Baltimore County Public Transportation Transit Development Plan

FINAL REPORT

February 2016

Prepared for
Maryland Transit Administration and Baltimore County

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INTRODUCTION

CountyRide is the Locally Operated Transit System (LOTS) that serves Baltimore County, providing specialized transportation service for seniors and people with disabilities as well as general public service in the rural portions of the county. These services are funded by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), state grant programs administered by the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) Office of Local Transit Support (OLTS), and local funds from Baltimore County.

The Transportation Development Plan (TDP) is an important requirement for continuing to receive FTA and MTA funds. The TDP provides a multi-year plan for how the grant funds will be used efficiently and effectively. It documents transportation needs in the county, reviews existing transit services, provides alternative options for improving or expanding services to better meet transportation needs within the realities of fiscal constraints, and ultimately provides a 5-year plan to implement the recommended alternatives. The TDP planning process for Baltimore County's CountyRide was initiated in June of 2015 and the final plan is being submitted in February 2016.

CountyRide is a program of the Baltimore County Department of Aging, and TDP planning efforts were coordinated with staff of CountyRide and the Department of Aging as well as with MTA staff. Input from the Department of Aging's Transportation Advisory Board was solicited at several points during the TDP process, and a public/community meeting was held in late November to present the recommended improvement options as the study neared conclusion. Revisions to the plan have been made, where appropriate, to respond to input and comments.

Importantly, the planning process benefited from a survey of riders that generated over 170 responses and provided important information about CountyRide's services. The survey also provided the opportunity for riders to suggest improvements they would like to see.

This summary highlights the key elements of the TDP planning process.

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EXISTING COUNTYRIDE SERVICES

CountyRide is operated on a demand response basis with advance reservations required. As a program of the Department of Aging, its services are designed predominantly to meet the specialized transportation needs of seniors and people with disabilities throughout the county. CountyRide also offers basic public transit in low density, rural areas of county. CountyRide has a fleet of 28 vehicles, 21 of which are used in peak period service.

Service for seniors and persons with disabilities is referred to as SSTAP service, named after its funding source (Statewide Special Transportation Assistance Program). Service for the rural parts of the county is known as Section 5311 service, again, named for its funding source.

The following mission statement is included in the CountyRide brochure:

The Baltimore County Department of Aging strengthens lives by connecting individuals to community resources, programs and services. CountyRide serves Baltimore County citizens aged 60 and over, adults with disabilities aged 18-59, and rural residents.

The performance of CountyRide was assessed using performance standards set by the MTA. Services are rated as "Successful," "Acceptable," or "Needs Review" based on how they perform in relation to the MTA's measures.

- The **cost per hour** measure is Successful for both Section 5311 service and SSTAP service.
- The **cost per mile** measure is Acceptable for both Section 5311 service and SSTAP service.
- CountyRide's **cost per trip** Needs Review for the 5311 service and is Acceptable for SSTAP.
- **Passenger trips per hour**, which is one of the more significant performance measures, Needs Review for both Section 5311 and SSTAP services.

CountyRide uses the Trapeze PASS reservations, scheduling and dispatching software. There are questions as to whether this is the most appropriate software for the transportation program. A current county study is reviewing CountyRide's use of Trapeze as part of a larger county technology study. CountyRide has received funding from the MTA to consider alternative technology that provides for rider payment by swipe card, eliminating payment by cash and ticket, and that may include a module for routing and scheduling.

CountyRide has developed a partnership arrangement with a number of the medical facilities in the Baltimore region, whereby the facilities contribute financial support to

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CountyRide. These contributions are included as passenger revenues and help to demonstrate the community's support for CountyRide.

In addition to CountyRide, Baltimore County has various other transportation services, including MTA's bus and rail services, the MARC commuter train, MTA's ADA paratransit service known as Mobility and the Call-a-Ride same-day taxi/sedan service, and service from human service agencies and private providers including Greyhound, non-emergency wheelchair accessible services, and taxi and sedan services.

TRANSIT NEEDS ANALYSIS

The analysis of transit needs included both a demographic assessment using U.S. Census data to analyze and identify potential transit needs in the county and primary information obtained from stakeholder interviews and the rider survey.

Demographic Assessment

The assessment of the U.S. Census data looked at a range of demographic variables known to influence the need for transit such as the elderly population and households without vehicles. This assessment was summarized with a measure that we refer to as the Transit Dependence Index (TDI), an aggregate measure that identifies relative concentrations of transit dependent populations. Five factors make up the TDI calculation: population density, autoless households, elderly populations (age 65 and over), youth populations (ages 10-17) and below poverty populations.

For Baltimore County, those areas with a high TDI include communities clustered around Baltimore City, including Dundalk, Essex, parts of Towson, Milford Mill, parts of Catonsville, Randallstown and Reistertown. These areas closely mirror those with high population densities.

Stakeholder Interviews and Rider Survey

For primary information on transit needs, we conducted stakeholder interviews and a rider survey. Stakeholders at the following organizations were contacted:

- Greater Baltimore Medical Center
- MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center
- Baltimore County Department of Aging, Senior Employment and Housing
- Baltimore County, Commission on Disabilities
- Davita Dialysis
- Baltimore County Senior Communities

The stakeholders contacted for the study were generally very satisfied with their clients' use of CountyRide.

The weaknesses of the service, according to the interviews, are primarily focused on the scheduling process (specifically long telephone hold times, need for two-week advance notice for trips, difficulty in scheduling return trips particularly later in the day) and service availability, the latter referring to both the geographic scope of CountyRide's service area and the capacity to serve trips. Issues with service availability reflect the demand for service that is currently unmet, with stakeholders requesting: an increased service area, inter-county coordination of trips, "more service," and longer service hours.

The rider survey generated 174 responses. Survey results show CountyRide serves predominately older seniors; more than one-third are age 80 and above and another third are age 70 to 79. More than half of the riders (55%) are transit-dependent as they do not have a driver's license. Only a small proportion of riders use a wheelchair or scooter (8%) when traveling on CountyRide. Riders use CountyRide most frequently for medical trips.

Riders' voiced opinions and satisfaction with CountyRide through several survey questions, and their comments through the survey's final question. The drivers, their courtesy and their service to riders are clearly a highlight of CountyRide. Of the 12 characteristics of CountyRide service that were rated by the riders, *driver courtesy* received the strongest satisfaction rating. This was echoed through other questions, including the one that asked riders to list what they liked best about CountyRide.

On the less positive side, riders are less satisfied with the *hours and days of service*; the *trip scheduling process*; and *telephone service.*

CountyRide service is constrained in the service it offers by available capacity, not uncommon for transportation programs that are popular and have limited funds. When demand exceeds supply, as is the case for CountyRide, there will be riders and stakeholders who voice dissatisfaction as they want "more service."

Overall, riders as well as stakeholders seem appreciative of CountyRide and its transportation service, although, as one rider noted through a comment: *There are [sic] always room for improvements.*

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COUNTYRIDE

Key Issues Identified for Improvement

The key issues for improving CountyRide, identified through input from riders, stakeholders and the assessment of existing CountyRide services include:

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- The scheduling process, long telephone hold times and advance reservation period.
- Insufficient capacity to meet the demand.
- Limited hours of service.
- Productivity, which measures passenger trips carried per hour of service, is low.
- Trip cancellations are high. A high rate of cancellations has a negative impact on performance. The rate of cancellations is likely related, in part, to the scheduling process with a two-week advance reservation policy.
- Based on a limited review of use of the Trapeze software, it does not appear that its capabilities are fully utilized.
- CountyRide would like to streamline the fare payment process and eliminate cash and tickets.

Challenges/Constraints

CountyRide faces a number of challenges with its service and operations. A key challenge comes with demographic trends. Like much of the country, Baltimore County faces the coming "age wave," with increasing numbers of elderly residents. According to U.S. Census data, 14.6% of the county's 2010 population was age 65 and above, with more than 117,000 seniors age 65 and above. Estimates for 2014 show an increase in this segment of the population to almost 131,000 seniors, 15.8% of the total population.

By 2020, only four years from now, 18% of the population will be age 65 and above, with more than 149,000 seniors. CountyRide will need to find ways to serve increasing numbers of seniors who will have transportation needs with resources for transportation that are not likely to increase at the same rate as the population trends.

Other challenges come from Baltimore County's geography and population distribution between its urban and rural portions. The county is relatively large, with the third largest land area of any political subdivision in Maryland. The location of the City of Baltimore, which CountyRide does not serve except for selected medical facilities, impacts travel between the west and eastern parts of the county. The rural portion of the county is low-density, which reduces opportunities for group rides and increases travel times and miles, which have negative impacts on productivity and cost-efficiency. Trip patterns of rural residents in the northern part of Baltimore County include trips into Pennsylvania, which CountyRide does not serve.

CountyRide is constrained in its administrative staffing. In particular, there are only one and one-half time positions for the call-taking function. Given the level of calls, including calls for trip reservations, the telephone hold times can be lengthy.

CountyRide faces issues as a program of Baltimore County. While the transit program is fortunate given the ability of the county to provide financial resources and "over-match" available MTA grants, vehicle maintenance and technology support for CountyRide are

shared with various other county departments and programs. This means that CountyRide "stands in line" with the other departments and programs for support and service.

Opportunities

Short-term opportunities include options to tighten policies and procedures to improve performance, and enhance use of Trapeze to assist with productivity improvements, which include:

- Improve productivity. It should be possible to improve CountyRide's with revisions to the scheduling process, with greater use of Trapeze, and with a decrease in the number of cancellations.
- Revise certain policies related to scheduling and day-of-service operations.
- Consider implementation of group shopping trips for groceries on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. This might be explored on a pilot basis from a small number of designated senior housing complexes to specified grocery stores.
- Educate riders on CountyRide's policies and procedures to help streamline service. Such rider education needs to be a sustained effort and should address a number of issues.
- Address the long hold times on the phone.
    - CountyRide is developing a phone "menu" with certain topics to be addressed and pre-recorded answers to frequently asked questions. This should be a significant improvement.
    - Encourage use of the IVR and IWR.
- Implement the taxi pilot and collect data to assess its cost-effectiveness.
- Ensure service coordination to the extent possible.
- Explore opportunities to increase service in the rural parts of the county.

Opportunities for the longer term involve increased capacity to meet transportation needs that exist today given the constrained capacity and needs that are expected to grow given demographic trends including:

- Increase capacity by adding vehicles and service hours with the CountyRide dedicated fleet.
- Depending on the results of the taxi pilot, add capacity by implementing a taxi subsidy program. Consider use of a swipe card technology for fare payment and trip monitoring.
- Lengthen the service day to serve needs in the late afternoon.
- Add staff to address the call-taking function.

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

From a range of alternatives proposed to develop and improve CountyRide, and after presentation at a public/community meeting and review by CountyRide and Department of Aging staff, the planning process recommends shorter term and longer term options. The shorter term options require no or minimal new funding, while those for the longer term require new funding. Several of the options for the shorter term are already planned for implementation with funding secured, such as the taxi pilot, and are included below.

Shorter-Term: Fiscal Years 2016, 2017 and 2018

Scheduling Process – Address Long Telephone Hold Times

- Implement CountyRide's planned phone "menu" for riders, which will channel calls to appropriate staff, to voicemail, or to pre-recorded answers for commonly-asked questions by pressing appropriate numbers on the telephone keypad. CountyRide has indicated this should be implemented in early 2016.
- Review the script for call-takers for trip reservations to encourage shorter calls.
- Encourage riders to use the IVR and IWR systems to reserve trips. This will require sustained outreach and education to the riders.

Revise Scheduling Policies

- Provide a one-week advance reservation time period for medical appointments instead of the current two-week time period.
- Provide either a three-day or two-day advance reservation time period for other, non-medical trips, referred to as Miscellaneous Trips.
- Eliminate the ability to change the drop-off destination on the day of service.
- Continue to provide standing rides for riders traveling to partnership hospitals for regular appointments. These standing rides form the "skeletons" of the vehicle schedules.
- If determined appropriate, continue to allow priority scheduling for low income riders, so that they have a two-week advance reservation time period to schedule medical trips.
- Senior Center staff should work diligently to reduce the high rate of cancellations on the Center Connection service. Towards this objective, CountyRide could reach out to the Senior Center staff on a routine basis to make sure staff members understand the importance of providing cancellations to CountyRide on a timely basis.

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Educate Riders on Policies and Procedures

CountyRide relies on its riders to help make the service efficient, for example, being ready when the vehicle arrives; cancelling unneeded trips as soon as the rider knows; and having complete address information when calling for trips. This partnership between CountyRide and its riders requires rider education which must be a sustained effort.

Review of CountyRide's Computerized Scheduling/Dispatch System

CountyRide's technology is being reviewed as part of a current Baltimore County study. At the same time, CountyRide wants to consider other scheduling/dispatch software products that might be more compatible with CountyRide's size and needs. The county has been granted funding to acquire new technology, based on a capital request for a "Computer System Upgrade."

Enhanced Use of Trapeze

CountyRide uses Trapeze for scheduling/dispatch and this will continue to be the software for the immediate short term, at a minimum. CountyRide should pursue expanded and enhanced use of the software's many capabilities. Enhanced use should allow CountyRide to develop more efficient schedules and therefore more productive service.

Group Shopping Trips

CountyRide should consider if it could provide additional group shopping trips, which should satisfy some of the demand for "Miscellaneous" trips and increase productivity.

Short Term Options to Move from Cash and Tickets for Rider Fare Payment

In the shorter term, the most straightforward option would be to accept only tickets for fare payment and eliminate the option for cash payment. A second option would encourage use of tickets rather than cash by providing a greater discount for the purchase of ticket books.

These options would reduce administrative efforts in handling and reconciling cash with ridership but will decrease fare revenues somewhat given the fare differential between a cash fare and a ticket. After balancing the savings from decreased administrative efforts for cash fare handling and reconciliation with somewhat reduced fare revenue impacts, the estimated overall cost impacts are not expected to be significant.

Market Rural Service to Veterans' Facilities and American Job Centers

CountyRide should reach out to veterans' facilities, including the Vet Center in Dundalk, newly opened in 2011. Input from the November 2015 community meeting suggested that CountyRide should also reach out to the county's three American Job Centers. The objective is to ensure these facilities know about CountyRide and its transportation services which in turn may lead to service requests and help ensure that CountyRide meets its Section 5311 funding obligations to serve the rural portions of the county.

Implement Taxi Pilot

CountyRide is pursuing implementation of the planned taxi pilot. One of the parameters for the taxi pilot is the payment method. With CountyRide's objective of moving away from cash (and tickets), one suggestion is to accept only tickets for the taxi service. Not only will this facilitate fare reconciliation but it will also make it easier to enforce a no tipping policy for taxi trips. As a pilot service, CountyRide has somewhat more flexibility with policies and procedures. The costs for the taxi pilot were included in CountyRide's FY16 Annual Transportation Plan (ATP).

Computer System Upgrade, Including Swipe Card Technology for Fare Payment

CountyRide received funding in FY16 for new technology that uses swipe cards for fare payment and includes routing/scheduling capabilities. With the lead time needed to conduct a competitive procurement, implementation of this improvement is months away. For purposes of the plan, it is included in FY18. Total cost for the upgrade is $165,040, with federal and state grants covering 90% of that total.

Longer-Term: Fiscal Years 2019, 2020 and 2021

Increase Capacity with Added CountyRide Vehicles and Service Hours

Given demand for service, CountyRide should increase its service. This improvement adds three vehicles in service and an additional approximately 5,400 annual vehicle service hours.

Increase Capacity with a User-Side Subsidy Taxi Program

CountyRide can increase capacity with a user-side taxi subsidy program. Such an option becomes particularly feasible assuming CountyRide adopts swipe card technology for fare payment. This plan suggests that the taxi subsidy program be funded at $200,000 annually. This amount can be assessed after several years to determine ridership levels and effectiveness. At a minimum, the amount should be re-evaluated should there be an

increase in the taxi rate structure. It is important to have an annual ceiling on the subsidy program so that CountyRide knows its maximum exposure for the year.

Lengthen the Service Day

One of the issues identified by riders as well as stakeholders is a need to lengthen the service day. Currently, CountyRide tries to schedule riders' return trips in the afternoon no later than about 3:30 p.m. or 4 p.m. Adding more service hours in the afternoon would give riders more flexibility in scheduling their medical and other trips. This option would be done in conjunction with the option listed above of increasing capacity with CountyRide vehicles and service hours.

Operating and Capital Costs

Chapter 5 of the report provides the details on estimated operating and capital costs for the recommended options over the 5-year TDP planning horizon.

Conclusion

CountyRide provides a vital transportation service to the riders it serves in Baltimore County. This is demonstrated by the very positive feedback we received through the TDP planning process from both riders and stakeholders as well as the fact that demand for service outstrips available capacity.

This TDP describes an organized process for improving and developing this vital transportation service. The shorter term options include a number of no cost or low cost revisions and suggestions for both policy and operational improvements that will allow CountyRide to be incrementally more productive – that is, serve more trips with the current resources. The longer term options add resources, through both an expansion of the CountyRide fleet and through a taxi subsidy program, the latter expanding capacity without the need to add vehicles. The longer term options require new funding.

The ability to pursue recommendations that require new funding will depend on the continuing availability of grant funding from the MTA, possible growth in those grant funds, and the ability of the county to contribute its funds to support CountyRide. These recommendations constitute a plan of improvements that should be viewed as just that, a plan which gives Baltimore County a road map to consider and follow as funding allows to develop and improve CountyRide.

Chapter 1: Existing Services

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 presents a review of the existing transportation services in Baltimore County, focusing on the public transit services of Baltimore County Department of Aging's CountyRide.

CountyRide is the Locally Operated Transit System (LOTS) that serves Baltimore County, providing specialized transportation services as well as general public service. These services are funded by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as well as state grant programs administered by the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) Office of Local Transit Support (OLTS) as well as by Baltimore County.

The Transportation Development Plan (TDP) is an important requirement for continuing to receive FTA and MTA funds. The TDP provides a multi-year plan for how these funds will be used efficiently and effectively. It documents the transportation needs in the county, reviews how these needs are currently being met, provides alternative ideas for improving or expanding services to optimize how needs could be met within the realities of fiscal constraints, and ultimately will provide a 5-year plan to implement the recommended alternatives.

The review of CountyRide includes an analysis and assessment of:
- current approaches to providing transit services in terms of service types, schedules, and operating policies and procedures,
- performance measurements of the currently operated services,
- the transit fleet, facilities, and technology
- management and institutional structure,
- funding sources, and
- fare policy.

Following the review of CountyRide services, this technical memorandum provides a summary overview of other transportation providers that serve Baltimore County, to provide a comprehensive picture of the network of transportation services available to those who live in, work in, and visit Baltimore County. The additional providers include:

- regional bus, rail, and paratransit services operated by MTA,
- specialized transportation services provided by human service agencies,
- other privately-operated, open-to-the-public services such as taxi and intercity bus, and
- commuter-focused services that help employees, employers, and university students reduce reliance on personal automobiles.

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REVIEW OF EXISTING PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEM: COUNTYRIDE

Overview, Mission and Goals

CountyRide is a program of the Baltimore County Department of Aging. As a part of county government, CountyRide is ultimately governed by the Baltimore County Council. As a program of the Department of Aging, its services are predominantly targeted toward senior residents of the county, although people with disabilities and rural residents of all ages are also eligible to ride CountyRide services. CountyRide's services, all of which are operated on a demand response basis, are designed to meet the specialized transportation needs of seniors and people with disabilities throughout the county, as well as to offer basic public transit in low density rural areas of county.

CountyRide's Mission Statement

The following mission statement is included on the CountyRide brochure:

The Baltimore County Department of Aging strengthens lives by connecting individuals to community resources, programs and services. CountyRide serves Baltimore County citizens aged 60 and over, adults with disabilities aged 18-59, and rural residents.

Possible Goals for CountyRide

The following goals were drafted for CountyRide and presented at a Transportation Advisory Committee during the TDP study process for consideration:

- Provide effective, accessible, and affordable transportation for Baltimore County residents aged 60 and over and adults with disabilities aged 18-59, as well as for residents living in rural portion of the county.
- Ensure access to key destinations including medical facilities, shopping and retail centers, and other activity centers.
- Continue partnerships with Baltimore County and Baltimore City hospitals that support CountyRide.
- Provide efficient transportation recognizing available transit funding sources.
- Coordinate services as appropriate with other county transportation services.

Description of Existing Services

As noted about, CountyRide's transportation services are operated on a demand response basis. Service is provided 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Service may be available for

pick-ups somewhat before 8:00 am (e.g., after 7:00 am) depending on the rider's trip purpose and available capacity.

Although service is limited to Baltimore County residents, CountyRide will transport county residents to and from nine hospitals in Baltimore City. Medical transportation is prioritized, as is senior center transportation, in terms of when rides may be scheduled for these and other types of trips.

Service availability within the urbanized areas of the county is limited to seniors and people with disabilities. (Public transit as well as ADA paratransit is provided by MTA in the urbanized areas of Baltimore County , as discussed later in this document.)

Outside of the urbanized areas, CountyRide service is open to the general public (i.e., rural county residents). The rural areas of Baltimore County are located primarily in the northern half of the county, as well as to the far west, southwest, and east of Baltimore.

A Shopping Shuttle program allows riders to travel in a group to a pre-selected destination for different types of shopping. The Shopping Shuttle serves each area of the county at least one day a month, traveling to grocery stores, malls, or individual stores that vary from month to month. Riders are picked up at their homes, dropped off at the selected destination and picked up approximately 90 minutes later, and then returned home. Each area of the county has a designated shopping coordinator who selects the destinations and organizes the shopping trip. Senior Center Coordinators assist in the recruitment of participants for these demand response shuttles.

CountyRide reports that there are more than 13,000 individuals who are registered and included in the rider database. The vast majority are seniors, and about two-thirds of the seniors are ambulatory. Of registered riders, about 3,300 are active riders, defined as a rider who has taken at least one trip on CountyRide in the past two years.

How Riders Arrange for Service

Individuals can register for CountyRide eligibility in person at Baltimore County Senior Centers and the CountyRide office, which is located in one of the Senior Centers. They can also download the registration form from the Baltimore County website and return the completed form by mail or fax. It takes approximately two weeks to process an application, and this must happen before a rider can arrange for transportation.

Baltimore County residents who are eligible to use CountyRide services can make reservations with the CountyRide office (in person or by calling 410-887-2080) between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:00 pm Monday through Friday up to two weeks in advance of the service for rides to medical appointments and up to one week in advance for other trip purposes. Same day-

reservations can be scheduled on a space- and time-available basis. However, demand for service often exceeds available capacity.

CountyRide also accepts requests for reservations through an Interactive Voice (IVR) and an Interactive Web Response (IWR) system known as Request-a-Trip. County residents who are registered riders can request a reservation through these methods, and once the trip is scheduled, receive an automated phone call confirming pick-up and/or return time.

The following special options are available for scheduling CountyRide services.

- The Priority One Program permits low-income residents of Baltimore County aged 60 or greater, or between the ages of 21 and 59 with a disability, to book rides to medical appointments three weeks in advance. This allows low-income CountyRide riders the opportunity to book their medical transportation a week before other riders.
- The Priority Two Program allows riders going to senior center to book trips to the center three weeks in advance on prescheduled days. According to CountyRide, there are few trips booked through this program.
- Standing Rides are available to riders going to partnership hospital locations regularly, for a limited period of time (i.e., chemotherapy). The partnership hospitals are Franklin Square Hospital Center, Greater Baltimore Medical Center, The James Lawrence Kernan Hospital, Northwest Hospital, and University of Maryland Saint Joseph Medical Center. Riders can reserve up to five round trips per week. Standing rides are also available for participants using Center Connection, a service for designated Senior Centers.
- Except for the allowed Standing Rides, the rest of the CountyRide service is provided as demand response, with riders able to book up to two trips per week. If requesting medical trips, riders can call for their trip two weeks in advance (though Priority One riders can call three weeks in advance). For all other trip types, for example, shopping or visiting friends, riders can call one week in advance. Non-medical transportation will be provided to the closest location to the client's home (i.e. closest senior center, grocery store, retail store or pharmacy).
- Trips are available on a same-day basis as capacity allows.
- CountyRide also allows riders to request same-day revisions to their trips, for both pick-up times as well as changes to the drop-off destination. Revisions to pick-up times may be needed particularly for medical appointments which may run later than expected. Revisions to drop-off destinations, according to the CountyRide brochure, may be accommodated but "there is no guarantee."

Pick-Up Time, Cancellations, and "No Show" Policies

The CountyRide brochure indicates that trips are scheduled with a 20-minute window before and after the scheduled time, which is essentially a 40-minute window. In practice, however, it does not appear that this window is used, and riders typically are told that their vehicle will arrive, for example, between 10:25 and 10:30 am. CountyRide reports that vehicles are often

early but reportedly riders are typically ready to go despite early pick-ups and this is apparently not an issue for the riders.

Cancellations are requested 24 hours in advance and required no later than 12:00 noon on the day prior to service. Cancellations are accepted 24 hours a day through an answering service. However, cancellations made after noon the day before the scheduled trip are considered "late cancellations." Three late cancellations within a 90-period can result in a suspension of service.

If a rider is not ready when CountyRide arrives, the driver will wait five minutes at the scheduled pick-up location. If the rider did not previously call to cancel the trip, the driver notifies dispatch and may be instructed to depart for their next scheduled pick-up. In this case, the rider is considered a "no show." Cancellations received once the bus is en route to the passenger's pick-up location or canceled at the door are also considered no-shows. Three no-shows within a 90-period can result in a suspension of service.

CountyRide experiences an 18% cancellation rate. This includes all types of cancelations, including advance cancels, late cancels and same-day cancels. This is considered a high rate of cancellations, particularly with same-day cancels at 6%.

Fares

Table 1-1 summarizes CountyRide's fare policy for each one-way trip.

Table 1-1: CountyRide One-Way Fare Structure Summary

Payment method	Trips within the County	Trips that cross the City/ County line
Fare paid by tickets purchased in advance	$2.50 (1 ticket)	$5.00 (2 tickets)
Fare paid via cash, check or money order	$3.00	$6.00

CountyRide's preferred method of payment is by CountyRide tickets, purchased in advance of the trip. Tickets are sold in books of six for $15.00 ($2.50 per ticket). Trips within the county require one ticket each way. Trips crossing the city-county line require two tickets each way.

Books of tickets may be purchased in person at the CountyRide office as well as at any Baltimore County Senior Center, or by mail (paying via check or money order). Tickets must be purchased in advance of travel.

CountyRide accepts cash, check, or money order as payment for fares for individuals without tickets. One-way fares paid by one of these means are $3.00 within Baltimore County, and $6.00 for travel into Baltimore City (with round trip fares being $6.00 and $12.00 respectively). Riders

must have the exact fare. Riders making more than one trip per day are required to pay the full day's fare upon boarding the first trip of the day.

Other Operating Policies

Children - Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Parents or guardians are responsible for supplying a child safety seat for children under 8 years old who are under 4'9" and 65 pounds. Children traveling in the rural area under age 3 ride for free.

Management and Organizational Structure

Figure 1-1 presents CountyRide's organization chart. As noted earlier and shown in the chart, CountyRide is part of the Baltimore County Department of Aging. Oversight of the transit program is provided by the Baltimore County Council, the County Executive and the Director and Assistant Director of the Department of Aging, with day-to-day management of the program provided by the CountyRide Manager. CountyRide has six administrative staff members, one of whom is half-time, and 29 drivers. Three of the drivers serve as hub leaders. Maintenance is the responsibility of Baltimore County's Vehicle Operations and Maintenance (VOM) division.

