings are required before implementation - when details are finalized (routing, timetables)

Routes

Phase 1

- More shorter routes, fewer longer routes. Overall, 14 proposed routes versus 9 today.
- Current: 9 routes: 6 entirely within Howard County and 3 regional. Proposed: 14 routes: 10 entirely within Howard County and 4 regional.
- Half-hour headways on 4 key routes, Monday through Saturday during daytime hours.

- Increased weekend service.
- More service overall. Approximately 132,400 annual service hours in Phase 1, versus approximately 109,500 today.
- Reduced travel times on many routes, e.g., 405 (Columbia Mall to Ellicott City) 406 (Columbia Mall to Columbia Gateway)
- Almost no loss in service. Three stops only out of 500; all on the 408; at Millrace Ct., Long Reach High School, and at Carriage House Lane. Nearest stops will be between approximately 500 to 1,000 feet away.
- Objective is to implement in winter/spring 2019.
- Annual operating cost increase: \$1.3 million (\$9.6 million vs. \$8.3 million).

Phase 2

- Expand service to areas not currently served: Maple Lawn (via APL); Elkridge (via Long Reach); River Hill (via HCPSS headquarters); Turf Valley. Catonsville (with MTA, Baltimore County support).
- More service overall; more routes, more routes with half hour frequency, more weekend service. Approximately 171,788 annual service hours.
- Timing of expansions– dependent on funding and community interest/support.

Fleet

- Continue to bring fleet to state of good repair, eliminate over age vehicles, and provide for adequate spares—to provide reliable service
- Phase1 routes implementation would require 3 additional buses (covered under 13 new buses currently on order). Implementation of Phases 1 and 2 and elimination of over-age vehicles by FY 2023 would require 17 buses in addition to the 13 currently on order.

Mobility Services (ADA and General Paratransit)

- TDP identifies options to address the high cost and rising demand for demand-response services, but includes no specific proposals for immediate implementation. Recommends discussions with affected communities beginning in spring/summer of 2018.
- Ideas suggested to focus mobility services to where needs are greatest, encourage paratransit riders to use fixed routes, and ensure long-term program financial stability. Begin community discussion in spring/summer 2018.
- Examples of ideas: more use of taxicab services; free fares for seniors/disabled on fixed routes, raise senior age from 60 to 65.

Future Services

- Bus Rapid Transit to Burtonsville/Silver Spring.
- Downtown Columbia to Gateway transit corridor.
- Downtown Columbia shuttle.

Regional Transportation Agency (RTA) service and facility improvements

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| • Driver training/customer service. | • Consolidated fare structure. |
| • Real time bus tracking on mobile devices (RouteShout). | • Electronic fare media. |
| • Downtown Columbia Transit Center. | • Bus stop/shelter improvements. |
| • Marketing and branding to improve/increase name recognition. | |

Route Highlights – Phase 1

Route	Serving	Route Versus Current	Benefits/ Improvements
401	Columbia Mall to Clary's Forest	Same	More half-hour service for successful route midday and Sat.
402	Ellicott City to Snowden Square	New route	Direct n-s between major shopping centers
403	Columbia Mall to Dorsey's Search /Red Branch	Serves southern portion of existing Route 405	Shorter route in central Columbia
404	Columbia Mall to Hickory Ridge	Serves northern portion of existing route	Shorter, more efficient route. Allows creation of 411
405	Columbia Mall to Ellicott City	Serves northern portion of existing route; more direct alignment	Shorter, more efficient route, using US 29
406	Columbia Mall to Columbia Gateway	Shorter, more direct alignment between current endpoints of existing route	Shorter, more efficient route connecting major employment centers
407	Columbia Mall to Kings Contrivance	Same with minor modifications	Maintains successful route, increased frequency (half-hour service) between Columbia Mall and Owen Brown (Mon-Sat, daytime hours)
408	Columbia Mall to Sherwood Crossing	Shorter, more direct alignment between current endpoints of existing route	Faster, more direct service along MD 175 corridor
409	Towne Centre Laurel to Elkridge	Small adjustments to current (since 10-17). Route 409 will be split into Routes 409A and 409B	Half hour service along approximately 75% of route between Laurel and Elkridge
410	Columbia Mall to Long Reach Village	New route (serving mainly portions of existing Route 406) Expansion to Elkridge in Phase 2	Half-hour service (in conjunction with Route 505) (Mon-Sat, daytime hours)
411	Columbia Mall to Kings Contrivance Village	New route. Serves southern portion of existing Route 404; more direct alignment	Shorter more direct route between Columbia Mall and Kings Contrivance
501	Columbia Mall to Arundel Mills Mall	Built from current 406. Will no longer serve BWI; service to BWI via 505 or via a shuttle from Arundel Mills	Connects major east-west employment areas Half-hour service on western portion (Mon-Sat, daytime hours); 60-minute versus current 90 on entire route
503	Columbia Mall to Towne Centre Laurel	Same	Maintains successful route
505	Columbia Mall to BWI Airport	New route (serving portions of existing Routes 406 and 501)	Express route BWI. In combination with 410 provides half-hour service to Long Reach (Mon-Sat, daytime hours)