Figure 1-1: CountyRide's Organizational Structure
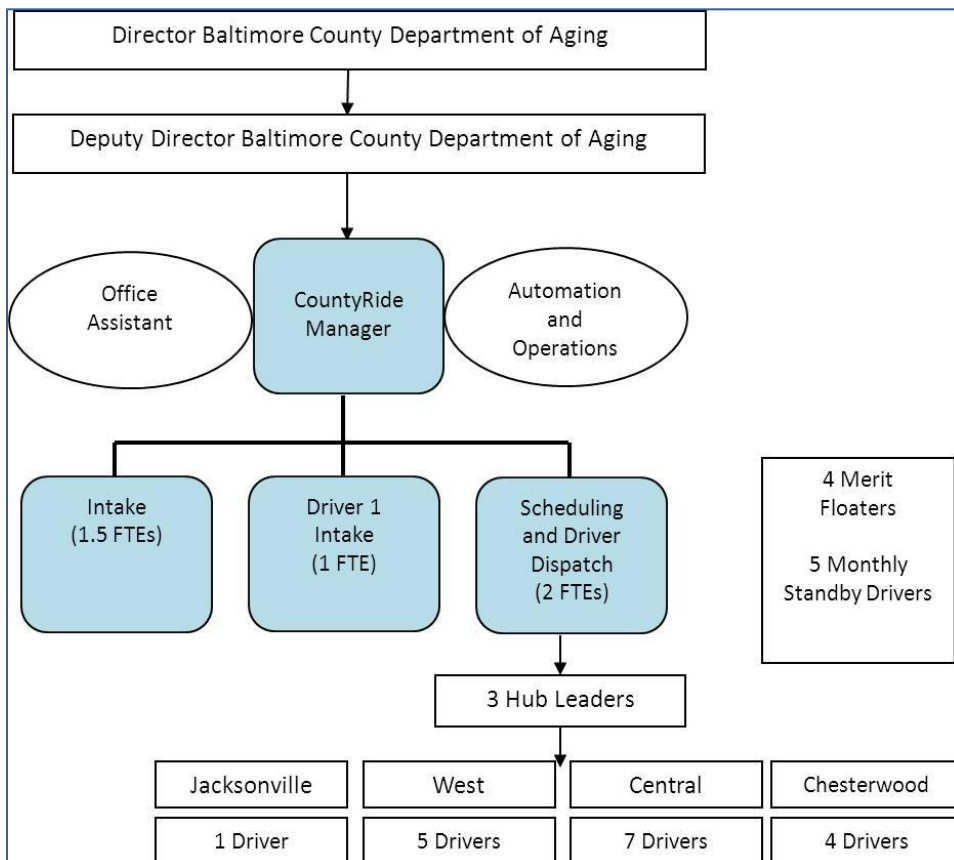
Analysis of Current Services

Table 1-2 presents FY2014 data for CountyRide and the funding provided by the MTA (i.e., those funded by Section 5311 and SSTAP, which are discussed later in this document under "Review of Funding Sources." As noted earlier, all of CountyRide's services are provided on a demand response basis.

Table 1-2: CountyRide Performance Data, FY16 Application, FY14 Data

FY 2014	Section 5311	SSTAP	Total for MTA-Funded Services
Total Passenger Trips	12,118	26,161	38,279
Total Service Miles	97,832	214,347	312,179
Total Service Hours	10,334	22,123	32,457
Total Operating Costs	$225,523	$826,735	$1,052,258
Total Farebox Receipts	$18,208	$41,376	$59,584
Other Local Operating Revenues	$91,027	$582,930	$673,957
Cost/Hour	$21.82	$37.37	
Cost/Mile	$2.31	$3.86	
Cost/Trip	$18.61	$31.60	
Local Operating Revenue Ratio	48%	76%	
Farebox Recovery	8%	5%	
Passenger Trips/Mile	0.12	0.12	
Passenger Trips/Hour	1.17	1.18	

Red= "Needs Review" | **Blue= "Acceptable"** | **Green= "Successful"**

MTA Performance Standards:

Section 5311 - Standards for "Rural Transit Service"

SSTAP - Standards for "Suburban/Small Urban Demand Response"

According to the FY2016 ATP, CountyRide provided a total of 38,279 passenger trips in FY 2014. CountyRide's services are funded by SSTAP and Section 5310, administered by the MTA, and also by Baltimore County funds. For FY 2014, funds to support CountyRide operations came from the following sources: $225,523 from Section 5311; $826,735 from SSTAP funds; $59,584 from passenger fares; and $673,957 from local Baltimore County funds. Local funds from the county are a significant source for CountyRide operations.

County funds support vehicle maintenance and administrative expenses. As noted above, vehicle maintenance is performed by the county's Vehicle Operations and Maintenance (VOM)

division, which is responsible for county vehicles under 14,000 lbs gross vehicle weight, which include the CountyRide fleet. The vehicles are maintained at two VOM locations – Hunt Valley and Liberty, depending on the type of vehicle and type of maintenance work that is needed.

CountyRide leases the vehicles from the county and, according to the current arrangement, is charged $1.10 per mile for maintenance and insurance. This cost is paid entirely by the county. The $1.10 per mile also includes an allocation for the purchase of the vehicles; Baltimore County has purchased all but two of the current vehicle fleet with county funds.

CountyRide reports that the turn-around time for maintenance may vary, so that there are times when the transit program does not have a full complement of vehicles for service pull-out. Given VOM's responsibility for all county vehicles, there are times when other priorities may affect service scheduling for the CountyRide vehicles.

CountyRide has organized it service into four geographic areas, which are referred to as "hubs." Vehicles are assigned to each hub according to general demand for service. Drivers start their driver manifests from their assigned hubs. CountyRide schedules trips, to the extent possible, within the general area of the hub to reduce deadhead miles and time. Although given the nature of trip patterns with the large number of medical trips to designated hospitals and CountyRide's provision of same-day service to fill the capacity created by cancellations, vehicles are assigned trips outside of their hub area.

The hub for the rural service is located in Jacksonville. Given current limited demand for service from the rural area, there is only one vehicle assigned to the Jacksonville hub, although in the past, that hub had two assigned vehicles.

MTA Performance Measures

Table 1-2 also shows the performance measures for CountyRide services based on the MTA-provided funding. MTA applies performance standards to the LOTS to monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of each system's services (updated December 2014). MTA's standards for Suburban/Small Urban Demand Response Service are used to assess CountyRide's SSTAP service, and the standards for Rural Transit Service performance measures are used for the 5311 service.

Services are rated as "Successful," "Acceptable," or "Needs Review" based on how they perform in each of the operating measures. In addition, these standards are utilized in determining whether new services requested by each system should be funded based on their potential for success.

The MTA performance standards were derived from a compilation of sources that include industry research, industry experience, and peer reviews. The performance standards assessed include operating cost per hour, per mile, and per passenger trip; farebox recovery; and passenger trips per mile and per hour.

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- For the **cost per hour** measure, CountyRide is successful for the Section 5311 service and the SSTAP service.
- The **cost per mile** measure is acceptable for the Section 5311 service and the SSTAP service.
- CountyRide's **cost per trip** needs review for the 5311 service and is acceptable for SSTAP.
- The **local operating ratio**, which is the ratio of fares, service contracts, and other local operating revenues to total operating costs, is acceptable for the 5311 service and successful for SSTAP.
- **Farebox recovery ratio** (the ratio of fares to total operating costs) is acceptable for the Section 5311 service, but needs review for the SSTAP.
- P**assenger trips per mile** needs review for the 5311 service and is acceptable for the SSTAP service.
- **Passenger trips per hour**, a key productivity measure, needs review for both Section 5311 and SSTAP.

In the rural areas of the county, general-purpose public transportation appears to be very limited. Medical and senior center transportation are prioritized, and other trip purposes can only be accommodated within whatever capacity has not yet been booked within a week of the requested trip. The Shopping Shuttle program serves various parts of the county, but only once a month. CountyRide reports that it experiences limited demand for service in the rural areas.

Demand for medical transportation also appears to exceed available capacity. The registration form for CountyRide states: "CountyRide cannot guarantee transportation due to limited resources. A qualifying client increases their chances to secure transportation when appointments are scheduled between the hours of 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Tuesdays and Thursdays are CountyRide's heaviest days during the week. We recommend scheduling appointments for Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, whenever possible."

The current productivity for the SSTAP service, based on FY 2014 data, is 1.18. This is considered low for a demand response service, particularly given that a portion of the service is focused on group trips to Senior Centers. If CountyRide is able to improve productivity, it will be able to meet more of the demand for service with current resources.

Scheduling Process

The trip scheduling process for CountyRide has evolved over the years from the transit program's genesis as a service for seniors. The current process has multiple layers, some of which are designed to give priority to certain designated riders and for specified trip purposes.

The resulting process is somewhat confusing and, when combined with the fact that demand for service exceeds capacity and that telephone hold times to reserve trips can be lengthy, is one of the transit system's characteristics that riders like least, according to the rider survey.

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Additionally, CountyRide experiences a relatively high trip cancellation rate. According to data from 2015, the rate of cancelled trips, including advance cancels, late cancels and same-day cancels is 18%.

While cancellations are a reality of advance reservation paratransit services, they have an impact on performance. Once trips are reserved and placed on schedules, they occupy capacity within the system. Subsequent requests for trips have to be placed around these trips and this impacts available times for subsequently scheduled trips. When trips are cancelled, they create "holes" in the schedule. Some of the "holes" can be filled, and CountyRide is able to provide some same-day trips, but the scheduling system has less time and opportunity to optimize the schedules and this limits productivity.

Research and transit industry experience shows that an advance reservation time period of 14 days affects the cancellation rate, as riders find over the time period that their trip plans change, including some riders who find a different transportation mode for their trip (such as a family member who can drive them).

Interestingly, the rate of CountyRide no-shows is relatively low by transit industry standards. This likely reflects the fact that demand for service exceeds capacity so those who do not cancel their scheduled trip make sure to take the trip as scheduled.

Fare Payment

CountyRide would like to streamline their fare payment system and eliminate cash and tickets. This would reduce dwell time now required for riders to count and provide their cash fare or to tear off the appropriate number of tickets from their ticket books to pay the fare.

Eliminating cash and tickets would also reduce administrative time to count and reconcile fares with passenger counts.

Existing Facilities, Fleet and Technology

Facilities

CountyRide's administrative office is located at 611 Central Avenue in Towson, within the offices of the Department of Aging.

The fleet is maintained by VOM at two different garages.

Fleet

As shown in Table 1-3, the CountyRide fleet includes 28 vehicles, 21 of which are used in peak service, with seven spares. This makes for a spare ratio—the ratio of spare vehicles to the total number of vehicles needed to provide maximum (peak) service—of approximately 33 percent. All except one vehicle (which is a sedan) are equipped with lifts or ramps.

CountyRide's FY16 grant application did not include any replacement or expansion vehicle requests. However, it did note that vehicles 141, 142, 143, and 144 would replace vehicles 33, 51, 54, and 55 respectively. (It is noted that vehicle #51 is not included on the listing of CountyRide vehicles.)

All but two of the vehicles have been purchased with Baltimore County funds. Two vehicles – #91 and #92 – were purchased with MTA grant funding. These are both 2009 model year smaller vehicles, lift-equipped and with seating for 12 passengers plus two wheelchair positions. The ATP indicates these vehicles are in "excellent" condition.

Technology

CountyRide uses the Trapeze PASS reservations, scheduling and dispatching software. Baltimore County has commissioned a study to evaluate software in use in various county departments, including CountyRide's Trapeze software. It is possible the study may suggest alternatives to Trapeze. Thus, it is not clear if CountyRide will continue to use Trapeze in the longer run.

The FY 2016 grant application included a request for a software upgrade that would streamline the fare payment process, eliminating the use of tickets as well as cash. The total grant request was $165,040, with funding requested from the MTA of $148,536 (90% of the total). According to the OLTS, this funding has been awarded to the county and purchase of the software will necessitate a competitive procurement.

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Table 1-3: CountyRide Vehicle Inventory, FY16 Application

Agency Fleet Number	County Vehicle Number	VIN Number	Model Year	Make	Vehicle Type	Lift or Ramp?	Capacity	
							Ambulatory	Wheelchair
33	27043	1FDXE45F13HB18712	2003	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
54	27155	1FDXE45PX4HB45661	2004	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
55	27156	1FDXE45P34HB45663	2004	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
61	27489	1FDXE45P74HB45665	2005	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
62	27490	1FDXE45P65HB49370	2005	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
63	27491	1FDXE45P15HB49373	2005	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
64	27492	1FDXE45P85HB49371	2005	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
71	27769	1FDXE45PX5HB49372	2006	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
72	27770	1FDXE45P16DB33103	2006	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
73	27771	1FDXE45P56DB33105	2006	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
74	27772	1FDXE45PX6DB33102	2006	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
81	30111	1FDXE45P36DB33104	2008	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
82	30112	1FD4E5PX8DB09730	2008	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
83	30113	1FD4E5P18DB09731	2008	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
84	30114	1FD4E5P38DB09732	2008	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
91	30381	1FD4E5P38DB09729	2009	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
92	30382	1FDFE45P39DA24772	2009	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
93	30383	1FDFE45P59DA24773	2009	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
101	30612	1FDFE45P1DA24771	2010	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
102	30613	1FDFE4FP3ADA05593	2010	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
103	30890	1FDFE4FPXADA03565	2010	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
104	30891	1FDE4FS9ADB02236	2010	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2

105	30892	1FDFE4FS0ADB02237	2010	Ford	Light duty-small bus	Lift	12	2
141	31092	1FDEE3FL2DA34432	2015	Ford TK	Light duty-small bus	Lift	8	2
142	31091	1FDEE3FLXEDA34422	2015	Ford TK	Light duty-small bus	Lift	8	2
143	31090	1FDEE3FL8EDA34421	2015	Ford TK	Light duty-small bus	Lift	8	2
144	31089	1FDEE3FL6EDA34420	2015	Ford TK	Light duty-small bus	Lift	8	2
906	30810	1FDFE4FS2ADB02238	2011	Ford 4S	Sedan	0	3	0

Review of Funding Sources

MTA's OLTS administers federal and state funding for LOTS in Maryland. For FY 2016, Baltimore County applied for (and was awarded) funding from the following programs:

- FTA Section 5311 – federal and state funds (capital and operating) for public transportation in rural areas
- SSTAP (Statewide Special Transportation Assistance Program) – state funds to provide transportation for seniors and individuals with disabilities

The local application for these grant funds is referred as the Annual Transportation Plan (ATP). As shown in Table 1-4, based on the FY2016 ATP, the total CountyRide operating budget is approximately $1.99 million for FY 2016.

It should be noted that the MTA grant-funded portion of CountyRide's budget reflects somewhat less than 60% of CountyRide's total budget, based on the FY16 ATP budget. The rest is funded by Baltimore County.

CountyRide's FY16 ATP included only one capital project funding request: $148,536 in Federal/State funding (matched by $16,504 in local funding for a project total of $165,040 to purchase technology to streamline the passenger payment process, as noted above. The project justification form for this project also indicated an estimated $32,000 annual maintenance fee. In terms of future capital project requests, the application projected a FY2017 need to replace office chairs. No anticipated new or replacement vehicles through FY21 were indicated. Baltimore County purchases vehicles for CountyRide.

Table 1-4: CountyRide FY 2016 Operating Budget, FY16 ATP

	Section 5311	SSTAP	Other	Total
Expenses				
Vehicle Operations Expenses	$ 243,501	$ 857,584	$ 645,566	$ 1,746,651
Purchased Service	$ 50,000	$ -	$ -	$ 50,000
Maintenance Expenses	$ -	$ -	$ 3,500	$ 3,500
Administrative Expenses	$ -	$ -	$ 191,473	$ 191,473
Total Expenses	**$ 293,501**	**$ 857,584**	**$ 840,539**	**$ 1,991,624**
Revenues				
Passenger Fares	$ 17,699	$ 55,001	$ -	$ 72,700
Other Local Operating Revenue	$ -	$ -	$ -	
Local Funds	$ 112,186	$ 406,747	$ 840,539	$ 1,359,472
Federal/State Funds Requested	$ 163,616	$ 395,836	$ -	$ 559,452
Total Funding	**$ 293,501**	**$ 857,584**	**$ 840,539**	**$ 1,991,624**

Partnership Hospitals

CountyRide's transportation program receives the financial support of a number of medical facilities that contribute to its public-private partnership program. These contributions are included as passenger revenues.

- Baltimore County medical facilities include:
  - Franklin Square Hospital Center
  - Greater Baltimore Medical Center
  - The James Lawrence Kernan Hospital
  - Northwest Hospital
  - University of Maryland Saint Joseph Medical Center

- Baltimore City medial facilities include:
  - Good Samaritan Hospital
  - Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center
  - The Johns Hopkins Health Center
  - Kennedy Krieger Spine Center
  - Mercy Medical Center
  - St. Agnes Health Care
  - Sinai Hospital of Baltimore
  - The Union Memorial Hospital
  - University of Maryland Medical System

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CountyRide operates only within Baltimore County and does not travel into Baltimore City except to and from the Partnership Hospitals listed above.

OTHER TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS SERVING BALTIMORE COUNTY

Maryland Transit Administration (MTA)

MTA is a division of the Maryland Department of Transportation, and one of the largest multi-modal transit systems in the nation. The MTA service network is comprised of Local Bus, Metro Subway, Light Rail, MARC Train, Commuter Bus, Mobility Paratransit, and Call-A-Ride subsidized taxi and sedan service.

Figure 1-2 displays MTA's bus and rail services as well as the urbanized area boundaries.

In addition to being a multimodal regional transit system, MTA administers the FTA and State programs that provide grant funding and assistance throughout Maryland to support Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS) in all Maryland counties, Baltimore City, the City of Annapolis and the Town of Ocean City.

Local Bus

MTA operates more than 50 bus routes throughout the Baltimore area. These include 47 local bus routes, four limited-stop routes (known as QuickBus), and four express bus routes (which operate from various suburbs to downtown Baltimore).

MTA Local Bus fares are $1.70 one-way for the general public, and $0.70 one-way for seniors and people with disabilities. MTA also sells multi-trip passes and a day pass for unlimited rides. The day pass, which is good on MTA Local Bus, Light Rail and Metro Subway routes, is $4.00 for the general public and $2.00 for seniors and people with disabilities.

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Figure 1-2: MTA Bus and Rail Routes and Service Area
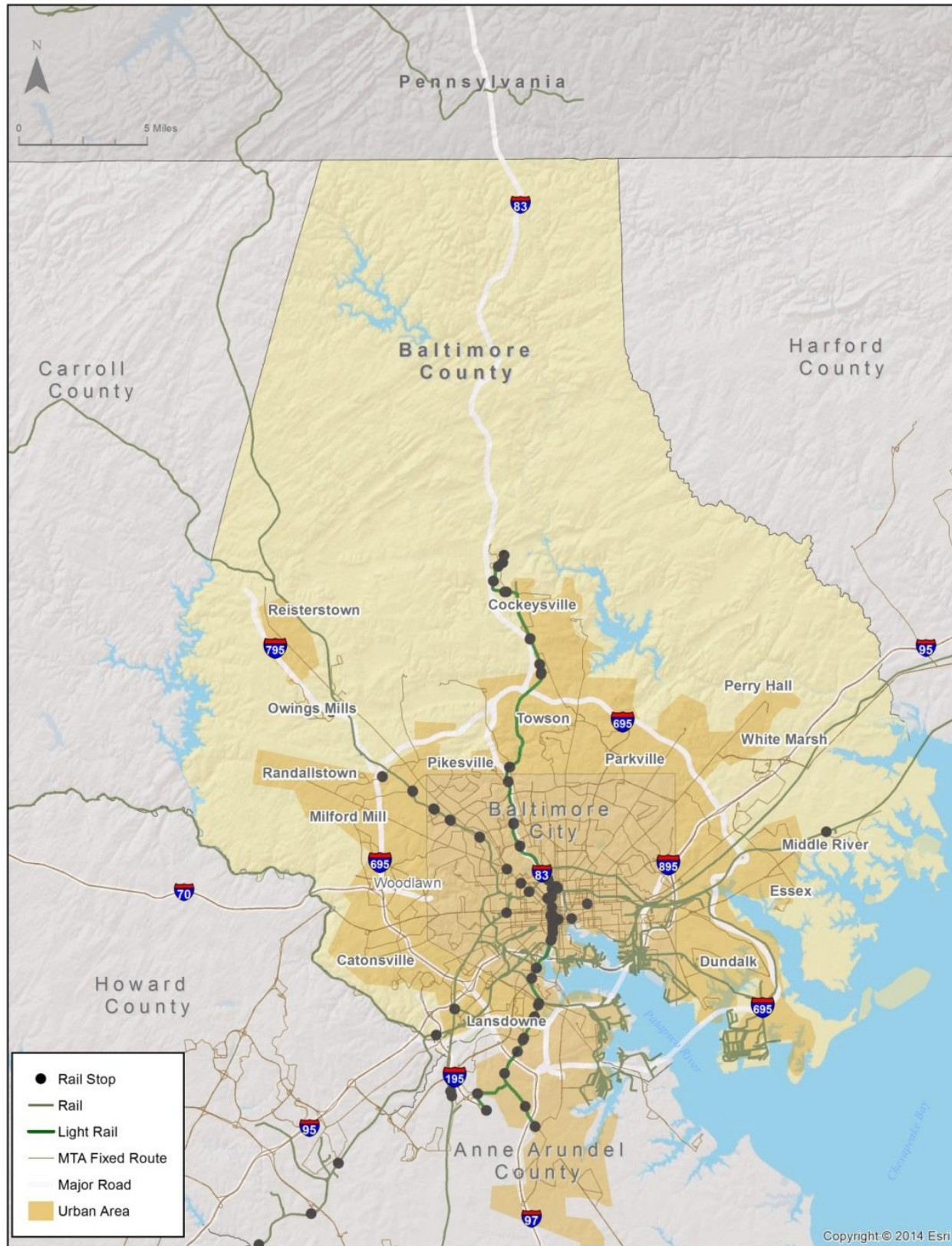
Source: U.S. Census, Maryland iMAP

Commuter Bus

MTA contracts for the operation of some 37 commuter bus routes designed to transport commuters to jobs in Baltimore, Washington, DC, and other major employment destinations in Anne Arundel, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties. The two commuter bus routes that make stops in Baltimore County, en route to and from downtown Baltimore City, are:

- Route 411 stops at the White Marsh Park & Ride lot at 6:00 am on its way into downtown Baltimore on weekday mornings. (No outbound stops are made in Baltimore County on this route.)
- Route 420 stops at U.S. 40 and Ebenezer Rd en route to downtown Baltimore on all five of its weekend morning trips. On the return trips, this route stops at U.S. 40 and Ebenezer Rd and White Marsh Park & Ride in the mid-day (1:34 and 1:40 respectively) and only at U.S. 40 and Ebenezer Rd on the five trips during the PM peak.

One-way fares for these Commuter Bus routes are $3.00 general public and $2.00 for seniors and people with disabilities. The current contract operator for both routes is Academy Express, LLC.

Light Rail

MTA operates the Baltimore Light Rail service Hunt Valley (Cockeysville) and BWI Airport, Timonium and Glen Burnie, and, entirely with the City, Penn Station and Camden Yards. The Light Rail system provides frequent north-south service through Baltimore City. Ten Light Rail stations are located in Baltimore County:

- Hunt Valley - 98 Shawan Road, Hunt Valley
- Pepper Road - 1101 Schilling Road, Hunt Valley
- McCormick Road - 265 Schillings Circle, Hunt Valley
- Gilroy Road - 10903 Gilroy Road, Hunt Valley
- Warren Road - 300 West Warren Road, Hunt Valley
- Timonium Fairgrounds - 2379 Greenspring Drive, Lutherville
- Timonium Business Park - 11 West Aylesbury Road, Lutherville
- Lutherville - 124 Ridgely Road, Lutherville
- Patapsco - 751 West Patapsco Avenue, Halethorpe
- Baltimore Highlands - 4215 Baltimore Street, Halethorpe

The Light Rail system operates from 5:00 am to 12:00 am on weekdays, 6:00 am to 12:00 am Saturdays, and 11:00 am to 7:00 pm Sundays. Trains operate every 10 minutes peak/15 minutes off peak between Timonium and Linthicum and 20-30 minutes between Hunt Valley and

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Timonium, Linthicum and BWI Marshall Airport, and Linthicum and Cromwell Station/Glen Burnie.

Light Rail fares are the same as Local Bus fares.

Metro Subway

MTA operates the Baltimore Metro Subway service, which is a 15.5-mile rail line between Owings Mills and Johns Hopkins Hospital in east Baltimore City. Three Metro Subway stations are located in Baltimore County:

- Owings Mills - 5018 Painters Mill Road
- Old Court - 4300 Old Court Road (Pikesville)
- Milford Mill - 4401 Milford Mill Road (Pikesville)

The Metro Subway system operates from 5:00 am to 12:00 am on weekdays and 6:00 am to 12:00 am on weekdays. Trains run every 8-10 minutes during the morning and evening peak periods, 10 minutes during mid-day weekdays, 11 minutes during weekday evenings, and 15 minutes on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. The travel time from Owings Mills to the Johns Hopkins Hospital is 29 minutes.

Metro Subway fares are the same as Local Bus fares.

MARC Train

MARC Train is a commuter rail system whose service areas span from Perryville, Maryland to the east, Martinsburg, West Virginia to the west, and Washington, DC, to the south. Two lines travel through in Baltimore County: the Penn Line, which operates from Perryville to Washington, and the Camden Line, which operates from Baltimore to Washington. Three MARC Stations are located in Baltimore County:

- Martin State Airport - 2710 Eastern Blvd, Middle River (Penn Line)
- Halethorpe - 5833 Southwestern Blvd, Arbutus (Penn Line)
- St. Denis - 1734 Arlington Avenue, Arbutus (Camden Line)

The MARC Penn Line operates weekdays from 4:40 am to 11:30 pm, providing bi-directional service between Baltimore City and Washington, DC (and thus through Halethorpe). The Martin State Airport station is serve by four southwest-bound and one northeast-bound trip during the morning peak, one midday northeast-bound trip, and six northeast-bound and three southwest-bound trips during the p.m. peak.

The MARC Camden Line operates weekdays from 5:00 to 9:12 am and 3:30 to 8:55 pm. The St. Denis station is served by three southwest-bound trains in the morning and three northeast-bound trains (only dropping off passengers) in the afternoon/evening peak.

MARC fares vary by distance traveled. The minimum one-way fare is $5.00, and the maximum fare from a Baltimore County station (Martin State Airport to Washington, DC) is $9.00. Seniors and people with disabilities ride for half fare. Multi-ride tickets and monthly passes are available.

Mobility Paratransit

Mobility is MTA's ADA paratransit service for people who, because of a disability, are functionally unable to use MTA's Local Bus, Metro Subway or Light Rail service. To use this service, individuals must go through a certification process to determine to what extent (if any) the individual would be able to ride fixed route service. Eligibility can be conditional, if the individual is able to use fixed route service for some of their trips.

Mobility operates during the same days and hours as the fixed route services. The geographic service area is within ¾-mile of any Local Bus route in Baltimore City and Anne Arundel and Baltimore counties, as well within within ¾ of a mile radius of an MTA Light Rail or Metro Subway station. Reservations are accepted during normal business hours seven days a week.

The one-way fare is $1.90 for eligible riders and their guests. A Personal Care Attendant (PCA) traveling with an eligible individual rides for free with the individual. A maximum of two children under the age of six may ride free of charge; children over six pay the adult fare of $1.90.

Mobility/Paratransit service is provided by the MTA via contracts with Veolia Transportation, MV Transportation, and First Transit, Inc.

Call-A-Ride

The MTA Call-a-Ride service is available to MTA certified Mobility customers, but is a separate, premium service provided under contract by participating area taxicab and sedan companies. Through this program, Mobility customers can use taxi and sedan service for a reduced rate. Customer fares are $3.00 for taxi/sedan rides valued up to $20.00. The customer is responsible for any amount over $20.00. Up to three companions may travel with the eligible rider so long as they share the same trip origin and destination.

MTA is not involved in scheduling Call-A-Ride trips. Customers deal with the taxi or sedan company, including calling the participating provider of their choice to request service.

Call-A-Ride service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Travel must begin and end within the MTA Mobility service area (i.e. within ¾ mile of any Local Bus route, Light Rail

station, or Metro Subway station), which covers Baltimore City as well as parts of Anne Arundel and Baltimore counties; see Figure 1-3.

Figure 1-3: Call-and-Ride Service Area
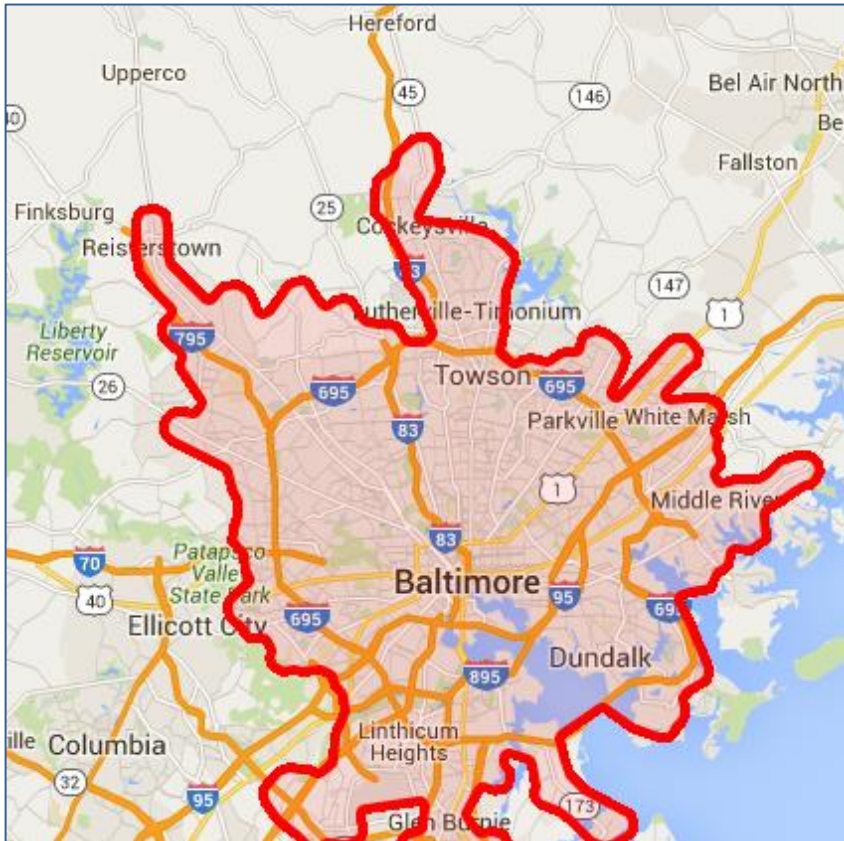
Source: MTA website.

Human Service Transportation Providers

- Action in Maturity, Inc. (AIM), a "senior center without walls" based in Baltimore City, provides transportation and social services to aging adults and adults with disabilities. AIM provides door-to-door transportation service Monday-Thursday, as well as Friday mornings. Fares are $10.00/hour, pro-rated by time an individual's ride actually starts, with a minimum fee of $5.00.
- The American Cancer Society Road to Recovery reimburses volunteers who transport cancer patients to and from cancer treatment appointments.
- Associated Catholic Charities Lifetime Services Division provides services for seniors and people with disabilities. This includes adult day services and day vocational programs, and transportation with its own fleet of vehicles (including 5310 vehicles).
- The Baltimore County Health Department funds non-emergency medical transportation for Medical Assistance (Medicaid) recipients.

- Glen Meadows Retirement Community in Glen Arm transports its residents to and from medical appointments.
- Jewish Community Services Mitzvah Mobility reimburses volunteers who transport older adults to medical appointments.
- Lifeline of Baltimore Senior Rides Volunteer Transportation reimburses volunteers who transport Baltimore County seniors (60+) and their families to medical-related appointments.
- Mosaic Community Services, an organization that is dedicated to transforming the lives of individuals with mental illness and addictions, operates its own vehicles (at least 2 Section 5310-funded) to transport clients. Mosaic's programs are located in Randallstown, Lutherville-Timonium, and Baltimore City.
- The National Multiple Sclerosis Society Assisted Transportation Program, based in Timonium, provides financial assistance for transportation to medical appointments for people affected by MS.
- Comprehensive Housing Assistance, Inc. (CHAI), operated by Action in Maturity, provides free shuttle services for residents of Weinberg Senior Living (with residential communities in Pikesville, Owings Mills, and Baltimore City) and members of Northwest Neighbors Connecting (a network of Jewish communities that support aging in place, with study-area locations in Pikesville and Baltimore City). This service is known as the Northwest Senior Shuttle. (5310 recipient)
- Penn-Mar Human Services in Freeland, MD and Glen Rock, PA provides demand response service for its clients. Penn-Mar provides employment, training, day program services, and support services to people with disabilities.
- St. Ann Adult Day Services in Halethorpe, a program for older adults needing medical supervision, transports clients to the day program as well as medical appointments.
- Unified Community Connections, Inc. (formerly United Cerebral Palsy of Central Maryland) provides transportation services to its clients via a fleet of lift-equipped buses and vans that transport them to day programs, places of employment, medical appointments, recreational outings and local community sites. Unified Community Connections is headquartered in Hunt Valley and has day programs in Middle River as well as locations in Baltimore, Frederick, Hagerstown, and Cumberland. Its No Boundaries Assistive Technology Center in Hunt Valley provides assessment, therapy, and training for children and adults with communication and computer-access difficulties. Residential services are provided throughout Maryland.

FTA Section 5311(f)-Funded Service Operated by Greyhound

Greyhound operates FTA-funded intercity bus service along Route 40 through northeast and central Maryland, en route between Wilmington, Delaware and Washington, DC. This route, Greyhound Table 123, stops at 3969 Honeygo Blvd on the periphery of White Marsh Mall in between Edgewood and Baltimore City. This service is funded by the FTA Section 5311(f) grant program, which MTA administers through the OLTS. One round trip per day is operated. Currently, northbound service departs Washington, DC at 5:10 am, stops in White Marsh at

7:50 am, and arrives in Wilmington at 10:15 am, while southbound service departs Wilmington at 11:05 am, stops in White Marsh at 1:30 pm, and arrives in Washington, DC at 3:50 pm. There is a 40-minute layover at the Greyhound station in Baltimore City in either direction.

Other Private Providers

- Numerous taxicab, sedan, and airport limousine companies serve the urbanized areas of Baltimore County. The following taxi and sedan services participate in MTA's Call-a-Ride program for trips originating within Baltimore County:
  - Jimmy's Cab provides Call-a-Ride rides originating in East Baltimore County 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
  - Valley Cab provides Call-a-Ride rides originating in Northwest Baltimore County 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
  - 24/7 Sedan provides Call-a-Ride rides originating in Southwest Baltimore City and County 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
  - Green Sedan, Inc. provides Call-a-Ride rides originating in Southwest Baltimore City and County 5:00 am - 5:00 pm, 7 days a week

- Private ride-hailing services that serve the Baltimore metro area include Lyft and UberX. These services use a digital platform and smartphone technology to match passengers with independently contracted drivers using their own vehicles.

- Non-emergency wheelchair-accessible transportation is provided in Baltimore City and County by numerous private providers, including these which are based in the County:
  - East Coast Ambulance Service Wheelchair Transportation Services in Parkville operates 24/7, providing bariatric and emergency transportation.
  - LifeStar Response of Maryland Medical Transportation in Halethorpe operates 24/7, providing emergency transportation.
  - Van Go Senior Transport in Owings Mills operates private-pay service Mon-Fri, 8 am – 5 pm.

- In-home care providers that provide transportation among other services supporting seniors and/or people with disabilities living at home:
  - Comforcare Home Care Services provides non-medical care to seniors and people with disabilities.
  - Elizabeth Cooney Care Network in Towson provides in-home medical and non-medical care, including transportation.
  - Homewatch Caregivers of Maryland in Towson provides transportation to medical appointments as well as for social outings.
  - Senior Helpers provides transportation to appointments as one of its companion care services.
  - Seniors Helping Seniors West Baltimore County provides non-medical care services, including transportation, for seniors living at home in Owings Mills,

Reisterstown, Pikesville, Catonsville, Randallstown, Hunt Valley, Garrison, and surrounding area

- Megabus intercity bus service makes two stops on the periphery of White Marsh Mall, as part of its frequent service along the I-95 corridor. Service between White Marsh (which Megabus refers to as its Baltimore stop) and New York City makes at least 18 round trips on a typical weekday. Typical weekday service to and from Washington, D.C. involves at least eight round trips.

College/University Transportation Systems

- Baltimore Collegetown Shuttle transports students, faculty and staff at six participating colleges in Baltimore City and County, including Towson State University and Goucher College.
- University of Maryland, Baltimore County in Catonsville operates UMBC Transit to meet the transportation needs of the UMBC community. Shuttle routes covering residential communities and shopping areas near the UMCP campus are open to UMBC students, faculty, and staff. The service is funded by student fees.

Commuter Assistance Programs

Several regional programs promote the use of transit and other alternatives to driving to work alone by commuters who live or work in Baltimore County.

- Maryland Rideshare is a program offered by the MTA's Commuter Assistance Office that promotes the use of carpooling, vanpooling and various alternative commute options. Baltimore Metropolitan Council participates in the regional Commuter Connections network, which offers computerized ridematching and, for eligible participants, a guaranteed ride home program.
- Baltimore Metropolitan Council's Rideshare program is a free service to residents, employees and employers in Baltimore and Carroll Counties that helps commuters find carpool partners, a vanpool, or other transit options. Like MTA, Baltimore Metropolitan Council participates in the regional Commuter Connections network.
- Commuter Connections' Guaranteed Ride Home is a free commuter insurance program for commuters who use public and alternative modes of transportation within the Baltimore and Washington D.C. Metropolitan areas. The program offers up to four free rides home per year to those who ride transit or commuter rail, bike, walk, carpool or vanpool to work, at least twice a week, or for occasions and times when their usual transportation options are limited. Guaranteed Ride Home is available to anyone registered with Commuter Connections working in the Baltimore, Central Maryland, and Washington, D.C. regions.

- Commuter Choice Maryland is an incentive program that encourages Maryland employees to choose transit or vanpools instead of driving to work. Commuter Choice offers employers monthly pass distribution options which encourage employees to ride MTA Local Bus, Commuter Bus, Light Rail, Metro Subway, and MARC Train for less than full fare. Employers can benefit by claiming the Maryland Commuter Tax Credit for 50% of the eligible costs of providing workplace commuter transportation benefits up to a maximum credit of $50.00 per participating employee per month. The credit is applicable for employer-purchased MTA fare media, employer-sponsored vanpool programs, employer-sponsored guaranteed ride home programs, and company cash in lieu of parking. The program offers significant savings for commuters and a valuable addition to employer benefit packages. To participate, an employer must have at least 20 employees signed up to be in the formal Commuter Choice Maryland program. Employers with less than 20 employees signed up can still offer commuter benefits to employees by purchasing passes and vouchers from mta.maryland.gov and offering the fare media to employees using any one of three qualified distribution options.

Park and Ride Lots

The park & ride lots located in Baltimore County are listed in Table 1-5. MTA serves many of these lots with bus, Light Rail, Metro subway, and/or MARC train service.

Table 1-5: Baltimore County Park & Ride Lots

Town	Name	Location	Parking Spaces	Connecting Transit Service
Arbutus	MARC-Halethorpe	Southwestern Blvd (US-1) south of Francis Ave	345	MTA Local Bus, MARC Train
Arbutus	MARC-St. Denis	Arlington Ave & Maple Ave	30	MARC Train
Arbutus	Southwest P&R	I-95 & MD-166	277	
Carney	Carney	MD-147 (Harford Rd) at Jomat Ave	250	
Cockeysville	Hunt Valley	I-83 Exit-20/Shawan Rd	30	
Cockeysville	Light Rail-Hunt Valley	Shawan Rd / Hunt Valley Mall	85	MTA Local Bus, MTA Light Rail
Cockeysville	Light Rail-Warren Road	Warren Rd & Beaver Dam Rd	370	MTA Local Bus, MTA Light Rail
Essex	Essex	MD-150 at Back River Bridge (Eastern Blvd & Virginia Ave)	225	MTA Local Bus
Essex	Mace Mini P&R	Mace Ave/Stemmers Run Rd & Rossville Blvd	45	
Franklintown	Franklintown	I-70 & MD-122 (Security Blvd) at end of I-70 East	250	
Halethorpe	Light Rail-Baltimore Highlands	Baltimore St & Georgia Ave	50	MTA Light Rail
Halethorpe	Light Rail-Patapsco	Patapsco Ave 1 mi west of MD-2/Exit-7	216	MTA Local Bus, MTA Light Rail
Hereford	Hereford	I-83 Exit-27/MD-137 Mt Carmel Rd	123	
Kingsville	Gunpowder Falls	Belair Rd (US-1) at Gunpowder River	45	MTA Commuter Bus
Liberty	Liberty	Brenbrook Dr (off Liberty Rd) & Cinnamon Cir	250	
Lutherville	Light Rail-Lutherville	Ridgley Rd / Timonium Mall	286	MTA Local Bus, MTA Light Rail
Maryland Line	Maryland Line	I-83 Exit-36/MD-439 (Old York Rd)	78	
Middle River	MARC-Martin State Airport	2710 Eastern Blvd (opposite airport)	175	MTA Local Bus, MARC Train
Owings Mills	Metro Subway-Owings Mills	5018 Painters Mill Road (off I-795)	3,500	MTA Local Bus, MTA Metro Subway
Parkton	Parkton	I-83 Exit-31/Middletown Rd	53	
Pikesville	Metro Subway-Milford Mill	Milford Mill Rd & Roman Frasier Ln	1,300	MTA Local Bus, MTA Metro Subway
Pikesville	Metro Subway-Old Court	Old Court Rd near Greenwood Rd	625	MTA Local Bus, MTA Metro Subway
Rosedale	Rosedale	US-40 (Pulaski Hwy) West between Rosedale Ave & 68th St	216	
Timonium	Light Rail-Timonium	Greenspring Dr near Landstreet Rd	851	MTA Local Bus, MTA Light Rail
Towson	Cromwell Bridge	I-695/Exit-29A Cromwell Bridge Rd E	64	MTA Commuter Bus
Towson	Providence Road	I-695/Exit-28 Providence Rd	254	MTA Local Bus
White Marsh	White Marsh	I-95/Exit-67 MD-43	409	

Sources: Commuter Connections and MTA websites

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Chapter 2: Transit Needs Analysis

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews recent transportation plans that address or include Baltimore County, analyzes demographic data and land use characteristics influencing transit needs in the county, and presents the results of a rider survey and input from stakeholders that provide perspectives on current CountyRide service. This memo will become a chapter in the county's Transportation Development Plan.

REVIEW OF RECENT PLANS

Prior Transportation Development Plan

Baltimore County's last TDP was completed in 2008, about seven years ago. That document indicated that "the challenge for CountyRide as it maps out its future is to identify ways of increasing ridership and boosting productivity further without significantly increasing costs or sacrificing service quality."

The plan included a range of recommended service options. Among those recommendations, a number have been implemented. Most of these were determined to be "high" priority and include:

- Expansion of the shopping shuttles to include people with disabilities
- New shopping shuttles for seniors and people with disabilities
- Medical shuttles to partnership medical facilities from selected shopping shuttle locations and one CountyRide zone
- Addition of one vehicle to rural service areas during CountyRide's operating days and hours
- Establishment of a new bus hub in the rural, northern part of the service area

There are a few recommendations of "medium priority" that were not implemented due primarily to funding constraints. These included expansion of service to include Saturdays and deviated fixed route service in the rural part of the county.

Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

To meet planning requirements of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) is leading the effort in Maryland to update the coordinated

public transit-human service transportation plans that were originally prepared in 2007. Baltimore County is included in the plan for the Baltimore Area.

According to FTA guidance, the coordinated plan is one that identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes, provides strategies for meeting those local needs, and prioritizes transportation services for funding and implementation. Required elements of the plan are:

- An assessment of available services that identifies current providers (public, private, and non-profit)
- An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes
- Strategies, activities and/or projects to address the identified gaps and achieve efficiencies in service delivery
- Relative priorities for implementation based on resources, time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies/activities identified

The most recent plan update for the Baltimore Area was completed in 2010, and efforts are underway in 2015 to prepare the next update. The 2010 plan update assessed the entire Baltimore Area, without disaggregation to the county level. The key issues for the Baltimore Area are shown in Table 2-1, which is an excerpt from the 2010 plan update report.

Table 2-1: Unmet Transportation Needs and Issues Statement for Targeted Populations of Older Adults, People with Disabilities and People with Low Incomes – Excerpt from Baltimore Area Coordinated Plan 2010 Update

Unmet Transportation Need/Issue	Older Adults	People With Disabilities	People With Low Incomes	Regional/County Specific
No centralized location for customers, human service agency staff, families, etc., to gain information on available transportation options in the region.	X	X	X	Regional
Limited transportation options at certain time frames -- early morning, mid-day, evenings, weekends, and for second and third shift job hours.	X	X	X	Regional (outside of some MTA core services)
Insufficient transportation to access medical sites, such as dialysis and other critical needs; and for long distance trips to medical facilities; and limited options to medical services for customers not eligible for Medicaid-funded transportation.	X	X	X	Regional (outside of MTA ADA service area and services not funded through Medicaid)
Limited connectivity between various transportation providers in region.	X	X	X	Regional
Limited transportation options for urban area residents to access employment opportunities in suburbs (reverse commute), including jobs that result from the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process.	X	X	X	Regional (outside existing MTA core services)
Lack of transportation options for targeted populations who may need more customized transportation services and greater assistance to travel.	X	X	X	Regional

Source: Baltimore Area Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, September 2007 and Updated in September 2010, Maryland Transit Administration

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DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The following section provides a general population profile for Baltimore County, identifies and evaluates underserved population subgroups and reviews the demographic characteristics pertinent to a Title VI analysis. [1] Data sources include the 2010 Census and American Community Survey (ACS) 2009-2013 5-year estimates. This demographic analysis helps inform the assessment of transit needs in the county.

As of the 2010 Census, Baltimore County's population was 805,029 (Table 2-2). This represents an increase from both 1990 and 2000. Overall from 1990-2010, Baltimore County's population increased at a rate of 16%.

Table 2-2: Historical Populations for Baltimore County

Place	1990 Pop.	2000 Pop.	2010 Pop.	1990-2000 % Change	2000-2010 % Change	1990-2010 % Change
Maryland	4,780,753	5,296,486	5,773,550	11%	9%	21%
Baltimore County	692,134	754,292	805,029	9%	7%	16%

Source: U.S. Census, American Factfinder

Table 2-3 shows population projections developed by Maryland's Department of Planning. According to this projection, Baltimore County will experience a 9% increase in population in the next 30 years (2010-2040).

Similar to many areas across the country with the coming "age wave," Baltimore County is projected to see an increase in the senior population (age 65+). Census data for 2010 indicates the county's senior population is 14.6% of the total at 117,534. Estimates for 2014 indicate the percent increases to 15.8% , with an estimated 130,654 seniors. As shown in the Table 2-3, the senior population continues to increase, comprising an increasing percent of the total population.

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[1] Title VI is a federal statute that provides "that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Title VI has been broadened by related statutes, regulations and executive orders, and now includes requirements that transit agencies receiving federal funds must ensure their programs and services do not disproportionately cause adverse impacts on minority populations, low-income populations and limited English proficient (LEP) persons.

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Table 2-3: Future Population Projections for Baltimore County

Place	2020 Pop. Projection		2030 Pop. Projection		2040 Pop. Projection	
Maryland	6,216,160		6,611,900		6,861,900	
Baltimore County	847,000		862,200		880,750	
0-19 years	206,430	24%	205,500	24%	206,960	23%
20-64 years	491,300	58%	473,660	55%	482,780	55%
65+ years	149,280	18%	183,030	21%	191,010	22%

Source: Maryland Department of Planning

Figure 2-1 provides a visualization of population growth from historical and projected population numbers for Baltimore County. Giving the estimated population projections, Baltimore County will have experienced a 27 percent increase in population over the span of 50 years.

Figure 2-1: Baltimore County Population
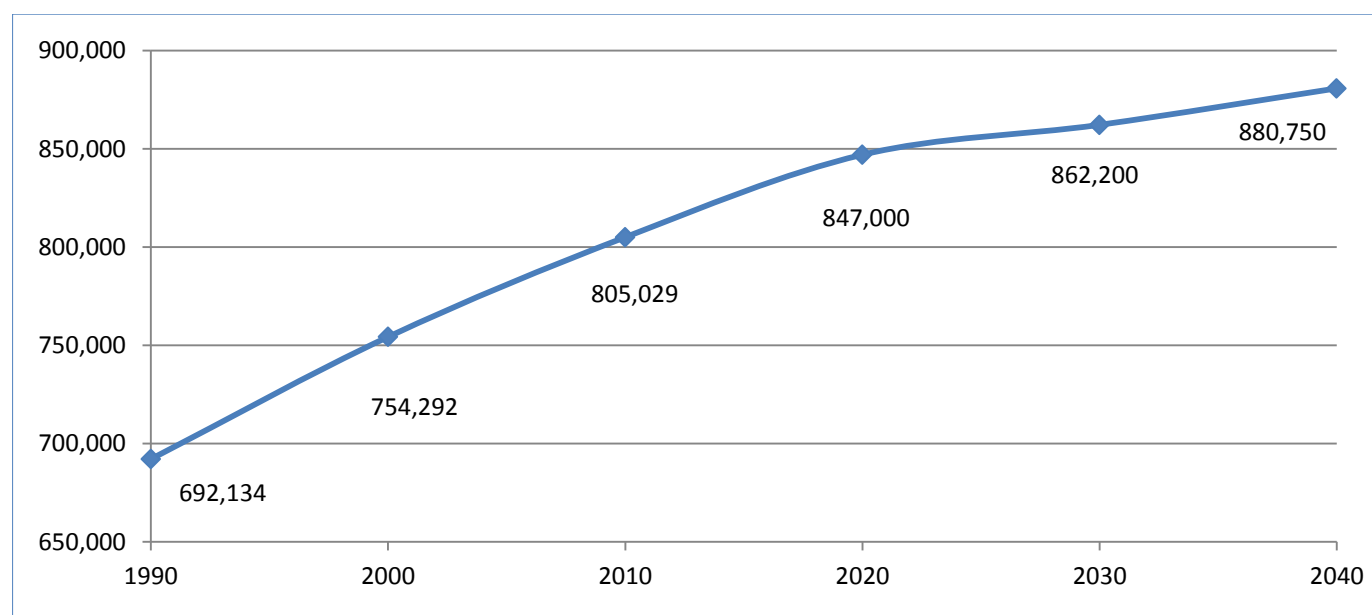
Population Density

Population density is often used as an indicator for the type of public transit services that are feasible within a study area. Typically an area with a density of 2,000 persons per square mile will be able to sustain daily fixed-route transit service. An area with a population density below 2,000 but above 1,000 persons per square mile may be a better candidate for deviated fixed-route or demand response services.

Figure 2-2 shows Baltimore County's population density at the census block level. The areas that have the highest population density are clustered around Baltimore City. Areas in particular that contain block groups with high population density include; Reisterstown, Owings Mills, Milford Mill, Catonsville, Towson, White Marsh, Essex, and Dundalk.

Transit Dependent Populations

The need for public transportation is often derived by recognizing the size and location of segments of the population most dependent on transit services. Transit dependency can be a result of many factors. Some of these include; no access to a personal vehicle, a disability that prevents a person from operating a personal vehicle, age and income. Establishing the location of transit dependent populations aid in the evaluation of the current population while identifying potential gaps in transit services.

The Transit Dependence Index (TDI) is an aggregate measure displaying relative concentrations of transit dependent populations. Five factors make up the TDI calculation; population density, autoless households, elderly populations (age 65 and over), youth populations (ages 10-17) and below poverty populations.

In addition to population density, the factors above represent specific socioeconomic characteristics of Baltimore County residents. For each factor, individual block groups were classified according to the frequency of the vulnerable population relative to the county average. The factors were then put into the TDI equation to determine the relative transit dependence of each block group.

The relative classification system utilizes averages in ranking populations. For example, areas with less than the average transit dependent population fall into the "very low" classification, where areas that are more than twice the average will be classified as "Very High." The classifications "Low, Moderate, and High" all fall between the average and twice the average; these classifications are divided into thirds.

Figure 2-3 displays the TDI rankings for Baltimore County. The TDI is very similar to the population density pattern.

The Transit Dependence Index Percent (TDIP) provides an analysis to the TDI measure. It is similar to the TDI measure however it excludes the population density factor. The TDIP for each block group in the study area was calculated based on autoless households, elderly populations, youth populations and below poverty populations.
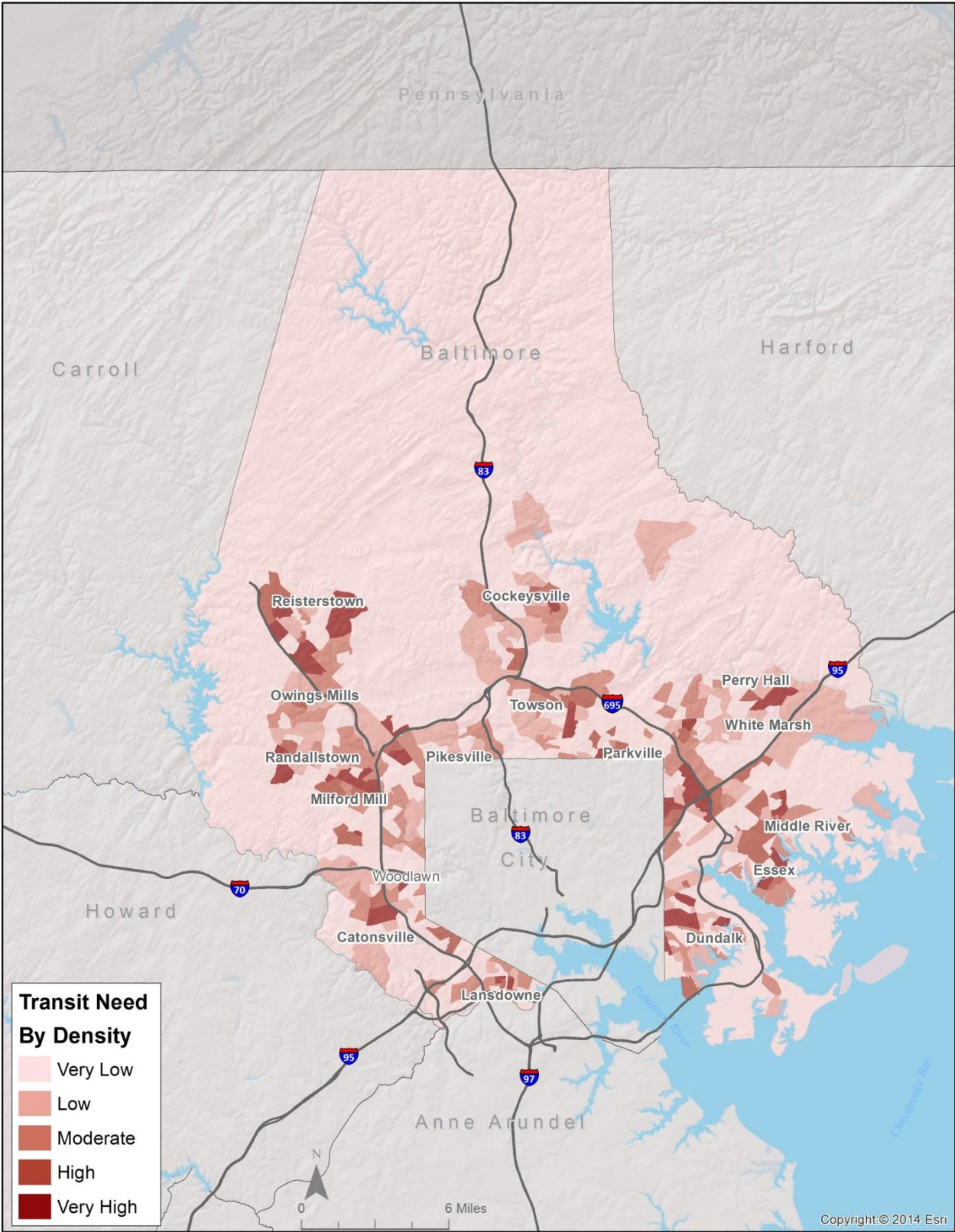
Figure 2-2: 2010 Census Population Density
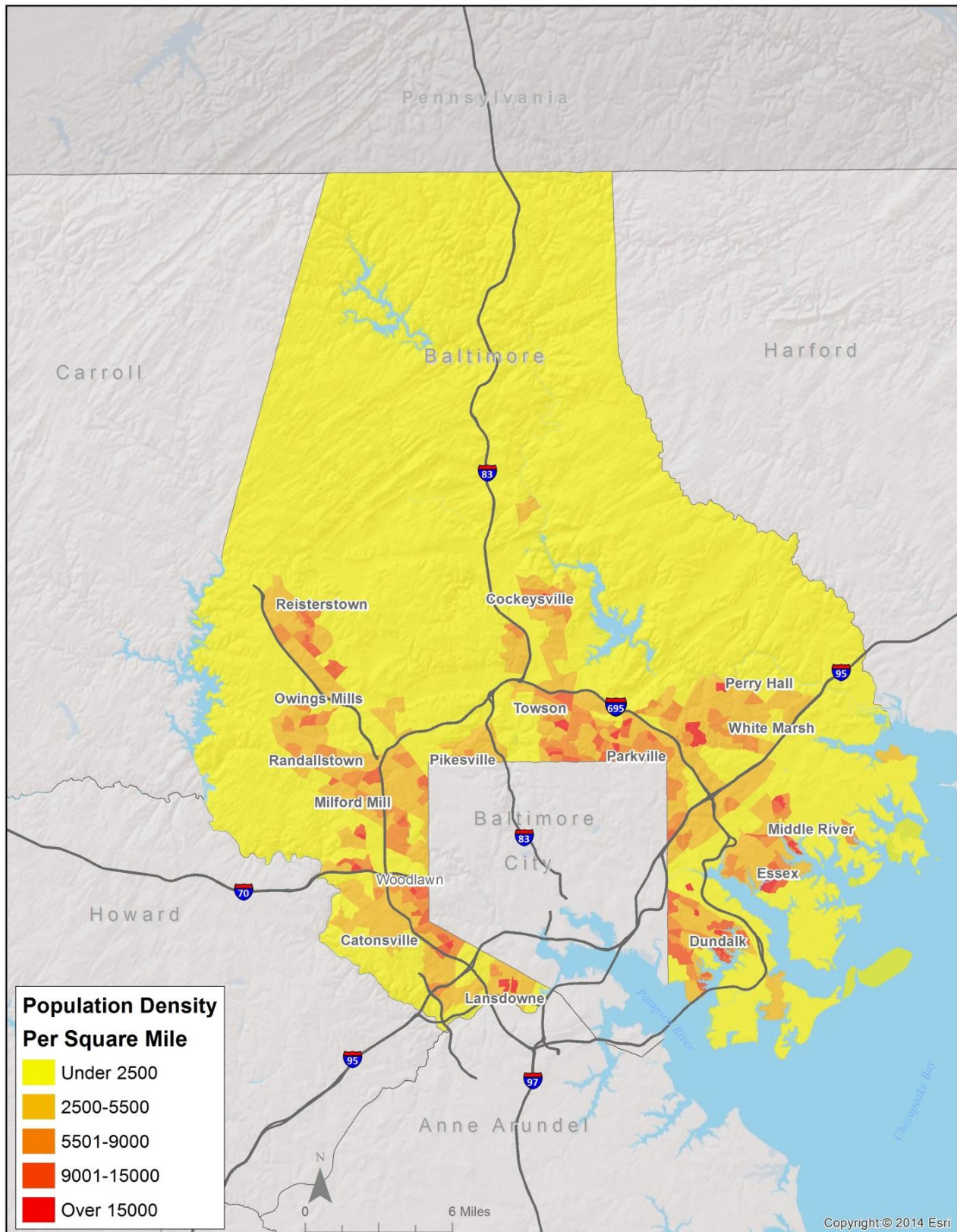
Source: U.S. Census

Figure 2-3: Transit Dependence Index Density

Source: U.S. Census

By removing the population density factor, the TDIP is able to measures the degree of vulnerability. It represents the percentage of the population within the block group with the above socioeconomic characteristics and it follows the TDI's five-tiered categorization of very low to very high. However, it does not highlight the block groups that are likely to have higher concentrations of vulnerable populations only because of their population density. As shown in Figure 2-4, the highest need, based on the percentage, occurs in Reisterstown, Pikesville, Catonsville, Lansdowne, Dundalk, Hampton, Towson, Parkville, Randallstown and Essex.

Autoless Households

Households without at least one personal vehicle are more likely to depend on the mobility offered by public transit. Although autoless households are reflected in both the TDI and TDIP measures, displaying this segment of the population separately is important since most land uses in Baltimore County are at distances too far for non-motorized travel. Figure 2-5 displays the relative number of autoless households. Randallstown, Owings Mills, Reisterstown, Milford Mills, Pikesville, Lochearn, Woodlawn, Catonsville, Arbutus, Lansdowne, Dundalk, Rosedale, Overlea, Rossville, Parkville, Timonium, and block groups north of Mays Chapel and Cockeysville show high numbers of autoless households.

Senior Adult Population

The TDI and the TDIP also analyzed the senior adult population which are individuals 65 years and older. Persons in this age cohort may begin to decrease their use of a personal vehicle and begin to rely more on public transit. Figure 2-6 shows the relative concentration of seniors in Baltimore County. The block groups that have high numbers of seniors are located in the Hampstead, Reisterstown, Owings Mills, Pikesville, Lochearn, Catonsville Dundalk, Essex, White Marsh, Kingsville, Timonium, Towson, Hampton, Woodlawn and Cockeysville areas.

Youth Population

The youth population is often used as an identifier of transit dependent population. Persons ages 10 to 17 either cannot drive or are just beginning to drive and often do not have a personal automobile assessable to them. For this population group, public transit is often the means that offers mobility. Figure 2-7 illustrates the areas with high concentrations of youth populations.

Figure 2-4: Transit Dependence Index Percentage
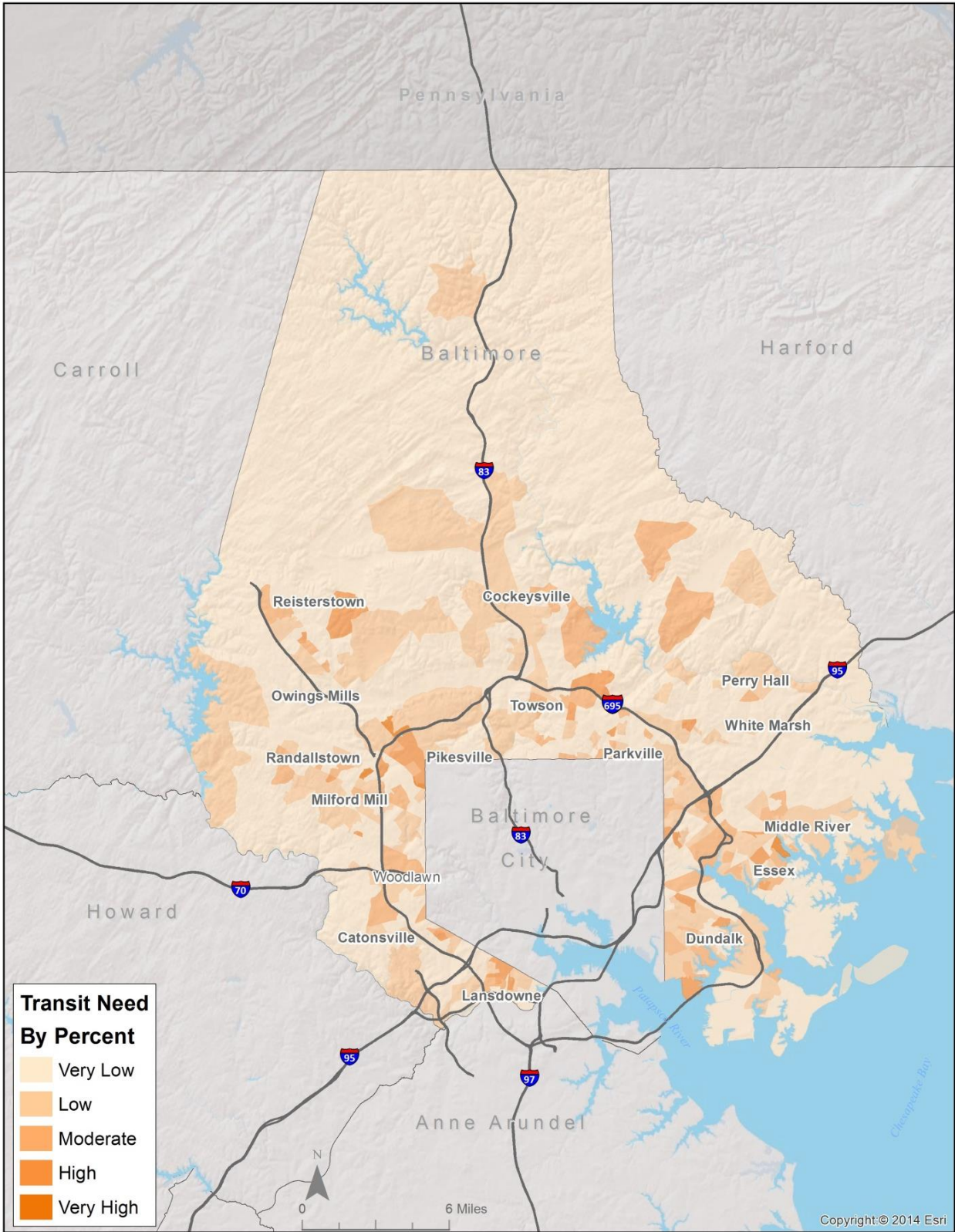
Source: U.S. Census

Figure 2-5: Classification of Autoless Households
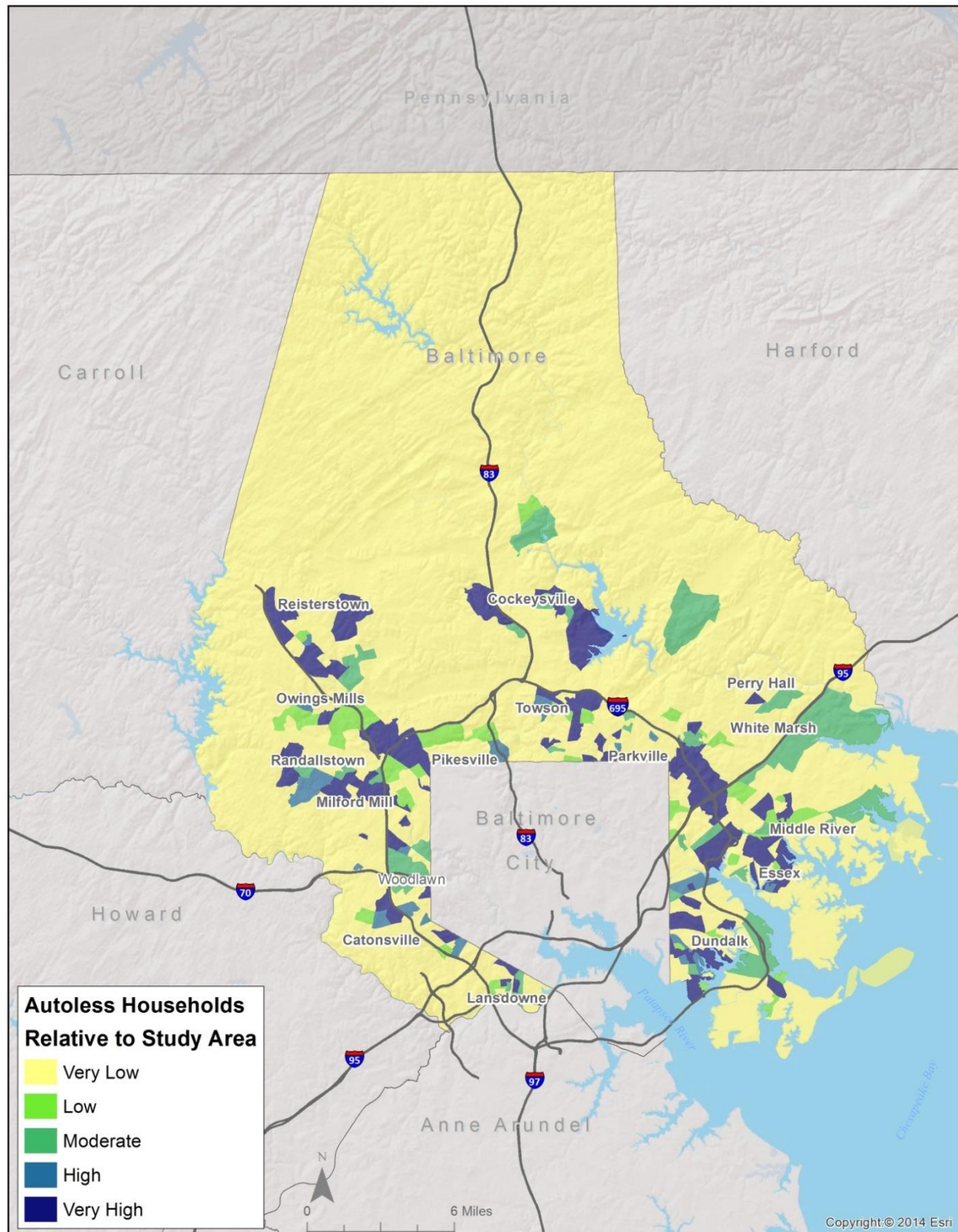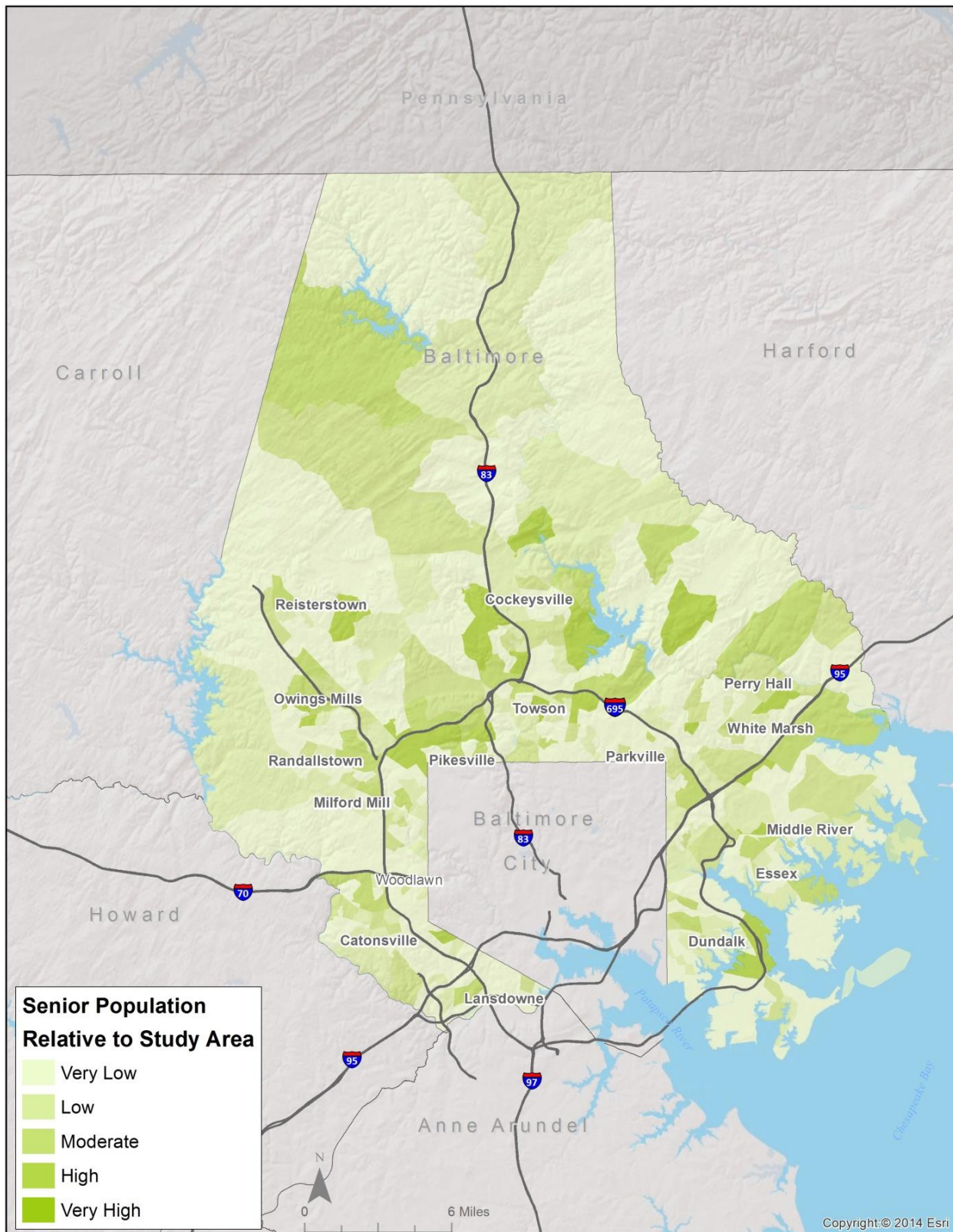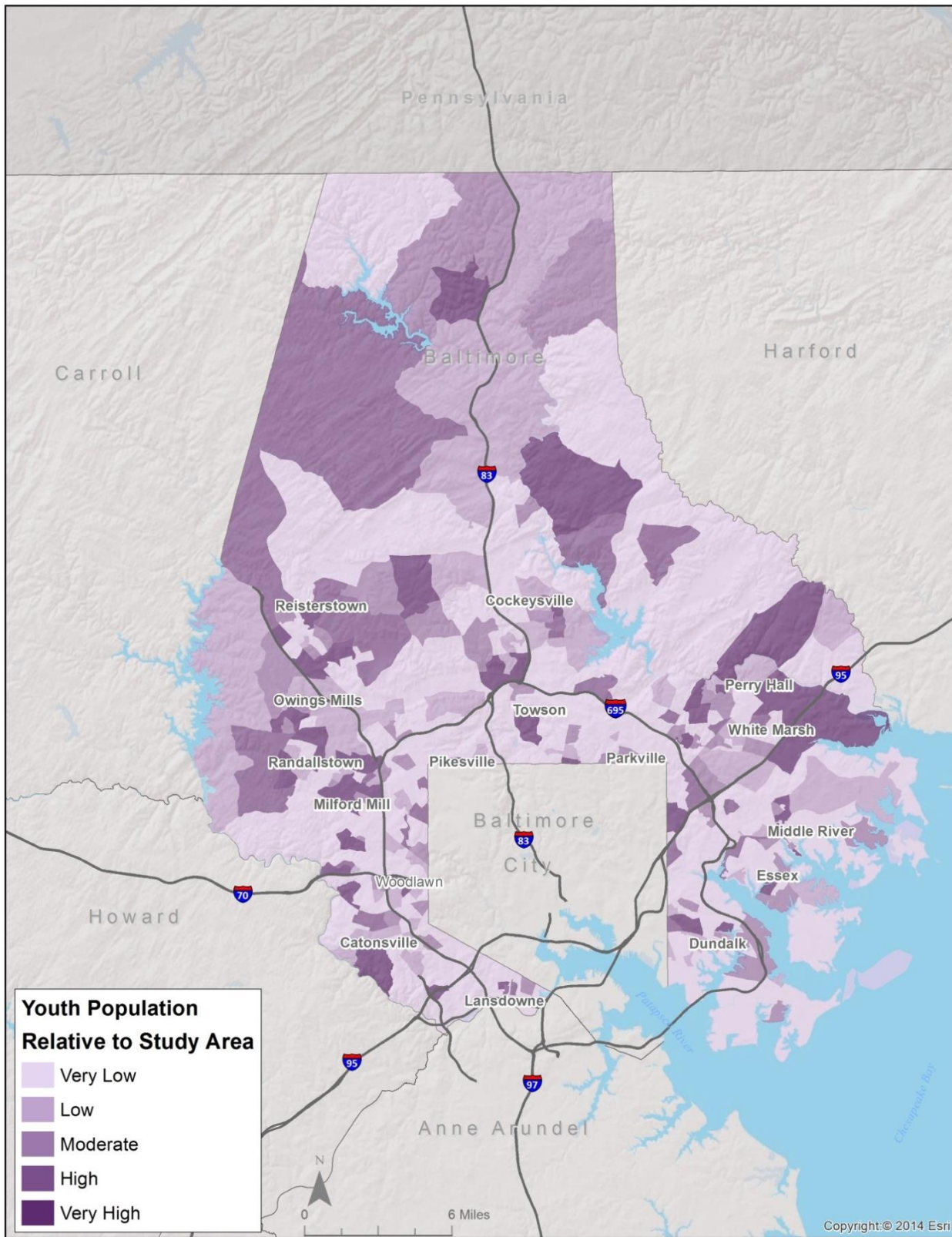

Source: U.S. Census

Figure 2-6: Classification of Senior Adults

Source: U.S. Census

Figure 2-7: Classification of Youths

Source: U.S. Census

Individuals with Disabilities

Figure 2-8 illustrates the disabled population in Baltimore County. The American Community Survey was used to obtain data for the disabled population. It is important to note that this data is only provided at the census tract level. Persons who have disabilities that prevent or make it more difficult for them to own and operate a personal vehicle often rely on public transit for their transportation needs.

Title VI Demographic Analysis

The Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in programs and activities receiving federal subsidies. This includes agencies providing federally funded public transportation. The following section examines the minority and below poverty level populations of Baltimore County.
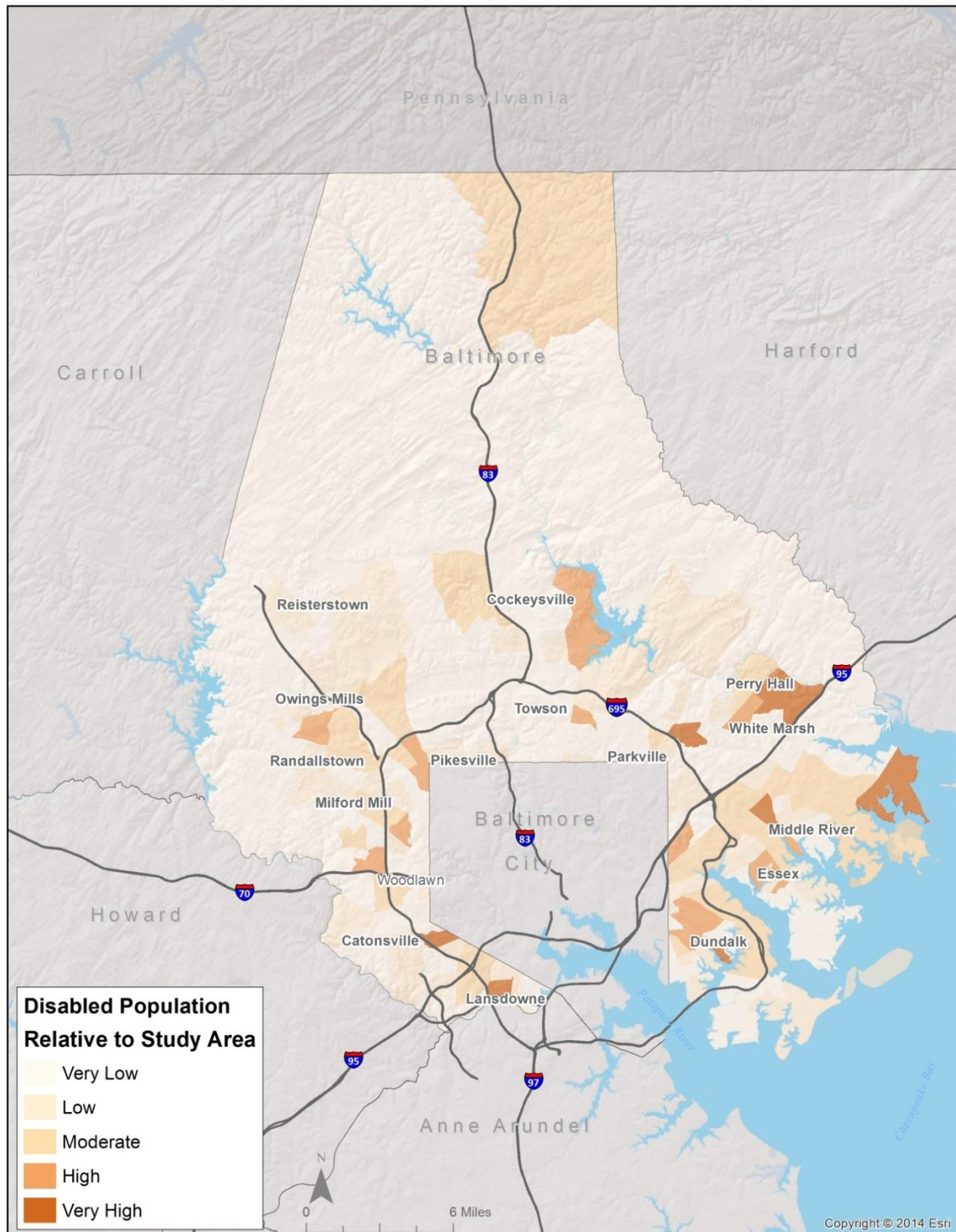
Minority Population

It is important to identify areas that have a high concentration of racial and/or ethnic minority populations. One reason is to ensure that any alterations in transit services do not adversely impact these populations. Baltimore County, Randallstown, Owings Mills, Reisterstown, Woodlawn and White Marsh are just some of the areas that have high minority populations. Figure 2-9 displays the minority population in Baltimore County.

Below Poverty Level Population

The second group included in the Title VI analysis represents those individuals who earn less than the federal poverty level. This segment of the populations may find it a financial burden to own and maintain a personal vehicle, thus relying on public transit as their primary means of transportation. Figure 2-10 depicts the percentage of below poverty individuals per block group.
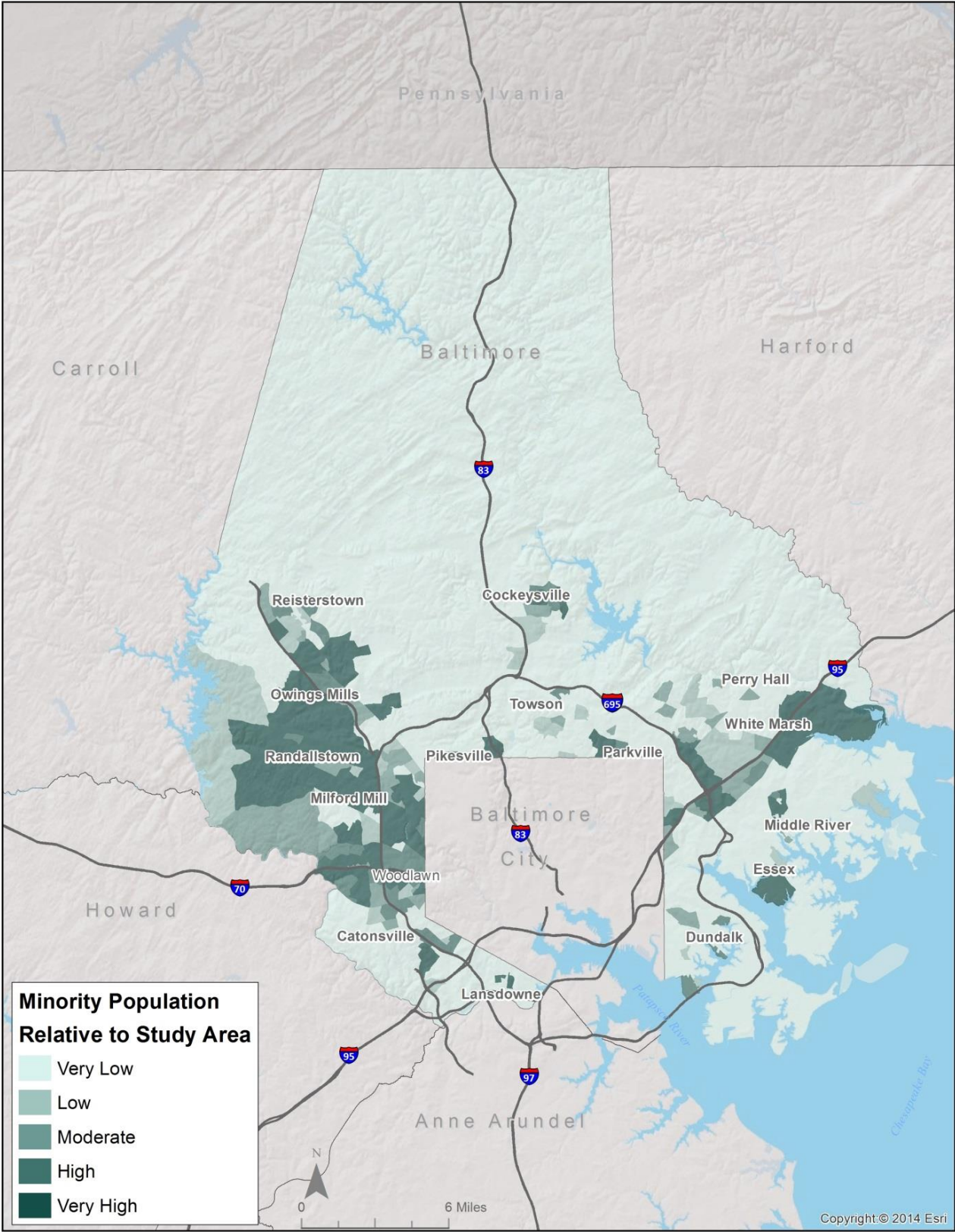
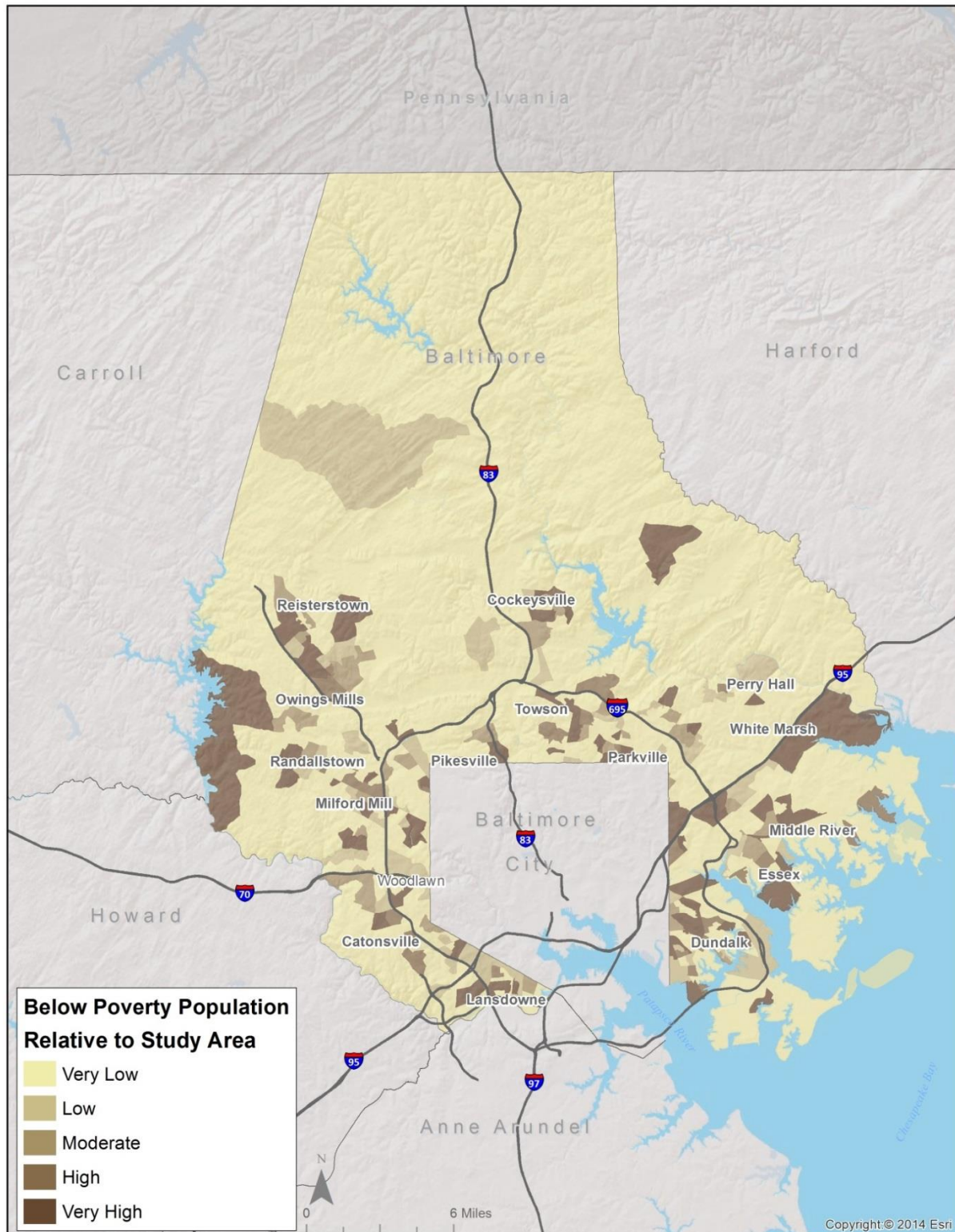**Figure 2-8: Classification of Individuals with Disabilities**

Source: U.S. Census

Figure 2-9: Minority Population

Source: U.S. Census

Figure 2-10: Individuals Below Poverty

Source: U.S. Census

Limited-English Proficiency

In addition to providing public transportation for a diversity of socioeconomic groups, it is also important to serve and disseminate information to those of different linguistic backgrounds. As shown in Table 2-4, Baltimore County residents predominately speak English (about 87%). Spanish is the next most prevalent language (4%). Of those households in the county where a non-English language is spoken, most are also able to speak English "very well" or "well."

Table 2-4: Limited English Proficiency for Baltimore County

Place of Residence	Maryland		Baltimore County	
Population Five Years and Older	5,467,945		763,373	
Language Spoken at Home	#	%	#	%
English	4,634,893	85%	663,617	87%
Speak Non-English at Home:	914,305	17%	99,756	13%
Spanish	378,010	7%	27,710	4%
Other Indo-European languages	242,645	4%	35223	5%
Asian/Pacific Island languages	196,814	4%	23296	3%
Other languages	96,836	2%	13527	2%
Ability to Speak English	#	%	#	%
"Very Well" or "Well"	745,673	14%	83,336	11%
"Not Well" or "Not at All"	164,305	3%	32,840	4%

Source: American Community Survey, Five-Year Estimates (2009-2013), Table B16004.

SERVICE AREA, TRANSIT GENERATORS AND ACTIVITY CENTERS

Service Area

Baltimore County is 600 square miles in size and is situated in what is referred to as Maryland's Baltimore region. This region consists of the City of Baltimore and Baltimore County, as well as the counties of Anne Arundel, Carroll, Harford, and Howard, situated in central Maryland; see Figure 2-11.

Baltimore County has both an urbanized and rural area; Figure 2-11 shows the two areas. This distinction between the urban and rural portions of the county is relevant not only regarding demographics, with the urbanized portion containing the majority of the county's population and with a higher density than the rural portion, but also in terms of the key funding sources for CountyRide. The transit program receives both urban and rural grant funding (to be discussed in more detail in a subsequent TDP report) and this impacts eligibility for the service. In particular, eligibility for service in the rural area is not restricted to seniors and individuals with disabilities, as it is in the urbanized area. In the rural portion of the county, CountyRide service is open for all residents.

Additionally, Baltimore County's service area is impacted by location of the City of Baltimore, situated in the middle of the southern end of the county. The major roadway pattern, with the exception of the Baltimore Beltway, is comprised largely of radial routes converging in downtown Baltimore. These factors impact travel for CountyRide and its provision of trips to riders, affecting travel times and travel routes between the western and eastern parts of the county.

Figure 2-11: Baltimore Region

Source: Baltimore County Master Plan, 2020

Major Trip Generators

Understanding the land uses and major trip generators in Baltimore County serves as a complement to the demographic analysis above. Knowing where major destinations are in the area will also help determine where transit services are needed. Trip generators attract transit demand and include common origins and destinations. Examples of trip generators are multi-unit housing, medical facilities, shopping centers, major employers and educational facilities.

Consistent with the population density, Baltimore County's urban area is located around Baltimore City. Figure 2-12 shows Baltimore County's urban area. Figure 2-13 confirms that many of the trip generators in Baltimore County are located close to Baltimore City. Included in this illustration of trip generators are housing, which consist of senior housing and retirement communities; medical facilities, which includes the 15 facilities that are contributors to the CountyRide Program; senior centers; and major shopping centers and big box stores such as Walmart and Target.
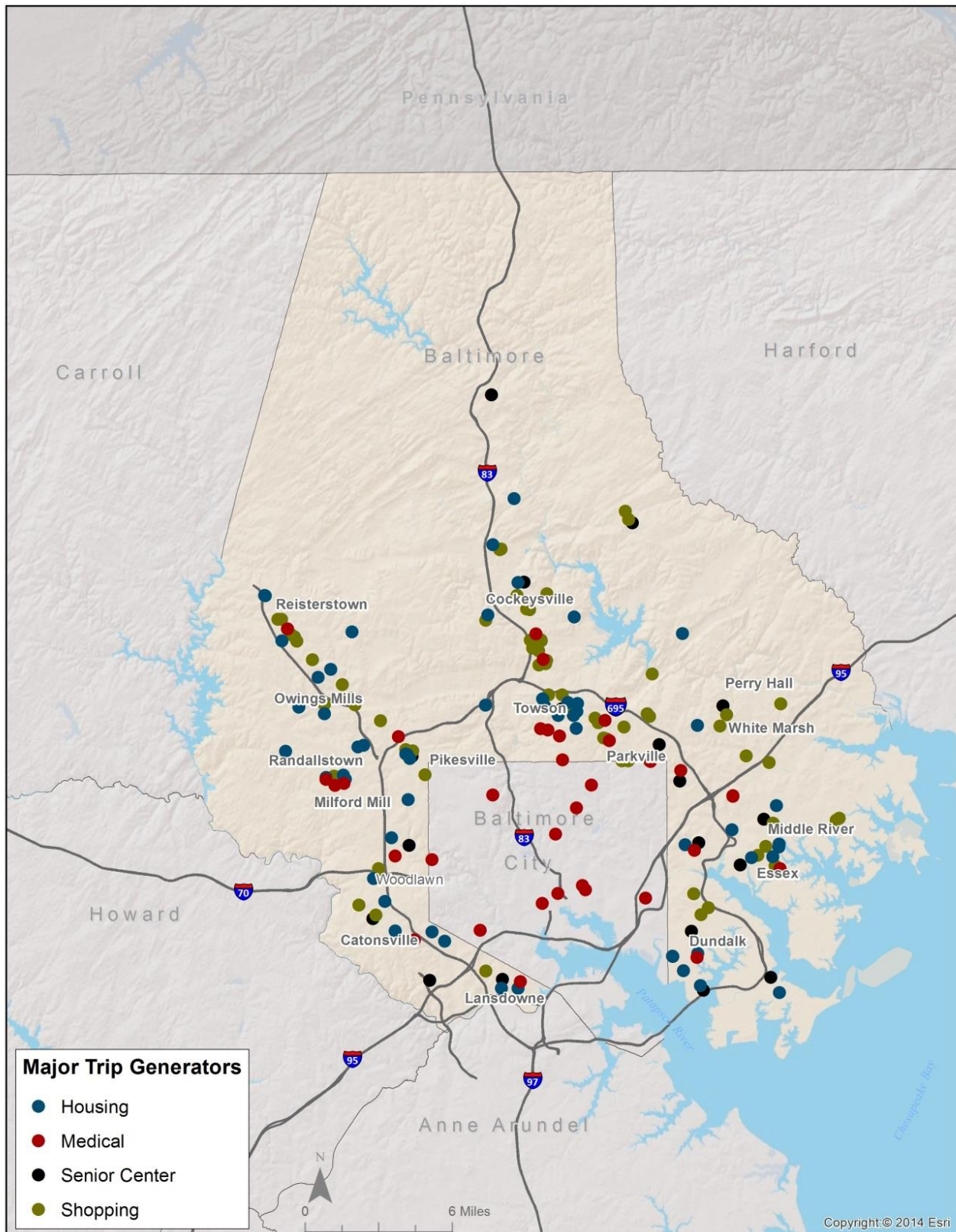
Figure 2-12: Baltimore County's Urban Area
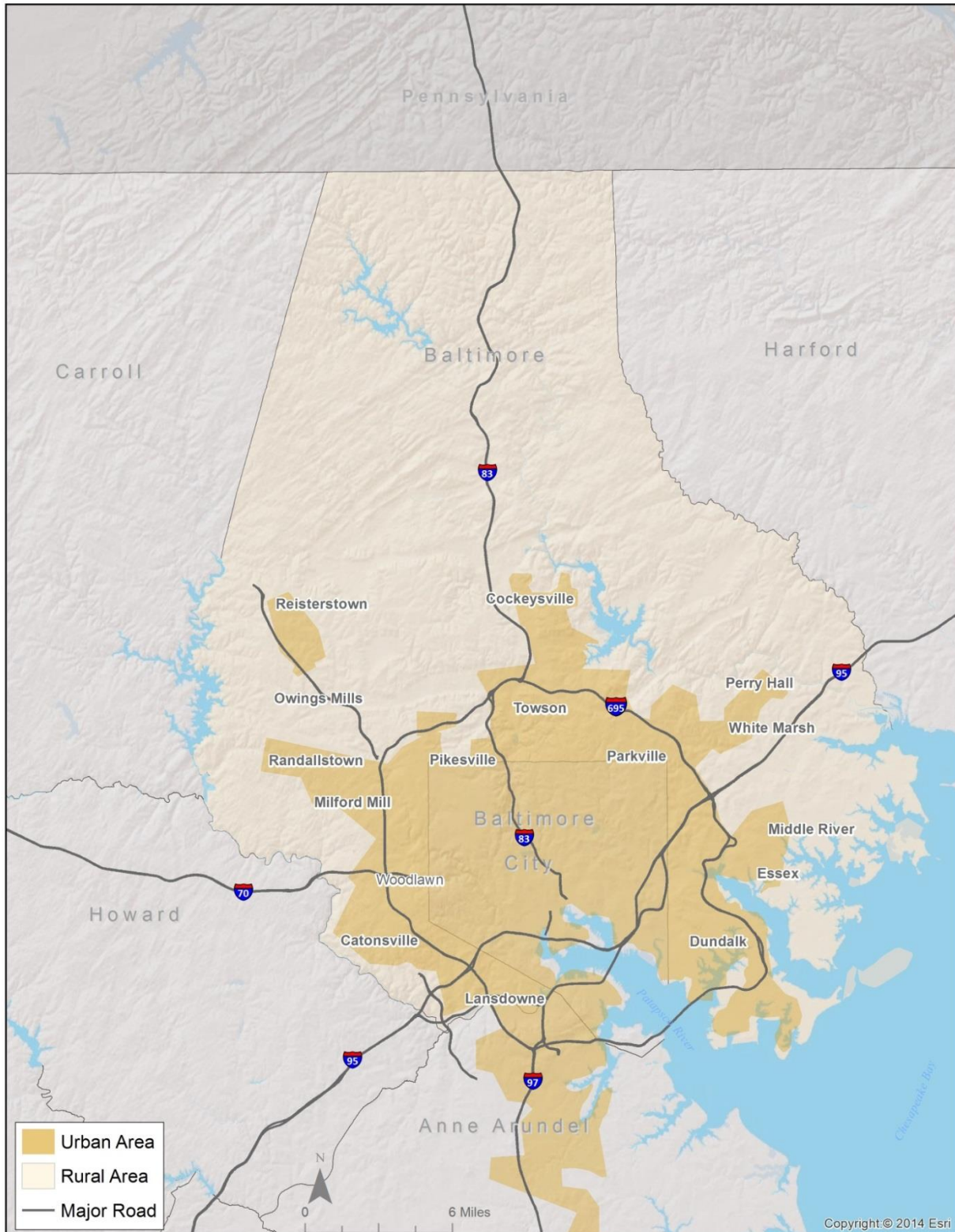
Source: Baltimore County Master Plan, 2020

Figure 2-13: Major Trip Generators

Source: U.S. Census

STAKEHOLDER AND RIDER INPUT

Stakeholders

The consultant team reached out to a number of stakeholders to gain their perspectives on CountyRide based on their interactions and experiences with their client base that uses the transportation service. Stakeholders at the following organizations were contacted:

- Greater Baltimore Medical Center
- MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center
- Baltimore County Department of Aging, Senior Employment and Housing
- Baltimore County, Commission on Disabilities
- Davita Dialysis
- Baltimore County Senior Communities

The stakeholders were sent a one-page listing of six questions that asked about their clients' transportation experiences and needs in Baltimore County as well as CountyRide's strengths and weaknesses. Some surveys were completed and returned and others were conducted as phone interviews, depending on the stakeholders' preferences.

All of the stakeholders contacted provided feedback about their clients' or patients' transportation needs and experience using CountyRide and other transportation services in Baltimore County. Baltimore County Senior Communities and Davita Dialysis sent the surveys to their service coordinators in the field. Six service coordinators from Baltimore County Senior Communities completed the surveys. Davita determined that it was preferable to survey their patients rather than Davita staff, so KFH Group provided the rider survey to Davita and that survey was handed out by Davita staff to patients as appropriate. Returned surveys were then included in the analysis of the rider surveys as described above.

Overall, the feedback from stakeholders was positive about CountyRide. All of the participating stakeholders reported that they had clients (which include patients) who used the service. The numbers of the stakeholders' clients using CountyRide ranged from 5 to 85, with the average being about 50.

Most of the stakeholders indicated that their clients had favorable experiences using CountyRide and would like to see the services expanded. Customer service was identified as the top strength of the system; it was mentioned nine times. Stakeholders mentioned the flexibility of the CountyRide staff, the courtesy of the staff and drivers, and the timeliness of the drivers. Four out of the six stakeholder organizations rated the CountyRide services as good or excellent.

The other strengths mentioned during the stakeholder outreach at least once included: flexibility in scheduling, on time pickups and shorter initial eligibility/registration time than Mobility.

While the eligibility/registration process was noted as a strength by one, others reported it a weakness. The one stakeholder who identified the process as a strength, it was only because it was faster than Mobility.

Stakeholders reported that when they have a new client, often that person will need a ride to appointments within a week or two. The intake paperwork and amount of time it takes for someone to initially be approved as eligible for the CountyRide services takes longer than a week or two. Stakeholders reported that this often leaves their new clients without transportation to medical appointments, causing them to miss the appointments or use an ambulance for a non-emergency medical trip.

One stakeholder suggested that allowing individuals to have one or two initial trips on CountyRide for medical appointments while they are going through the eligibility process might help. Stakeholders indicated that gathering and submitting the paperwork on the individual's end could be the cause of the delay in the eligibility process. Three stakeholders mentioned the lengthy eligibility/registration process as a barrier to using the CountyRide services.

Regarding weaknesses, the top two weaknesses identified by the participating stakeholders were scheduling and availability of services. The phone system was mentioned by three stakeholders as difficult for their clients to use, including long hold times. One stakeholder reported that this was the greatest barrier for their clients in using the service. This stakeholder indicated that many of their clients are older and have hearing problems which make it difficult for them to use the phone system, especially when they are put on hold for long periods of time. The stakeholder said: "If you are trying to empower people with disabilities to be independent, then they should not have to need help using your system. Often, they have to ask someone to help call to schedule rides."

Regarding scheduling, three stakeholders mentioned the two-week advanced notice time was too long. Similar to the amount of time it takes to go through the eligibility/registration process, sometimes the two-week requirement is a barrier.

Scheduling return trips was also mentioned by two stakeholders. One mentioned that if clients scheduled appointments too late in the day they could end up stranded with no ride home.

Extending service hours was mentioned three times, unrelated to the difficulty with scheduling return trips. However, extending service hours might relieve some of the stress about missing a return trip.

Increasing services was mentioned at least eight times, in several different ways. Regarding increasing service area, comments ranged from more destinations to inter-county trips. Stakeholders commented that they would like to see CountyRide service to Carroll County (mentioned three times), Edgemere, Hunt Valley, low-income senior employment sites, the Amish Market, Wholefoods and the hairdresser.

One stakeholder mentioned that their clients were having a difficult time scheduling rides to doctor's appointments because by the time they called, the trips were all booked and there were no rides available for them.

Other comments (and the number of times mentioned) about services included:

- Extend hours into nights and weekends (3)
- Coordinate more with other transportation providers, especially across county lines (3)
- Needs more funding (1)
- Coordinate more with health care providers on ride and appointment scheduling (1)

Two different stakeholders mentioned that the minimum rider requirement to schedule shuttles was too high for both the six-minimum shopping shuttle and the twelve-minimum shuttle. Another stakeholder suggested having more vehicle options, for example, smaller vehicles. This might have also been in reference to the minimum shuttle requirement.

Summary

The stakeholders contacted for the study were generally very satisfied with their clients' use of CountyRide. One survey respondent reported:

"The strength of County Ride is the professional services of the operations, the drivers do their job and customer service skills of the phone operators are above and beyond my expectations. The drivers practice good safety measures."

The weaknesses of the service are primarily focused on the scheduling process and service availability, the latter referring to both the geographic scope of CountyRide's service area and the capacity to serve trips.

More specifically, scheduling issues are reported to be: long hold times on the phone, the need for two-week advance notice for trips and return trips can be unreliable. Issues with service availability reflect the demand for service that is currently unmet, with stakeholders requesting: an increased service area, inter-county coordination of trips, "more service" and longer service hours.

Rider Survey

The rider survey was conducted in several ways. First, the survey was distributed to passengers on the CountyRide vehicles by the drivers for approximately three weeks in August. Drivers handed the survey to passengers and asked that the survey be completed. Drivers also asked their passengers to complete just one survey.

Passengers could return the survey in three ways: they could turn in the survey to a driver, they could hand in the survey at one of the county's senior centers, or they could mail back the survey to the CountyRide office. A total of 71 completed surveys were returned from the on-board version.

Second, the rider survey was included as an insert to the CountyRide newsletter, TRANSITions, which is published on a periodic basis. The newsletter reaches a large number of seniors and was a particularly effective way to reach those who use CountyRide only infrequently. Respondents to the newsletter-inserted surveys could return their completed surveys in the same three manners as for the on-board survey, though these respondents were less likely to return their surveys to the drivers.

Third, outreach to one of the major dialysis providers in the region was made to obtain input from the centers' perspective. The centers made the survey available to their patients who use CountyRide and completed surveys were then returned to the CountyRide office.

From the newsletter mail-out and dialysis centers, a total of 103 surveys were returned, with the large majority received from the newsletter version. Together with the on-board version of the survey, 174 total surveys were returned and analyzed.
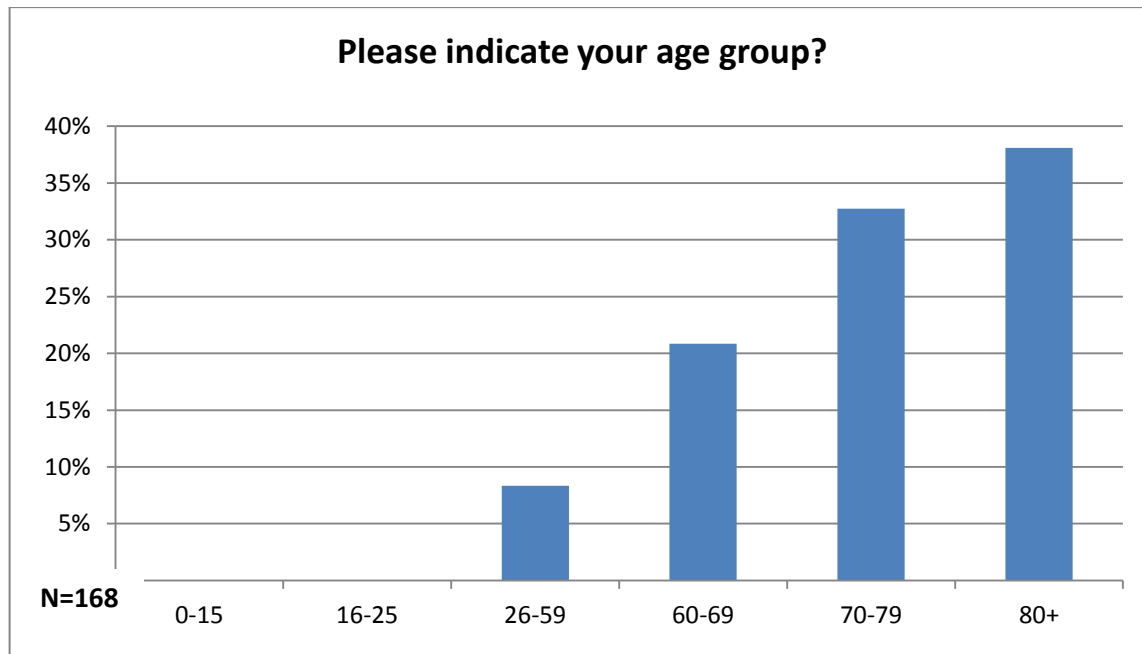
A copy of the survey instrument is shown in Table 2-5 and complete results of the surveys are included in Appendix A to this report, with a summary analysis provided below.

Characteristics of Riders

The survey asked riders to indicate the city, town, or community in which they live. More than 35 communities were identified. Owings Mills was identified the most frequently, by 13% of the survey respondents. The next most frequently mentioned places were Baltimore County (10%) and Towson at 9%.

The large majority of riders are older adults, as would be expected. The largest group is 80 years of age and older (38%). Another 33% are ages 70 to 79. Those age 60 to 69 are 21% of the riders, and 8% are younger than 60 years of age. See Figure 2-14.

Figure 2-14: Age Group of Riders

Please indicate your age group?

N=168

(Bar chart showing age groups: 0-15 = 0%, 16-25 = 0%, 26-59 ≈ 8%, 60-69 ≈ 21%, 70-79 ≈ 33%, 80+ ≈ 38%)

Many of the riders are transit-dependent, in that they do not have a driver's license. The survey found that 55% of the riders do not have driver's license, and therefore do not drive.

Most riders do not use a wheelchair or scooter when traveling on CountyRide (90%). Eight percent indicated that they travel using a wheelchair or scooter and 2% said they sometimes use a wheelchair or scooter for trips on CountyRide.

About a third of the riders (34%) said they use another type of mobility aid, such as a cane or walker, 8% said they sometimes travel using such a mobility aid, while the remainder, 58%, indicated they travel with no mobility aids when using CountyRide.

Respondents were asked if they have Internet access, as there is interest in maximizing the use of CountyRide's technology that automates various features such as trip reservations and trip cancellations. Based on answers to this question, 49% have Internet access and the remaining 51% do not.

Regarding use of CountyRide's automated "Request-a-Trip," 44% said they use the Interactive Voice Response (IVR), and 56% said they do not. For the online version – the Interactive Web Response (IWR) which has the same features as the IVR, only 13% said they use the web-based technology, and the rest – 87% – do not use it. This is despite the fact that almost 50% have Internet access.

Baltimore County's CountyRide

RIDER SURVEY

Please give us your feedback about CountyRide! We are currently conducting a planning study for CountyRide, and we would like to know how you use CountyRide and your opinions about the service. Please complete this brief survey. You may return your completed survey to the driver, hand it in at your Senior Center, or mail it to: Baltimore County Dept. of Aging, Attention: COUNTYRIDE SURVEY, 611 Central Ave., Towson, MD 21204. Your answers are anonymous. If you have already completed a survey, you do not need to complete a second one. ***Thank you!***

1. In what city, town, or community do you live? _____

2. What are the main purposes of your trips on CountyRide? *(You may check more than one)*

   ❑ Medical   ❑ Social/ Recreation   ❑ Work
   ❑ Shopping   ❑ Attend Senior Center   ❑ Errands/Personal Business
   ❑ School   ❑ Attend Senior Meal Site   ❑ Government Service Agency
                                                   ❑ Other: _____

3. How often do you use CountyRide?
   ❑ 2-3 times per week or more   ❑ A few times per month   ❑ Less than once a month
   ❑ Once a week   ❑ About once a month

4. How long have you been using CountyRide?
   ❑ Six months or less   ❑ Between 1 and 2 years
   ❑ Between six months and one year ❑ More than 2 years
   ❑ About one year   ❑ More than 5 years

5. Please rate your satisfaction with CountyRide in the following areas:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Unsatisfied	Very Unsatisfied
The trip scheduling process	❑	❑	❑	❑
Telephone customer service	❑	❑	❑	❑
On-time performance	❑	❑	❑	❑
Travel time on the vehicle for your trips	❑	❑	❑	❑
Days of service availability	❑	❑	❑	❑
Hours of service availability	❑	❑	❑	❑
Cost of service.	❑	❑	❑	❑
Cleanliness of the vehicles	❑	❑	❑	❑
Driver courtesy	❑	❑	❑	❑
Availability of information	❑	❑	❑	❑
Safety and comfort of your trips	❑	❑	❑	❑
Usefulness of CountyRide website	❑	❑	❑	❑

GO TO OTHER SIDE

SIDE 1

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◆GROUP◆

6. What type of vehicle is most appropriate for your needs when traveling on CountyRide?

    ❏ Sedan   ❏ Small van
    ❏ Caravan   ❏ Large van

7. Are there places in Baltimore County where you would like to go on a regular basis, but you cannot get to because there is no public transportation service available for the trip?

    ❏ No   ❏ Yes   If yes, from where to where? _____

8. What do you like <u>most</u> about CountyRide service?

    _____

9. What do you like <u>least</u> about CountyRide service?

    _____

10. If CountyRide were to make service improvements, what would be your top three choices?

    (1)_____   (2)_____   (3)_____

11. Please indicate your age group: ❏ 0-15   ❏60-69
                                       ❏ 16-25   ❏70-79
                                       ❏ 26-59   ❏ 80+

12. Mobility aids:
    A. Do you travel on CountyRide using a wheelchair or scooter?   ❏ Yes   ❏ No   ❏ Sometimes

    B. Do you travel with another mobility aid (walker, cane, etc.)?   ❏ Yes   ❏ No   ❏ Sometimes

13. Do you have Internet access?   ❏ Yes   ❏ No

14. Do you use CountyRide's automated "Request-a-Trip" system?

    A. The Interactive Voice Response (IVR) for booking trips, cancelling rides, etc.?   ❏ Yes   ❏ No

    B. The online Interactive Web Response (IWR) that has the same features as the IVR?   ❏ Yes   ❏ No

15. Was a car available today for this trip?   ❏ Yes   ❏ No

16. Do you have a driver's license?   ❏ Yes   ❏ No

17. If you have additional comments about public transportation in Baltimore County, please use this space:

Thank you!

SIDE 2

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Characteristics of Trip-Making

A number of survey questions asked riders about their trip-making on CountyRide, including how long riders have used CountyRide and about how often they ride; see Figures 2-15 and 2-16.

Figure 2-15: Length of Time Using CountyRide
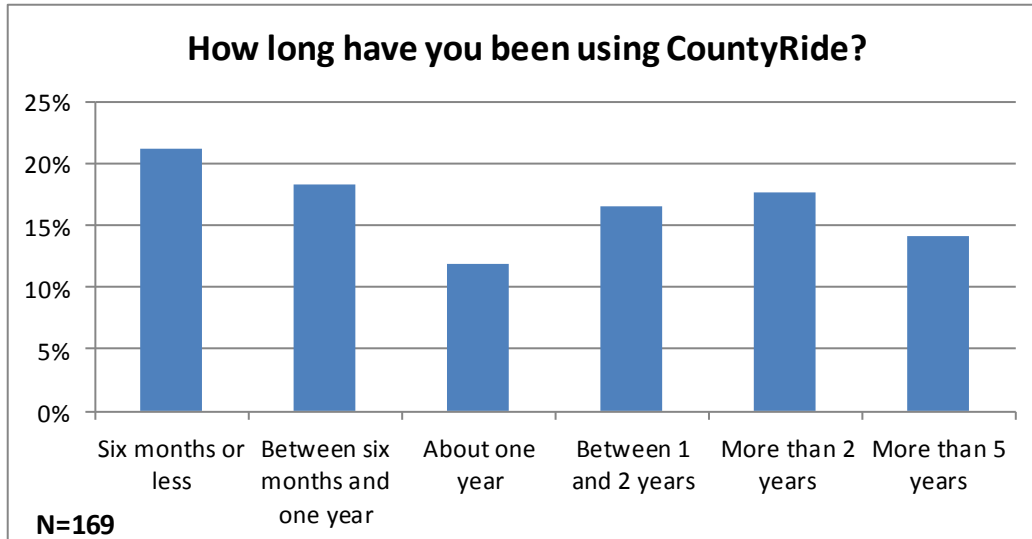
Figure 2-16: Frequency of CountyRide Use
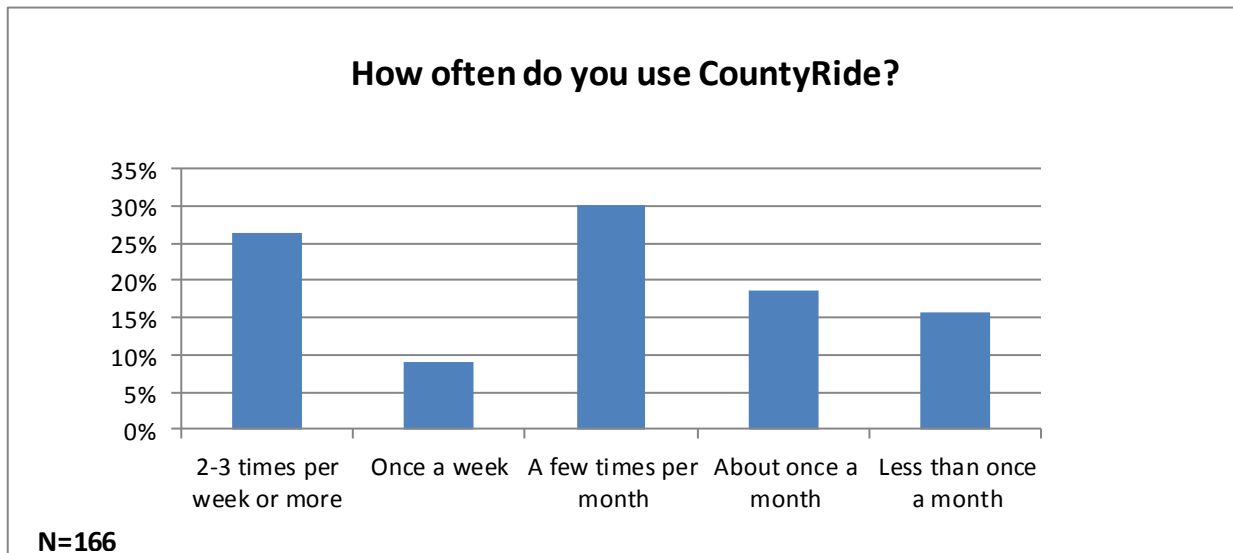
Reponses show that 21% of the respondents are relatively new riders, using the service only within the last six months. This can be compared to the 14% of riders who can be considered long-term riders, using CountyRide for more than five years.

Regarding frequency of use, 27% are frequent riders, with trips on CountyRide two to three times or more per week. Nine percent ride once per week. Thirty percent use CountyRide a few times per month, and the remainder – 16% – are infrequent riders, with less than one trip per month.

While there are a variety of trip purposes of CountyRide riders, by far the most frequent trip purpose is *medical*, with the next most frequent purposes *shopping* and *attending a senior center*. Riders could indicate more than one trip purpose. See Figure 2-17.

Figure 2-17: Trip Purposes
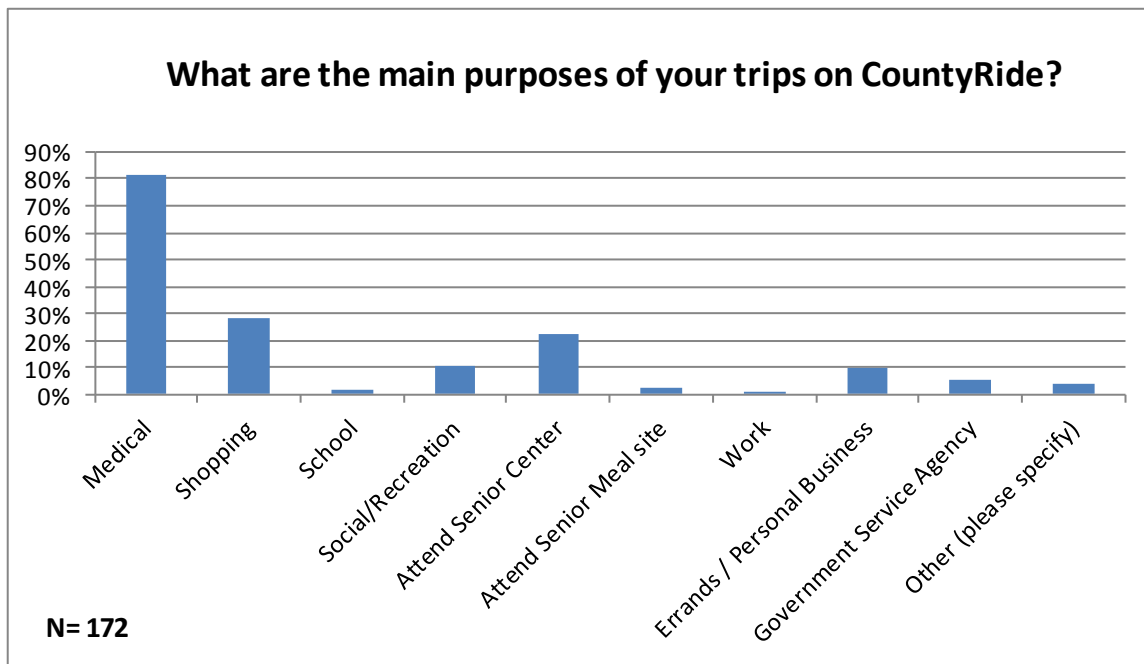
Riders were asked which vehicle type was most appropriate for their trips, with the largest group of riders (44%) selecting a *sedan*. For the other vehicle types, 30% chose the small van, 23% chose the large van, and 3% selected the caravan.

Destinations Desired But Not Now Served

Survey respondents were asked if there are destinations they would like to access on a regular basis but they cannot do so because there is no public transportation available; only 23% answered *yes*, and the rest said *no*. Various destinations were indicated by those answering *yes*, with some of the responses being a geographic location, such as *White Marsh* and *Carroll County*, while other responses were general, for example, *library* and *doctors' offices*.

Satisfaction with CountyRide Service

Riders responding to the survey were asked to rate their satisfaction with CountyRide on a range of features; see Figure 2-18. *Driver courtesy* and *safety and comfort of the ride* are the two features with the highest satisfaction ratings. The features which riders like least are the *days of service, hours of service,* and t*he trip scheduling process*. The features that riders like most and least mirror what we heard from the stakeholders about CountyRide service.

Figure 2-18: Satisfaction Ratings for CountyRide Service
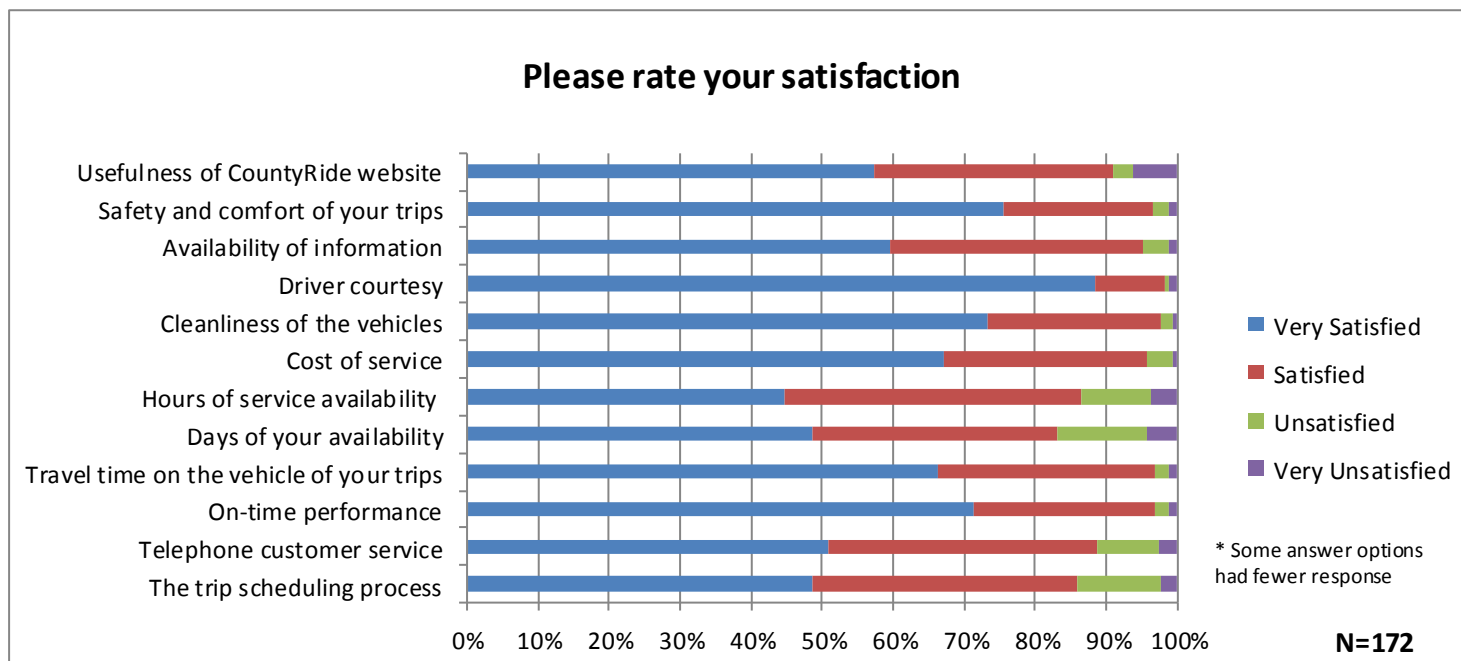
Riders were asked write down what they like most about CountyRide. Many of the comments focused on drivers. A sampling of comments is:

- *The drivers are courteous and polite.*
- *They have friendly drivers.*
- *There are excellent drivers.*

What riders like least about CountyRide focused on the limited availability of service and the scheduling process, which are also the features with which riders have the least satisfaction. A few of the specific comments provided from riders about what they like least include:

- *Limited to only 2 times a week*
- *Limited availability*
- *Having to call early in the morning exactly 2 weeks before appointments*
- *Telephone wait*

The survey asked the riders to list their top three options for service improvements. Not surprisingly, the most frequently mentioned improvement reflect what riders indicated they liked least about the service: *trip scheduling, the hours of services, number of trips allowed*, and the *telephone service*.

The survey provided space at the bottom on the second page for riders to provide comments. More than 35 respondents provided comments, which are shown in Table 2-6.

Summary

The survey results show that CountyRide serves predominately older seniors; more than one-third are age 80 and above and another third are age 70 to 79. More than half of the riders (55%) are transit-dependent as they do not have a driver's license.

Only a small proportion of riders use a wheelchair or scooter (8%) when traveling on CountyRide, and 2% said they sometimes use a wheelchair or scooter. About one-third (34%) did indicate use of another type of mobility aid when travelling on CountyRide, such as a cane or walker, and another 8% said they use such a mobility aid sometimes for CountyRide use.

Understanding rider characteristics and to what extent they use mobility aids is important for providing service. The trip scheduling process needs to understand the longer dwell times required for older seniors who are often frail and for those using mobility aids, in particular, wheelchairs and scooters. The riders' needs for assistance getting to and from the vehicle and for boarding and alighting are also important for trip scheduling as well as for driver training.

Riders use CountyRide's transportation service most frequently for medical trips. This is not surprising as CountyRide provides scheduling priority for medical trips and standing rides are reserved for medical trip purposes.

Riders' voiced opinions and satisfaction with CountyRide through several survey questions, as well as their comments through the survey's final question. The drivers and their courtesy and their service to riders are clearly a highlight of CountyRide. Of the 12 characteristics of CountyRide service that were rated by the riders, *driver courtesy* received the strongest satisfaction rating. This was echoed through other questions, including the one that asked riders to list what they liked best about CountyRide. Driver courtesy as well as overall staff courtesy was also mentioned as strength of CountyRide by stakeholders whom we interviewed.

Several comments from the survey capture riders' sentiments about the drivers:

- *Kind and dependable drivers*
- *There are courteous and friendly drivers*
- *The drivers are courteous and very prompt*

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◆GROUP◆

On the less positive side, riders as well as stakeholders are less satisfied with several aspects of CountyRide service. These include: the *hours and days of service*; the *trip scheduling process*; and *telephone service*. *Availability of service* and *scheduling* were also the two main weaknesses of CountyRide as identified by the stakeholders.

CountyRide service is constrained in the service it offers by available capacity, not uncommon for transportation programs with limited funds. When demand exceeds supply, as is the case for CountyRide, there will be riders and stakeholders who voice dissatisfaction as they want "more service."

There are ways to address at least some of the issues identified as less satisfactory, for example, "telephone service." CountyRide has technology that allows riders to by-pass telephoning a staff person and using what's called Interactive Voice Response (IVR) or Interactive Wed Response (IWR). With these technology tools, a rider can make a trip request as well as cancel a trip without waiting on the telephone for someone to answer.

Overall, riders as well as stakeholders seem appreciative of CountyRide and its transportation service, although, as one rider noted through a comment: *There are [sic] always room for improvements.*

Table 2-6: Comments from CountyRide Survey Respondents

Comments

The service is excellent and they are always on time.

I need County Ride because I am 69 1/2 years old and I have arthritis on my two legs. I find it a bit difficult to walk to the bus stop. This service helps me out.

This is a great service and a great way for my mother to get around.

I would like to get out to Carrol County to shop

The hospital sets up my rides and please keep up the great job

They don't perform a satisfactory job

Would be nice if 3 times a week for medical trips made available to

More MTA bus service to White Marsh and more taxis for senior citizens if possible.

There are always room for improvements

There used to not be much available in Baltimore, however, I am very happy that transportation is available.

The bus should go further down to Baltimore

Sometimes I wait for 2 hours for a return trip home. I am disappointed in the service

I am very pleased with the service. I have no complaints

The service is affordable , however the schedule needs to be improved and the hours could be longer

I am totally dependent on CountyRide

I used a wheel chair van

The driver, Mr. Lee was great. Give him a raise.

Cannot understand conversation talk too fast

I am very satisfied with the services!

I do not use Balto Co. public transportation. Need to appoint permanent employees.

I am very grateful for this service. I would not be able to make Dr. appointments and not be able to volunteer in "Mission of Mercy" Thank You

Thank you for the wonderful service

I appreciate your service

There have been 2 mistakes with scheduling. The trip I scheduled was cancelled and I had to call a cab.

The service will pick you up, but the driver may not get you close enough to where you need to be

Occasionally I have my ride canceled and had to re-schedule

Thank you for great help and wonderful people

County Ride is my only source for doctors and food. I ride 2-3 times per week.

This has helped me to make my Dr. appointments. It is a wonderful service

The service is wonderful

I have not used the service

I am grateful to have this service. I would not be able to make Dr. appointments

I had a car accident and this service helps me out immensely

Thank you for providing this service

The service is always there for you and is always helpful

I am impressed with the prompt and swift service

I request that the vehicles be available at a shorter notice, the service centers should pick people up before 9:00 am and should be more prompt.

There are minimal trips to shopping/grocery stores.

It would be helpful if CountyRide had holiday transportation

Keep up the good work

Chapter 3: Issues and Opportunities for CountyRide

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 identifies the key issues and opportunities for improving and developing Baltimore County's CountyRide program.

KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED FOR IMPROVEMENT

The key issues for improving CountyRide have been identified through input from riders and stakeholders as well as from the assessment of existing CountyRide services, as presented in this report's previous two chapters.

Riders report the following issues for improvement:

- The scheduling process, including long telephone hold times and the advance reservation period.
- Insufficient capacity to meet the demand.
- Limited hours of service.

These issues are shown in two key figures from the rider survey: Figure 3-1 displays responses to the rider survey question that asked riders to rate the various characteristics of CountyRide. Figure 3-2 shows the top choices that riders listed for improving CountyRide, again from the rider survey.

Stakeholders who provided information for the study echoed the frequent comments from riders regarding issues for improvement, including: long telephone hold times, the advance reservation process for trip scheduling, and limited capacity. The stakeholders also mentioned a need for extended hours of service during the day and for weekend service and for better coordination with other county transit services, including service to Carroll County. Two stakeholders mentioned that the minimum rider threshold for the shopping shuttles was too high for both the six and 12 minimum shuttles.

Figure 3-1: Responses to CountyRide Rider Survey

Figure 3-1: Please rate your satisfaction with CountyRide
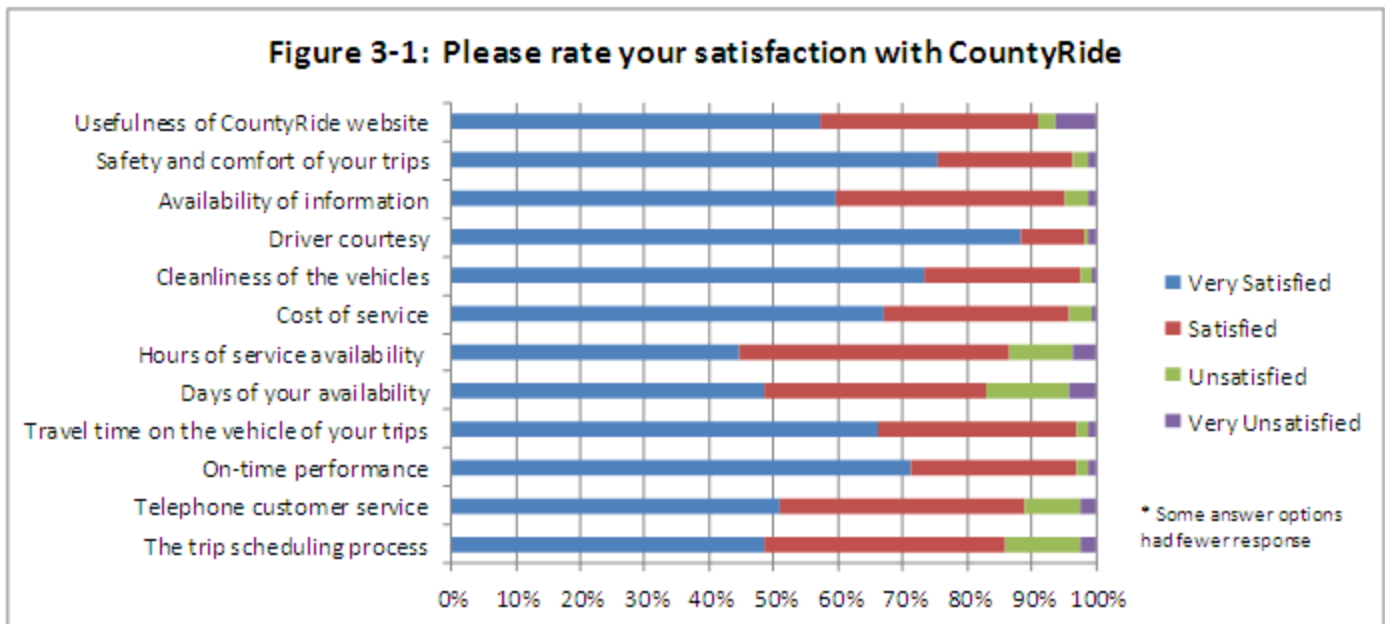
Figure 3-2: Survey Responses forTop Choice for Improving CountyRide

Figure 3-2: If CountyRide were to make service improvements, what would be your top three choices? *Answers have been summarized to reflect the top three most frequent comments in each category.*		
First Choice	**Second Choice**	**Third Choice**
Trip Scheduling	Expand hours of operations	Number of trips allowed
Number of trips allowed	Telephone Service	Telephone Service
Telephone Service	Trip Scheduling	Expanding service hours

The assessment of current CountyRide operations and performance has identified the following issues that can be considered for improvement:

- Productivity is low. CountyRide's productivity for the SSTAP service is 1.18 passenger trips per hour. Demand response programs serving seniors, particularly with service to senior centers and organized shopping trips have opportunities to group trips, which improves productivity. The productivity for the Section 5311 service is also low, at 1.17, though given the rural service area and lower population density, a lower productivity is not unexpected.
- Trip cancellations are high. A high rate of cancellations has a negative impact on performance. The rate of cancelations is likely related, in part, to the scheduling process with a two-week advance reservation policy.

- Based on a limited review of use of the Trapeze software, it does not appear that its capabilities are fully utilized. For example, while the CountyRide brochure describes a pick-up window of 20 minutes before and after the pick-up time, it does not appear that a window is used in the scheduling process in Trapeze. Use of a window during the scheduling process can help achieve greater ride sharing, which will improve productivity.
- CountyRide would like to streamline the fare payment process and eliminate cash and tickets.

CHALLENGES/CONSTRAINTS

CountyRide faces a number of challenges with its service and operations. A key challenge comes with demographic trends. Like much of the country, Baltimore County faces the coming "age wave," with increasing numbers of elderly residents. According to U.S. Census data, 14.6% of the county's 2010 population was age 65 and above, with more than 117,000 seniors age 65 and above. Estimates for 2014 show an increase in this segment of the population to almost 131,000 seniors, 15.8% of the total population.

By 2020, only five years from now, 18% of the population will be age 65 and above, with more than 149,000 seniors. CountyRide will need to find ways to serve increasing numbers of seniors who will have transportation needs with resources that are not likely to increase at the same rate as the population trends.

Other challenges come from Baltimore County's geography and population distribution between its urban and rural portions. The county is relatively large, with the third largest land area of any political subdivision in Maryland. The location of the City of Baltimore, which CountyRide does not serve except for selected medical facilities, impacts CountyRide's travel between the west and eastern parts of the county. The rural portion of the county is low-density, which reduces opportunities to group rides and increases travel times and miles, which have negative impacts on productivity and cost-efficiency. Additionally, trip patterns of rural residents in the northern part of Baltimore County include trips into Pennsylvania, which CountyRide does not serve.

CountyRide is constrained in its administrative staffing. In particular, there are only one and one-half time positions for the call-taking function. Given the level of calls, including calls for trip reservations, the telephone hold times can be lengthy.

CountyRide faces issues as a program of Baltimore County. While the transit program is fortunate given the ability of the county to provide financial resources and "over-match" available MTA grants, vehicle maintenance and technology support for CountyRide are shared with various other county departments and programs. This means that CountyRide "stands in line" with the other departments and programs for support and service.

Regarding technology, for example, Baltimore County's Office of Information Technology provides oversight and support for the transit program's scheduling/dispatch software – Trapeze. Given the breadth of responsibilities of that office for IT across Baltimore County, CountyRide may have to wait for support and upgrades to Trapeze. Given the current county-sponsored study that includes a review of Trapeze, it is not clear if CountyRide will continue to use Trapeze.

OPPORTUNITIES

Baltimore County has opportunities to improve CountyRide services to meet current needs as well as needs that are expected to increase with a growing population of seniors. Yet, given financial constraints, at least in the short term, such opportunities must recognize funding realities.

Short-term opportunities include options to tighten policies and procedures to try and improve productivity, as well as enhanced use of Trapeze to assist with productivity improvements. These include:

- Improve productivity. It should be possible to improve CountyRide's productivity – the number of passenger trips provided each service hour – with revisions to the scheduling process, with greater use of Trapeze, and with a decrease in the number of cancellations.
  - o Regarding Trapeze, for example, CountyRide should consider using a 15-minute window for scheduling trips. This should allow Trapeze to improve ride-sharing that in turn improves productivity.
- Revise policies related to scheduling and day-of-service operations.
  - o Eliminate the ability for riders to change their destination on the day-of-service. Such a policy impacts scheduling and works to the disadvantage of prescheduled service and productivity.
  - o Encourage use of tickets, and consider eliminating the option to pay the fare with cash.
- Consider implementation of group shopping trips for groceries on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. This might be explored on a pilot basis from a small number of designated senior housing complexes to specified grocery stores.
- Educate riders on CountyRide's policies and procedures to help streamline service. Such rider education needs to be a sustained effort and should address a number of issues, such as:
  - o Riders should have all their trip information ready when they call for a trip, including their ID number, the street address of their pick-up and drop-off information. This should help reduce call times that in turn will allow call-takers to respond to calls in a timelier manner.
  - o Explain to riders the impact on CountyRide operations and other riders from late cancellations.

- Address long hold times on the phone.
    - CountyRide is developing a phone "menu" with certain topics to be address with pre-recorded answers to frequently asked questions. This should be a significant improvement.
    - Encourage use of the IVR and IWR.
- Implement taxi pilot and collect data to assess its cost-effectiveness.
    - The MTA has granted funds for the taxi pilot. The objective is to use taxis to serve shorter trips, such as small group trips (up to three riders) to senior centers.
- Ensure service coordination to the extent possible.
    - Determine the feasibility of coordinating service with Carroll County. It might be possible to identify a common transfer location, allowing riders from Baltimore County to travel to Carroll County. This would require schedule coordination with the Carroll County transit system.
    - As possible, coordinate medical trips with healthcare professionals at the medical facilities that are served. This could involve coordinating with staff at dialysis centers to ensure service is more effective and efficient.
- Explore opportunities to increase service in the rural parts of the county.
    - For example, transportation for veterans is an important issue generating significant attention around the country. Maryland's major veterans' medical centers are in Baltimore City and in Perry Point, which is in Cecil County. There is a Vet Center in Dundalk and a community-based outpatient clinic in Fort Howard.[1] CountyRide could reach out to the VA facilities in Dundalk and Fort Howard to assess whether there are transportation needs from veterans living in the rural parts of the county to access services at the two facilities. There may also be needs for veterans living in the rural parts of the county to access the Medical Center in Baltimore.
    - CountyRide serves the Hereford Senior Center, which is open only one day per week. CountyRide might ensure that seniors attending that center know that CountyRide is available for trips other than just to the Senior Center.

Opportunities for the longer term involve increased capacity to meet transportation needs that exist today given the constrained capacity as well as needs that are expected to increase given demographic trends.

- Increase capacity by adding vehicles and service hours with the CountyRide dedicated fleet.
    - Add capacity to serve seniors and individuals with disabilities in the urbanized portion of the county.

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[1] Information from the VA describes proposed changes to the Fort Howard VA Campus: http://www.maryland.va.gov/hot_topics/construction/construction.asp#fh

- o Depending on ridership demand from the rural part of the county, add capacity to meet increased trip needs. Assess trip patterns to determine if flex route service would be more effective than demand response service..
- Depending on the results of the taxi pilot, add capacity by implementing a taxi subsidy program. Consider use of a swipe card technology for fare payment and trip monitoring. With a user-side subsidy program, there would not be a need for the taxi companies to have and administer a drug and alcohol testing program.
- Lengthen the service day to serve trip needs in the late afternoon.
- Add staff to address the call-taking function. While efforts to encourage use of the IVR and IWR should ease the telephone hold times, there remains a need to have individuals assisting riders with trip scheduling. This need will increase as ridership demand increases.

Chapter 4: Options and Alternatives for Improvement

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 presents options and alternatives developed through the TDP study process for Baltimore County to consider for improving and developing the CountyRide transportation program. CountyRide is clearly valued by its riders, based on the study's rider survey and input from stakeholders. And the fact that demand exceeds available capacity speaks both to CountyRide's important role in the county for those residents – particularly seniors – who rely on the service as well as the need to consider options to expand service to meet the demand.

In addition to options for improvement, this memo also includes a summary write-up of the public meeting held on November 23, 2015, where we presented the options and alternatives proposed in this chapter, which were then discussed by the meeting attendees.

The previous chapters in this report document our review of current CountyRide services as well as the identification and description of other transit services available in the county, our assessment of transit needs building on demographic data, the input from stakeholders, and an analysis of the rider survey that generated more than 170 responses. A summary of the key issues as well as the opportunities for improvement has also been provided. The study efforts suggest a number of options for CountyRide to consider for improving the service over the next five to six years, as outlined and discussed in this chapter.

We note that the options presented here are a starting point for discussion and are likely to be modified moving forward, based on policies and priorities of Baltimore County decision-makers, evolving transportation needs, and available funding as well as staffing resources.

Since funding is an uncertainty, the options are provided as shorter term, when it is assumed funding is constrained, and as longer term, where additional funding support would be needed.

SHORTER TERM IMPROVEMENT OPTIONS

The shorter term options for CountyRide improvement are suggested for the first two years of the five-year TDP planning horizon. They assume no significant new costs for implementation.

At least two of the shorter-term options – addressing long telephone hold times through a phone menu and a taxi pilot– are already planned for CountyRide and are in the process of implementation.

KFH ♦ G R O U P ♦

Scheduling Process

There are a number of options to consider regarding the scheduling process.

Address Long Telephone Hold Times

Options to address the long telephone hold times for riders calling the CountyRide office recognize that the transit program has limited staff for call-taking – just one full time and one half-time position – and adding staff for this function is not likely feasible in the short run.

Two options for improvement are described below. CountyRide staff has already planned the first, with implementation expected by the start of 2016.

- CountyRide staff has developed a phone "menu" for riders which will be installed on the office phones. This menu will channel calls to appropriate staff, to voicemail, or to pre-recorded answers for common questions by pressing appropriate numbers on the telephone keypad. Currently, there are calls to the CountyRide number for various reasons, including questions about registration, questions about eligibility, etc., as well as calls to schedule trips, all of which require call-taker time. As planned, the menu will have nine choices. For example, pressing "1" will allow the caller to request a registration form, and the caller will be directed to voicemail where they can leave their name and address. Staff will later pick up the messages and send out registration forms. Additionally, pre-recorded answers to frequently asked questions about eligibility and fares will be provided by pressing another designated number on the telephone keypad. And calls for trip scheduling will have its designated number and callers will be directed to the CountyRide call-takers.

  If a caller presses the trip reservation number and then asks a routine question that should have gone to one of the other phone menu choices, we suggest that CountyRide instruct the call-takers to politely inform the caller that "this extension is for trip reservations" and then transfer the caller to the appropriate phone menu choice. In this way, callers will learn to use the appropriate choices on the phone menu.

- The script for call-takers for trip reservations could also be reviewed to encourage shorter calls. While it is important to be polite and helpful to riders when calling for trips, it is also important to recognize that overly lengthy calls that involve extraneous information impact call-takers' time for other riders calling with trip requests and add to telephone hold times for other callers. Towards this objective, the call-takers might begin their calls with such wording as: "Good morning/afternoon: may I have your full name and client ID number?"

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages:
- Call-takers will have more time to respond to calls for trip reservations.
- Calls for trip reservations may be somewhat shorter.

Disadvantages:
- Some callers will likely prefer to talk to a real person for routine information.

Cost Estimates

- No added costs.

Impacts on Performance

- Telephone hold times for trip reservations should decrease, and complaints about this issue should decrease.

Encourage Use of IVR/IWR

Encouraging riders to use the IVR and IWR to reserve trips will also help address long telephone hold times. This will require sustained outreach and education to the riders.

With the current IVR/IWR process, riders who use this technology to schedule trips are providing only a *request* for a trip, and they receive a call later to inform them if the trip is actually booked. Riders who telephone the office with a trip request, on the other hand, typically receive a booked trip. Riders have learned that they have a better chance of getting their trip if they call the office rather than use the IVR or IWR.

To address this differential, staff is considering a change so that all trip requests, through telephone calls to the office as well as through the technology, are just requests. Staff would then process all the requests later in the day, determine the best schedules using the Trapeze software, and then inform riders as to their scheduled trip. Such notification can be done via the IVR. This would eliminate the incentive for riders to call for trips rather than use the technology. As riders learn of this change, it should also address the long hold times on the telephone as more riders begin to use the IVR and IWR.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages:
- Callers using the IVR would not have to wait on the phone to make a trip request.

- Schedulers should be able to make more efficient driver schedules during the batching process in Trapeze, as all the trips are being considered together.

Disadvantages:
- Riders would no longer get a confirmed trip when calling with a trip request; they are instead providing a request for a trip, with confirmation made later in the day.
- Some callers prefer to talk to a real person to make a trip reservation.

Cost Estimates

- The IVR/IWR technology already exists. There should be no additional costs for this option.

Impacts on Performance

- Telephone hold times should decrease as more riders use the IVR/IWR.
- There may be some additional efforts at the end of the day to complete the scheduling process.

Scheduling Policies

CountyRide might consider revisions to its policy regarding the advance reservation time period. The current two-week advance notice period is identified by both riders and stakeholders as an issue. This length of time is also a factor affecting the cancellation rate.

CountyRide might consider the following:

- Provide a one-week advance reservation time period for medical appointments instead of the current two-week time period.
- Provide either a three-day or two-day advance reservation time period for other, non-medical trips, called Miscellaneous Trips in the CountyRide brochure.
- Continue to provide standing rides for riders traveling to partnership hospitals for regular appointments and for a limited time period. These standing rides form the "skeletons" for the vehicle schedules.
- Continue to allow priority scheduling for low income riders, so that they have a two-week advance reservation time period to scheduled medical trips.

CountyRide should consider eliminating the ability to change the drop-off destination on the day of service, a policy now included in the CountyRide brochure. Such same-day scheduling changes have a negative impact on productivity. We suggest that CountyRide affirm the service is advance reservation only, with same day changes allowed only for return trips from medical

appointments (as those trips sometimes run late and require a change to the pick-up time for returning the rider to his or her home).

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages include:
- The trip priorities are maintained with this option, with riders traveling to the partnership hospitals for regular appointments receiving the highest priority with the ability to schedule standing rides, low income riders receive the next highest priority for their medical trips, other riders with medical trip needs have third priority, and riders traveling for non-medical appointments have the lowest priority.
- Riders with medical trip needs do not have to book trips two weeks in advance. They should be sure of their plans when scheduling one week out rather than two weeks out.
- Riders who wish a trip for a "Miscellaneous Trip" will only need two or three day advance notice and should be more sure of their plans.
- There will be less need for stand-by service as there will be fewer cancellations.
- Without last minute changes to riders' trip destinations, the driver schedules will remain as created by Trapeze and the CountyRide schedulers, which will ensure more productive service.

Disadvantages:
- Given the constrained capacity with more demand for service than can be served, riders will still need to call as soon as their scheduling window opens to make their trip request.
- Riders will have to adjust to the elimination of the ability to change their destination on the day of service.

Cost Estimates

- Minor costs will be needed to revise the CountyRide brochure and print new copies. Staff time will be needed to change the information on the website.

Impacts on Performance

- There will be fewer cancellations. While cancellations are a reality of advance reservation demand response services, they have an impact on performance. Once trips are reserved and placed on schedules, they occupy capacity within the system. Subsequent requests for trips have to be placed around these trips and this impacts available times for subsequently scheduled trips. When trips are cancelled, they create "holes" in the schedule. Some of the "holes" can be filled, and CountyRide is able to provide some same-day trips, but the scheduling software has less time and opportunity to optimize the schedules and this impacts productivity.

Research and transit industry experience show that the longer advance reservation time period of 14 days affects the cancellation rate, as riders find over the time period that their trip plans change, for example, riders may find a different transportation mode for their trip such as a family member who is able to provide the trip.

- Without same-day changes to trip destinations, the service will maintain its advance-scheduled sequencing of trips and that will help preserve the scheduled productivity.

Reduce Cancellations on the Center Connection Service

Another option for the scheduling process and to address the rate of cancellations is to ensure that the Senior Centers assume greater responsibility for scheduling the Center Connection service. This program provides guaranteed transportation to eight Senior Centers in the county. These are larger centers with more demand for service. It is reported that this service typically experiences a cancellation rate higher than the other service types. To address this, CountyRide needs to work with the Senior Centers and educate them on the importance of determining which riders (and their pick-up locations) are traveling to the Senior Center on each day of the guaranteed service and to convey that information to CountyRide by a predetermined time, for example, by at least one day before each service day. This would allow CountyRide scheduling staff to develop efficient schedules for the Center and minimize late and same-day cancellations.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages:
- There will be fewer cancellations as well as late and same-day cancellations for the Center Connection service.

Disadvantages:
- There would be new responsibility placed on the Senior Center staff to confirm the transportation needs before each service day.

Cost Estimates

- There should be no significant costs for this option.

Impacts on Performance

- Fewer cancellations which in turn should allow CountyRide to operate more efficient schedules, benefitting productivity.

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Educate Riders on Policies and Procedures

By design, demand response transportation programs rely on their riders to help make the service efficient. For example, riders need to be ready when the vehicle arrives to decrease the dwell time at pick-ups; riders should have all the pertinent information on their trips including full addresses of pick-up and drop off locations when they make trip reservations to ensure complete and accurate information for the trip; riders should not cancel trips at the last minute as this likely means another rider has been denied a trip; and so forth.

Such a partnership between the riders and the transportation program requires rider education. This needs to be a sustained effort, not a one- or two-time event. Such education can include reminders to riders through the CountyRide newsletter, periodic presentations at Senior Centers, and "tips" to riders that can be included on the pre-recorded information that riders hear when they call CountyRide or when they are put on hold. Such "tips" should be changed periodically to keep the information fresh. For example, there might be a "tip" of the month that is featured and relayed to riders.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages:
- With ongoing efforts to educate riders, the riders should become aware of and understand the importance of following CountyRide policies and practices and how their adherence helps make the service a better service for all riders.
- To the extent that riders adhere to the policies and practices, dwell times at pick-up locations may be decreased, calls for trip reservations may be somewhat shorter, and riders will understand and may better appreciate their individual role in making CountyRide an effective transportation service.

Disadvantages:
- No disadvantages.

Cost Estimates

- There should be no additional costs.

Impacts on Performance

- Impacts on performance will be very small on an individual trip basis but collectively, over the entire CountyRide system, improved adherence to the program's policies and procedures by the riders will yield benefits to productivity to the extent that dwell times may decrease and late cancellations reduced.

- Call times may decrease slightly should riders be fully prepared with all their trip information when they call, and this may help reduce the telephone hold times and help ensure accurate trip information for the scheduling process and for trip delivery.

Review of CountyRide's Computerized Scheduling/Dispatch System

CountyRide currently uses the Trapeze scheduling/dispatch system. This technology is being reviewed as part of a current Baltimore County study that is assessing technology used across various departments and programs. Concomitant with that study, CountyRide has expressed interest in considering other scheduling/dispatch software products and assessing whether there are alternatives that may be more compatible with CountyRide's size and needs. Towards this end, the county has received funding in FY 2016 for a technology upgrade, which is focused on swipe cards for rider payment but also includes routing/scheduling capabilities. Since that technology upgrade will require a competitive procurement, it remains worthwhile for CountyRide to review options for a computerized scheduling/dispatch system.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages:
- A structured and thorough assessment of potential scheduling/dispatch software products will help CountyRide determine the software that is most suitable for its size and needs.

Disadvantages:
- There are no real disadvantages to reviewing options for CountyRide's scheduling/ dispatch software.

Cost Estimates

- There should be no new costs involved in a review and assessment of software products.

Impacts on Performance

- Any impacts on performance would depend on decisions made for the scheduling/ dispatch software.

Enhanced Use of Trapeze

In the shorter term, while CountyRide has the Trapeze software, CountyRide should pursue expanded and enhanced use of the software's many features and capabilities. While this study included only a limited review of its use, it appears that enhanced use of Trapeze may benefit

CountyRide's operation. For example, use of a defined pick-up window for the scheduling process may allow Trapeze to produce more efficient schedules with greater ride-sharing. This would involve providing a pick-up window to the riders for their trip reservations, for example, a 15-minute window, and allow Trapeze to move trips within that window during the scheduling process. A rider would be given a 15-minute window in which to expect the vehicle to arrive, rather than a defined time.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages:
- Enhanced use of Trapeze should allow the development and operation of more productive schedules.

Disadvantages:
- Riders would have to adjust to having a pick-up window rather than an exact time for their pick-up.

Cost Estimates

- There will be some costs for Trapeze training to ensure effective use of the software and its "tools" for scheduling. Trapeze is able to provide training. A more cost effective option could be use of consulting assistance from a consultant skilled with the scheduling/dispatching software.

Impacts on Performance

- Enhanced use of the capabilities of Trapeze should lead to more productive schedules.

Group Shopping Trips

CountyRide now provides group shopping trips on a monthly basis, and these trips are provided to a large number of Senior Centers and senior housing facilities. Providing the opportunity for more frequent group shopping trips, for example weekly or bi-weekly, may be an option to serve some of the "Miscellaneous" trips that riders now take and would benefit the program's performance with more shared riding. This option must be balanced with the current number of group trips now provided and in consideration of the demand for medical trips.

This option could be tested by providing a selected number of pre-arranged group trips from certain senior housing complexes to designated grocery stores for a six or 12-month basis. The

option would require organization of the trips, either by CountyRide or by someone at the senior housing facility.

Should the option be feasible and move beyond pilot status, it may be possible to arrange financial support from the grocery store(s). There are various examples in communities around the country where the grocery store or grocery store parent organization provides funding support to the transit agency for the routine group trips of seniors who come to shop at their store.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages:
- Riders at the pilot sites would have the option to go to the grocery store on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

Disadvantages:
- Riders would be transported to a designated grocery store which may not be their preferred store.
- Any new group shopping trip would be competing for capacity within the current constrained capacity environment of CountyRide.

Cost Estimates

- If CountyRide uses one of its existing vehicles, there should be no additional operating costs.

Impacts on Performance

- With more group riding, productivity will improve. If the pilot is successful, CountyRide might consider expanding the program and adding capacity in the longer term.
- Use of capacity for a scheduled group trip will impact capacity for other trips. To mitigate this, the group trips should be scheduled during a less busy time when capacity is needed to serve medical trips.

Fare Payment

There are several options in the shorter term regarding fare payment, as CountyRide would like to move away from cash and tickets.

- The most straightforward option would be to accept only tickets for fare payment and eliminate the option for cash payment.

- A second option would encourage use of tickets rather than cash by providing a greater discount for the purchase of ticket books. Currently, a ticket book provides six tickets for a cost of $15. The one-way fare is one ticket, with a value of $2.50, or cash of $3.00. This option suggests that CountyRide sell two ticket books for $25 (rather than $30), which would mean each ticket costs $2.08, almost one dollar less than the cash fare. To provide an even greater incentive, the cash fare could be increased at the same time, for example, to $3.25 or $3.50.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages:
- Either an elimination or decrease in the use of cash for payment of CountyRide fares would result in less administrative effort to account for and reconcile cash fares.

Disadvantages:
- The disadvantage to the no cash option would initially be for riders who use cash. These riders would need to ensure the purchase of tickets for their trips.

Cost Estimates

- Without any increase in the fares, either for tickets or cash, there will be a loss of farebox revenues. With less or no cash to account for, there will be somewhat less administrative time to reconcile the cash fares. This is not likely to impact staffing costs.

Impacts on Performance

- Depending on which option might be selected, there could be a decrease in farebox recovery.

Rural Service

CountyRide service to the rural portions of the county, particularly for the general public, was identified in the prior TDP as an issue and continues to be an issue today. Despite some outreach in the past, there appears to be limited demand from the general public in the rural parts of Baltimore County. It is not clear if this is due to limited transportation needs or lack of knowledge about CountyRide.

One option to better serve the rural areas would be to target veterans living in rural Baltimore County. As noted in Chapter 3, transportation for veterans is an issue of significant interest around the country, and many transit agencies, and other public and non-profit organizations,

are reaching out to serve veterans.[1] Research has found that many of the younger veterans who have served in the recent conflicts in the Middle East returned to a bleak job market and may have difficulty with the expenses of owning and insuring a vehicle if they have not yet found employment. And veterans from prior wars are aging and may have had to stop driving. Census data shows that Baltimore County has approximately 58,000 veterans.[2]

This option suggests that CountyRide reach out specifically to veterans' facilities, including the Vet Center in Dundalk, newly opened in 2011, and there is a community-based outpatient clinic (CBOC) in Fort Howard. Figure 4-1 shows the various VA facilities in Baltimore County. Staff at these facilities may appreciate knowing that CountyRide is an option for veterans with transportation needs in the rural part of the county.

Figure 4-1 also shows the locations of American Job Centers in the county. Input received during the study's public meeting, discussed in more detail at the end of this chapter, suggested that outreach related to CountyRide service in the rural parts of the county also include outreach to the American Job Centers. These centers provide employment and training services for those seeking employment.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages:
- The VA facilities would learn of a new transportation resource that is able to provide door-to-door transportation for the veterans they serve.

Disadvantages:
- To the extent that this option creates additional ridership demand, current riders would be competing with new riders for service.

Cost Estimates

- There should be no new costs for this option, assuming any service would be provided with existing resources.

Impacts on Performance

- Without any additional capacity in the short term, any new trip demand created by such outreach adds to the current demand level.

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[1] Among various publications addressing transportation for veterans is the recent TCRP Report 164, *Community Tools To Improve Transportation Options for Veterans, Military Service Members and Their Families*, at http://www.trb.org/Publications/Blurbs/170466.aspx
[2] http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/24/24005.html

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- Service to the rural portions of the county is less productive than in the more urbanized service area, given the lower density of demand and longer trip distances for each trip.

Figure 4-1: Veterans Administration Facilities and American Job Centers in Baltimore County
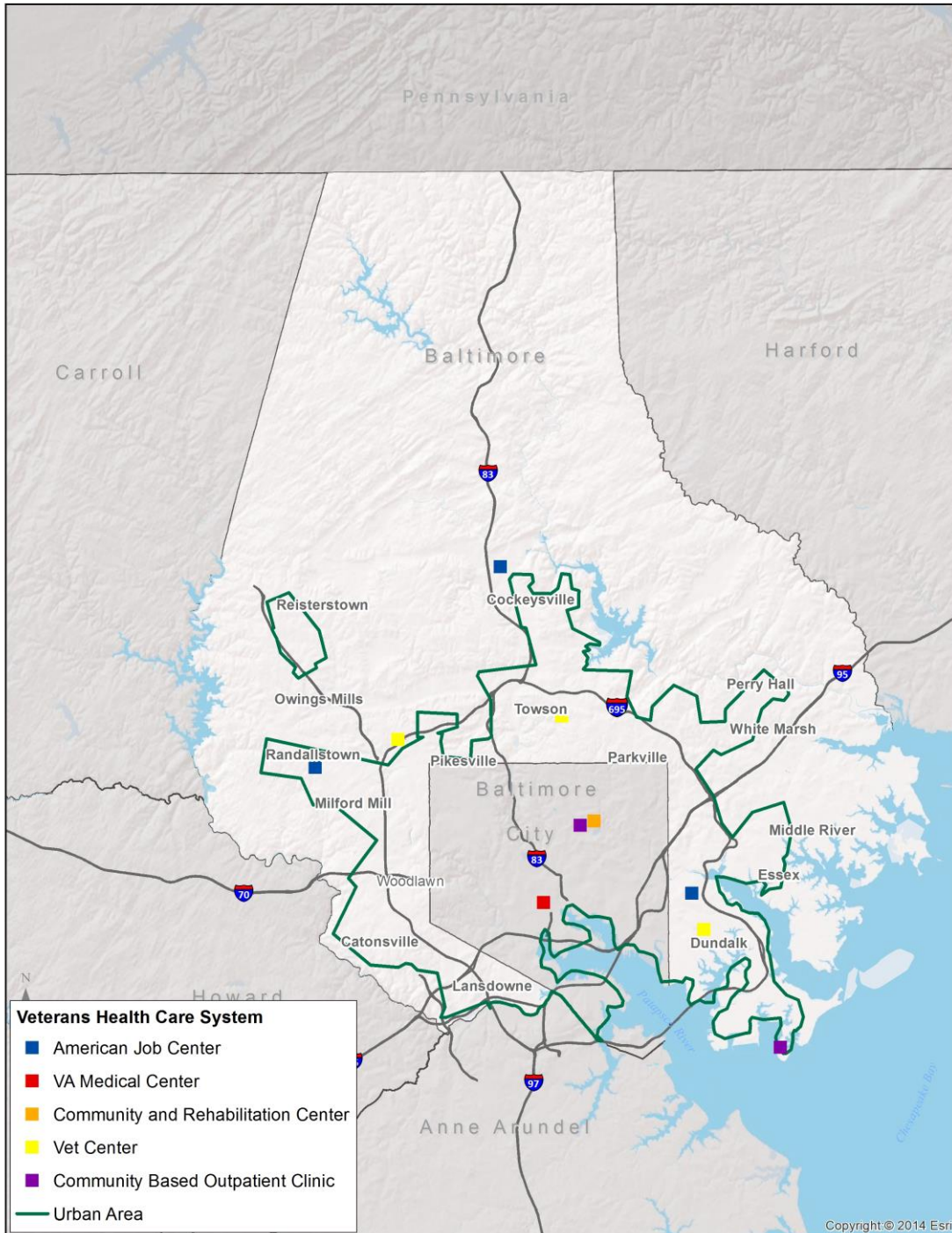
Taxi Pilot

CountyRide has plans to implement a taxi pilot. The plans call for taxis to be used to provide shorter trips to selected Senior Centers. The MTA has provided grant funding for this option, and CountyRide is in the process of a procurement to implement the pilot. The county reports that it has had discussions with a taxi company vendor, although it is not clear when the pilot might be implemented.

One of the parameters for the taxi pilot is the payment method. With CountyRide's objective of moving away from cash (and tickets), one suggestion is to accept only tickets for the taxi service. As a pilot service, CountyRide has somewhat more flexibility with policies and procedures.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages:
- The pilot will provide additional capacity without the need to acquire additional vehicles.
- Depending on the success of the pilot, CountyRide should consider more permanent use of taxis to provide additional capacity. Should the county move toward the swipe card technology for fare payment,[3] use of taxi service is greatly simplified with the built-in data capabilities and audit functions.
- Should the fare policy for the taxi pilot allow tickets only:
    - Eliminating cash fares would simplify the payment process for the taxi pilot.
    - Taxi drivers would need to accept only tickets, simplifying procedures for the drivers and taxi company.
    - A policy of no tipping by the riders would be easier to enforce.

Disadvantages:
- Taxi service may not be as specialized as CountyRide service. For example, drivers typically do not receive the same level of training as drivers of publicly-operated demand response programs.
- With a no cash policy, riders would need to ensure they have tickets before their trips.

Cost Estimates

- CountyRide has secured $50,000 for the taxi pilot in grant funding.

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[3] CountyRide's grant application for FY16 includes a capital funding request to acquire technology that includes fare payment via swipe cards and back office software for reconciliation, which would eliminate the need for cash and tickets.

Impacts on Performance

- CountyRide will have additional capacity with a focus on serving shorter trips. This is a logical approach since taxis charge predominately by distance, with mileage charges calculated by the taximeter.
- If the policy for fare payment allows tickets only, administrative efforts would be simplified as there would be no need to coordinate with the taxi drivers/company to account for the cash fares received.

Enhanced Technology for Fare Payment and Routing/Scheduling

To move entirely away from cash and tickets, CountyRide would like to implement swipe card technology. CountyRide has received grant approval in FY 2016 to acquire the swipe card technology, and at least one option for the swipe card technology includes a routing/scheduling module. This module may be a replacement for the current Trapeze system. This project is referred to as a "computer system upgrade" in CountyRide's FY2016 ATP.

Given that CountyRide is implementing a taxi pilot, an advantage of the swipe card technology is that it can be used for taxi trips. The taxi vehicles typically have the in-vehicle equipment to read the cards (their taxi meter that can read credit cards), so no new hardware would be needed. The technology provider would provide "firmware" that allows the in-vehicle hardware to read and process the swipe cards, and also provide the back office software for processing the data and payment to the taxi companies. Such technology provides comprehensive data and audit features. Transit systems that use such technology claim significant advantages with the technology over the use of paper vouchers or tickets.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages:
- Elimination of cash and tickets for fare payment.
- Reduced administrative time to reconcile cash and tickets with ridership figures.

Disadvantages:
- Requires implementation efforts and attention.
- Riders would have to get used to the new system and would have to plan ahead before making trips to ensure adequate funds available for their trip payment, whether using swipe cards or pre-paid accounts.

Cost Estimates

- As included in the FY16 grant application to the MTA, total costs for the technology are $165,040. The county's match at 10% of the total is identified as $16,504.

- Improved capabilities for fare accounting and reconciliation.
- After drivers and riders adjust to the new payment scheme, there should be somewhat reduced dwell times at rider pick-up locations which, over many passenger trips, will allow more capacity for trips and improved productivity.

LONGER-TERM IMPROVEMENTS

Increase Capacity

CountyRide needs additional capacity to meet ridership demand. With some revisions and improvements to the trip reservation and scheduling policies and practices including enhanced use of Trapeze, CountyRide should be able to meet more trip demand with existing resources. However, such increase will be incremental rather than substantial.

With current demand and demand that is expected to grow with demographic trends, CountyRide will need to add capacity to its fleet and service hours in the longer term. Such an increase can be accomplished by adding vehicles and service hours, by implementing a user-side taxi subsidy program, or by a combination of both options.

Increase Capacity: Increase CountyRide Fleet and Service Hours

This option suggests that CountyRide increase its service by 10-15% by year four or five of the TDP planning period. This would add two to three service vehicles and approximately 3,600 to 5,400 annual vehicle service hours.[4] The added vehicles could potentially be sedans rather than transit vehicles. CountyRide's vehicles have been purchased with county funding, with the exception of two in the current fleet.

Sedans can be effective for demand response vehicles, and can be easier for some seniors to get in and out of compared to transit vehicles. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) allows the use of non-accessible vehicles for demand response programs as long as the service, when viewed in its entirety, provides equivalent service for people with disabilities. Smaller vehicles are not only less costly to acquire, they are less costly to operate and maintain. However, given CountyRide's current fleet mix, this option assumes acquisition of similar transit vehicles rather than sedans.

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[4] This assumes one vehicle in service provides 1,800 vehicle service hours per year.

Advantages:
- Improved capability for CountyRide to provide trips for riders, both current riders and expected new riders.

Disadvantages:
- Increased capital costs to acquire the vehicles.
- Increased operating costs.

Cost Estimates

- Estimated capital cost per vehicle (assuming transit vehicles similar to the current vehicles) range from $57,000-$71,000.[5] Costs for two vehicles are then $114,000-$142,000; for three vehicles, $171,000-$213,000.
- Estimated operating cost per vehicle, assuming 1800 annual vehicle service hours and a fully allocated cost per service hour of $56.48,[6] is $101,664. Operating costs for two vehicles would be $203,328; for three vehicles, $304,992.

Impacts on Performance

- Increased capital and operating costs.
- Increased capacity to meet ridership demand. Assuming a productivity of 1.5[7] and 1,575 annual revenue hours of service,[8] CountyRide should be able to serve an additional 2,362 passenger trips per vehicle added to service for the assumed estimated annual service and revenue hours. For two new vehicles, this would be an estimated 4,725 additional annual passenger trips; for three new vehicles, 7,086 additional annual passenger trips.

Increase Capacity: User-Side Subsidy Taxi Program

CountyRide might consider implementation of a user-side taxi subsidy program. Such an option becomes particularly feasible if CountyRide adopts swipe card technology for fare payment. Acquisition of this technology is included as a capital request in CountyRide's FY16 grant application to the MTA. Acquisition would require a competitive procurement process, and that would require time and administrative effort.

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[5] Per MTA information in the FY16 grant application materials; costs depend on whether vehicle is gas or diesel engine.
[6] Cost per hour determined based on FY14 total operating costs shown on Form 2a for the FY16 grant application plus the county funds provided for FY14 to support CountyRide' operation.
[7] A productivity of 1.5 passenger trips per hour is a 27% increase over the current productivity of 1.18, but should be achievable with changes to scheduling policies and practices and an increase in group rides.
[8] Estimation has assumed 7 revenue service hours per service day, calculated as a total of 8 vehicle service hours per service day minus non-revenue time allocated for pre-trip inspection, post-trip inspection, and lunch.

Significantly, this technology would give CountyRide a major advantage for a user-side taxi program compared to the prior taxi subsidy program. The swipe card technology eliminates the use of cash and tickets and provides comprehensive data on each trip, including the locations of both the pick-up and drop off address (with GPS technology), time stamps of the pick-up and drop-off addresses, the length of the trip in miles, and the cost per the meter. It should also be possible to use the technology to create a defined service area, should this be desired, so that the taxi funds can only be used in Baltimore County and Baltimore City. The technology can provide an electronic "fence" around the desired service area. The technology provides many advantages for a taxi subsidy program compared to the use of tickets or vouchers; it is very difficult for drivers or riders to misuse the program with the technology.

The subsidies for riders could be configured in various ways, which is another advantage of the technology. For example, the country might allocate a set dollar figure for the program for the first year. Each month, riders could have the option to "buy" a set dollar amount for taxi use on their swipe card at a 50% discount.

Assume the county allocated $200,000 for the first year for the subsidy program. Assume that each rider could purchase $40 of taxi use per month for $20. The rider would buy the taxi value, via check, credit card, etc. The funds would be loaded onto the rider's swipe card. Each rider could then determine how to use that $40. For example, a four mile trip costs about $10.40 at current taxi meter rates (waiting time charges not included), thus $40 would provide for close to four trips of about four miles.

Using these figures, CountyRide would be able to sell 10,000 monthly allotments of $40 each ($200,000 divided by the county's subsidy of $20). Should all 3,300 active CountyRide users decided to buy the $40 each month, the annual total of $200,000 will last only several months. But it is not likely that all active users will participate, and those that do may not participate each month. The advantage of having a ceiling on the subsidy program is that CountyRide knows its maximum exposure for the year. Depending on experience with the program and its effectiveness, CountyRide could revise its funding for the program and other parameters as well.

Other variations for the taxi subsidy program are possible. For example, the subsidy levels might be different depending on the rider's income level. Those with lower income might pay $10 for $40 worth of taxi use while those with higher income might pay $30 for the same $40 worth of taxi use.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages:
- Increased capacity to serve trips without having to purchase any vehicles.
- Riders would have a same-day trip option.

- Riders would be able to use their subsidized taxi value as they determine: several shorter trips or fewer longer trips.

Disadvantages:
- Increased administrative costs for a new program.
- If the program is popular, the allocated annual funds may not be sufficient to last a full year.

Cost Estimates

- Costs will depend on the county's decisions regarding design of the program and the level of subsidy provided to riders.

Impacts on Performance

- Improved ability to meet trip demand without an investment in new vehicles and ongoing maintenance costs.

Lengthen the Service Day

One of the improvements identified by riders as well as stakeholders is an increase to the service day. Currently, CountyRide tries to schedule riders' return trips in the afternoon no later than about 3:30 p.m. or 4 p.m. Adding more service hours in the afternoon would allow riders more flexibility in scheduling their medical and other trips.

To accommodate ridership demand patterns which may vary, CountyRide is able to alter drivers' schedules through what the transit program calls flex routes. This gives the transit program some flexibility to meet trip demand for both early morning trips and afternoon trips. Based on rider input through the survey and stakeholder comments, it appears that there remains demand for service in the later afternoon.

This option suggests that CountyRide lengthen the service day so that there is capacity for trip pick-ups as late as 4:30 p.m. and 5 p.m. Given that demand for service is constrained at currently available capacity, this option would be combined with the option described above of increasing capacity with the CountyRide fleet. For example, should two new vehicles be added to service, the driver shifts might be scheduled from 10:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. This would allow for revenue service hours between 10:45 am and 6:15 pm (minus lunch breaks).

Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages:
- A longer service day will give riders somewhat more flexibility to schedule going and return trips in the afternoon.

Disadvantages:
- Ride times in the late afternoon will likely be longer given traffic during the late afternoon/early evening peak commute travel times.

Cost Estimates

- Cost estimates for this option are the same as for the option above – Increase Capacity with CountyRide Fleet and Service Hours.
- The slower speeds for the CountyRide vehicles during the later afternoon hours with greater traffic congestion will impact fuel economy, which will result in slightly increased fuel costs and this impact will depend on costs for fuel.

Impacts on Performance

- Improved ability to meet riders' trip needs for later afternoon service.
- Productivity during the later afternoon hours will be less than during off-peak hours because of slower speeds and resulting longer travel times which negatively impact productivity.

PUBLIC MEETING

The TDP process includes a public or community meeting to provide the opportunity for the public as well as others including riders to provide comments and input for the study. The public meeting for the CountyRide TDP meeting was publicized with an announcement in the Baltimore Sun and CountyRide reached out to the members of the CountyRide's Transportation Advisory Board to let them know about the meeting date and location.

The meeting was held on November 23, 2015 at the Bykota Senior Center and was attended by 16 interested individuals (one of whom participated via telephone). The attendees included a number of members of the Transportation Advisory Board.

The meeting presentation included a review of the efforts completed for the TDP and the options and alternatives developed for CountyRide for the five-year TDP were then presented.

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Discussion and comments after the presentation are summarized below.

- There was general consensus that the options and alternatives presented for the five-year TDP were positive.
  - o The suggestion for revisions to the advance reservation policy for trip scheduling was discussed, with several participants commented that they were good ideas.
  - o There was considerable discussion about cancellations, reasons that riders cancel trips, and ways to reduce the cancellations. There was one suggestion that riders be billed for no-shows and late cancelled trips.
  - o The importance of educating riders about CountyRide's policies and procedures was discussed, with agreement that such education is important.
  - o A participant asked if the scheduling/dispatch technology could be used to remind riders of their scheduled trips. The current software, Trapeze, does have such capability.
- It was suggested that the outreach option related to service in the rural parts of the county be expanded to include outreach to the three American Job Centers in Baltimore County. These centers provide employment and training services to job seekers and businesses. The centers are located in Randallstown, Hunt Valley and Baltimore and are shown on the map in Figure 4-1. The TDP's outreach option is intended to inform staff at these facilities and at veterans' facilities about CountyRide so they can inform those using and attending those facilities that CountyRide is a transportation option.
- A meeting participant inquired if safety was addressed in the TDP. He was advised that safety was not specifically or uniquely addressed and that it did not come up as an issue or concern during the stakeholder interviews and rider surveys.
- Having the ability to capture riders' comments on an ongoing basis was mentioned. Comment cards on the vehicles were suggested; however, county staff said that currently there is nowhere to store such cards on the vehicles.
- A longtime rider of CountyRide commented that certain new vehicles have safety concerns.
  - o The seats and the height of the armrest are awkward.
  - o They are dangerous when using the lift.
- There was discussion about the planned taxi pilot as well as the TDP's option for a taxi subsidy program.
- One participant suggested reserving vans for trips with less advance notice, for example, just a day or two. County staff indicated that this is the purpose of the taxi pilot that has been planned
- There was discussion that more resources are needed so CountyRide can meet the demand for service. It was mentioned that speaking with legislators to advocate for more resources would be helpful.

Chapter 5: Plan

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 describes a plan with revisions and improvements for Baltimore County's CountyRide transit program over an almost six-year time horizon. The plan results from a planning process initiated in June 2015 and conducted in collaboration with CountyRide staff and with MTA support.

The recommended changes and improvement projects in the plan build from an evaluation of CountyRide's current services; a comprehensive needs analysis including assessment of demographic data and stakeholder input as well as a rider survey that generated over 170 responses; an analysis of options and alternatives for improvement; and discussion of the proposed options and alternatives in a public meeting attended by , among others, CountyRide's Transportation Advisory Board members and Baltimore County staff.

The Transit Plan is organized into the following sections:

- Service plan
- Title VI analysis
- Implementation schedule
- Financial plan
- Capital plan

SERVICE PLAN

The service plan is divided into two parts – the shorter term, which is the current fiscal year and two years following, and longer term, which is the subsequent three years. While a TDP typically looks at a five-year time frame, this plan includes six years, with the first year being the current fiscal year FY16. Since the current fiscal year is half over, we have extended the plan through FY21.

For the shorter term, the service plan components focus on no-cost or minimal cost improvements, such as revisions to the scheduling policies and procedures and educating riders. Also included are two improvements already being pursued by CountyRide. These include the taxi pilot. Planning for this pilot is well underway with implementation expected within the next six months. We have placed this service in the second year of the plan.

Another improvement is referred to as a "computer system upgrade." This is a capital project, and MTA granted funding for this project in FY16. The project is described as a fare payment technology that uses swipe cards, and includes a module for routing/scheduling.

Implementation of this technology will require a competitive procurement which in turn requires lead time. For purposes of this plan, the project has been placed in FY18.

Improvement options for the longer term focus on adding capacity to meet demand for trips. These include adding capacity both through CountyRide operated service and through a taxi subsidy program.

All the options discussed below were described more fully in the previous Chapter 4.

Shorter-Term: Fiscal Years 2016, 2017 and 2018

Scheduling Process – Address Long Telephone Hold Times

There are a number of options to address the current long telephone hold times as detailed in Chapter 4. These options recognize that there will be no increased staffing in the shorter run, thus the options aim to increase the availability of call-takers to take trip requests.

- Implement CountyRide's planned phone "menu" for riders, which will channel calls to appropriate staff, to voicemail, or to pre-recorded answers for commonly-asked questions by pressing appropriate numbers on the telephone keypad. CountyRide has indicated that this should be implemented by the start of calendar year 2016.

- The script for call-takers for trip reservations should be reviewed to encourage shorter calls. Towards this objective, the call-takers might begin their calls with such wording as: "Good morning/afternoon: may I have your full name and client ID number?"

- Encourage riders to use the IVR and IWR systems to reserve trips. This will require sustained outreach and education to the riders.

Revise Scheduling Policies

Revisions to the current CountyRide scheduling policies have been designed and proposed to help CountyRide provide more productive service, and include addressing trip cancellations and same-day service changes. In particular, the current two-week advance notice period is identified by both riders and stakeholders as an issue. This two-week length of time is a factor affecting the cancellation rate.

CountyRide should consider the following:

- Provide a one-week advance reservation time period for medical appointments instead of the current two-week time period.

- Provide either a three-day or two-day advance reservation time period for other, non-medical trips, referred to as Miscellaneous Trips.
- Eliminate the ability to change the drop-off destination on the day of service
- Continue to provide standing rides for riders traveling to partnership hospitals for regular appointments. These standing rides form the "skeletons" of the vehicle schedules.
- If determined appropriate, continue to allow priority scheduling for low income riders, so that they have a two-week advance reservation time period to schedule medical trips.
- Revise the process for the Center Connection service to reduce the high rate of cancellations: each Senior Center would assign a specific person with responsibility to determine which riders (and their pick-up locations) are traveling to the Senior Center on each day of the guaranteed service and to convey that information to CountyRide by a predetermined time, for example, by at least one day before each service day..

Educate Riders on Policies and Procedures

CountyRide relies on its riders to help make the service efficient, e.g., being ready when the vehicle arrives; cancelling unneeded trips as soon as the rider knows; or having complete address information when calling for trips. This partnership between CountyRide and its riders requires rider education, which must be a sustained effort.

Review of CountyRide's Computerized Scheduling/Dispatch System

CountyRide's technology is being reviewed as part of a current Baltimore County study. At the same time, CountyRide wants to consider other scheduling/dispatch software products that might be more compatible with CountyRide's size and needs. The county has been granted funding to acquire new technology, based on a capital request for a "Computer System Upgrade."

Enhanced Use of Trapeze

CountyRide uses Trapeze for scheduling/dispatch and will this continue to be software for the immediate short term, at a minimum. CountyRide should pursue expanded and enhanced use of the software's many capabilities. Enhanced use should allow CountyRide to develop more efficient schedules and therefore more productive service.

Group Shopping Trips

CountyRide should consider if it could provide additional group shopping trips, which should satisfy some of the demand for "Miscellaneous" trips and increase productivity.

Short Term Options to Move from Cash and Tickets for Rider Fare Payment

CountyRide would like to transition its fare payment process from cash and tickets, with a more streamlined and secure process.

In the shorter term, the most straightforward option would be to accept only tickets for fare payment and eliminate the option for cash payment. A second option would encourage use of tickets rather than cash by providing a greater discount for the purchase of ticket books.

These options would reduce administrative efforts in handling and reconciling cash with ridership but will decrease fare revenues somewhat given the fare differential between a cash fare and a ticket. However, after balancing the savings from decreased administrative efforts with somewhat reduced fare revenue impacts, the estimated overall cost impacts are not expected to be significant.

Market Rural Service to Veterans' Facilities and American Job Centers

To increase service in the rural portion of the county, CountyRide should reach out to veterans' facilities, including the Vet Center in Dundalk, newly opened in 2011. Input from the November 2015 community meeting suggested that CountyRide should reach out to the county's three American Job Centers. The objective is to ensure these facilities know about CountyRide and its transportation services which in turn may lead to service requests and help ensure that CountyRide meets its Section 5311 funding obligations to serve the rural portions of the county.

Implement Taxi Pilot

CountyRide expects to implement the planned taxi pilot in the coming months, depending upon contract negotiations with an interested taxi company. One of the parameters for the taxi pilot is the payment method. With CountyRide's objective of moving away from cash (and tickets), one suggestion is to accept only tickets for the taxi service. Not only will this facilitate fare reconciliation but it will make it easier to enforce a no tipping policy for the taxi trips. As a pilot service, CountyRide has somewhat more flexibility with policies and procedures. The costs for the taxi pilot were included in CountyRide's FY16 ATP (therefore part of the total $1.99 M budget shown for FY16 in Table 5-1).

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Table 5-1: Conceptual Operations Financial Plan

	Shorter Term			*Longer Term*		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Projects	**FY 2016**	**FY 2017**	**FY 2018**	**FY 2019**	**FY 2020**	**FY 2021**
FY16 Operating Budget with Inflationary Increase[1]	$ 1,991,624	$ 2,011,540	$ 2,031,656	$ 2,051,972	$ 2,072,492	$ 2,093,217
Shorter Term Improvements						
Scheduling Process: Address Long Telephone Hold Times	n/m [2]					
Revised Scheduling Policies	n/m	n/m				
Educate Riders on Policies and Procedures	n/m	n/m	n/m	n/m	n/m	n/m
Review Computerized Scheduling/Dispatch System	n/m					
Enhance Use of Trapeze	n/m	n/m				
Pilot Additional Group Shopping Trips		n/m				
Fare Payment: Accept Tickets Only		n/m	n/m			
Market Rural Service:Veterans' Facilities &American Job Centers		n/m	n/m			
Taxi Pilot[3]						
Computer System Upgrade - See Capital Plan						
Longer Term Improvements						
Increase Capacity with CountyRide Vehicles & Service Hours[4]				$ 314,233	$ 317,376	$ 320,549
Increase Capacity with Taxi Subsidy Program					$ 200,000	$ 200,000
Lengthen the Service Day Using Added Capacity[5]						
Total New Operating Expenses	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 314,233	$ 517,376	$ 520,549
Subtotal Proposed Transit Operating Expenses	$ 1,991,624	$ 2,011,540	$ 2,031,656	$ 2,366,205	$ 2,589,867	$ 2,613,766

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Table 5-1: Conceptual Operations Financial Plan (continued)

	Shorter Term			Longer Term		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Anticipated Funding Sources for Operating[6]	**FY 2016**	**FY 2017**	**FY 2018**	**FY 2019**	**FY 2020**	**FY 2021**
Federal						
Section 5311	$122,712	$122,712	$122,712	$122,712	$122,712	$122,712
Subtotal	*$122,712*	*$122,712*	*$122,712*	*$122,712*	*$122,712*	*$122,712*
State						
Section 5311	$40,904	$40,904	$40,904	$40,904	$40,904	$40,904
SSTAP	$395,836	$395,836	$395,836	$395,836	$395,836	$395,836
Subtotal	*$436,740*	*$436,740*	*$436,740*	*$436,740*	*$436,740*	*$436,740*
Local						
Section 5311	$112,186	$112,186	$112,186	$112,186	$112,186	$112,186
SSTAP	$406,747	$406,747	$406,747	$406,747	$406,747	$406,747
Passenger Fares[7]	$72,700	$73,427	$74,161	$74,903	$75,652	$76,408
New Passenger Fares from Added Services[8]				$12,164	$112,165	$112,165
Additional Funds	$840,539	$859,728	$879,109	$1,200,754	$1,323,666	$1,346,808
Subtotal	*$1,432,172*	*$1,452,088*	*$1,472,204*	*$1,806,753*	*$2,030,415*	*$2,054,314*
Total Projected/Proposed Operating Revenues	**$1,991,624**	**$2,011,540**	**$2,031,656**	**$2,366,205**	**$2,589,867**	**$2,613,766**

Table 5-1: Conceptual Operations Financial Plan (continued)

Notes:

[1]Operating Budget figure for FY16 is the Total Expenses in the FY16 ATP and adjusted for a 1% annual inflation rate each subsequent year. (The 2015 inflation rate is less than 1%.)

[2] n/m = no additional cost or only minor additional cost.
[3]Cost for taxi pilot included with FY16 operating budget: $50,000 for taxi use and $30,000 for pilot coordination efforts.

[4] Costs for this option build from the estimate in Chapter 4, and increased to account for inflation.

[5]No operating costs shown for lengthening the service day; this would be implemented when the three new service vehicles are introduced and costs are included in the operating costs shown for the new vehicles.

[6]Federal, state, and local funding shown for FY16 are those provided in CountyRide's FY16 ATP for FY16. Funding levels are held constant over the plan years.

[7] Fare revenue for FY16 from the FY16 ATP. Fare revenues for FY17 through FY21 increased by 1% due to productivity increase with plan's no cost/minimal cost improvements.

[8] New fare revenue for FY19, 20 and 21 account for increased service: for FY19, 20 and 21, fare revenues increased for additional 5,400 service hours and assumed 3.65% farebox recovery, as per FY16. For FY20 and 21, farebox revenues also include 50% farebox recovery for taxi subsidy program, which assumes riders get a 50% discount for the program.

Computer System Upgrade, Including Swipe Card Technology for Fare Payment

As described above, CountyRide received funding in FY16 for new technology that uses swipe cards for fare payment and includes routing/scheduling capabilities. With the lead time needed to conduct a competitive procurement, implementation of this improvement is months away. For purposes of the plan, it is included in FY18. Total cost for the upgrade is $165,040, with federal and state grants covering 90% of that total. Funding for this improvement is shown later in this chapter in Table 5-3.

Longer-Term: Fiscal Years 2019, 2020 and 2021

Increase Capacity with Added CountyRide Vehicles and Service Hours

Given demand for service, CountyRide should increase its service. This improvement adds three vehicles in service and an additional approximately 5,400 annual vehicle service hours.[1]

Estimated capital costs for this expansion with three vehicles similar to those in the current fleet are $171,633.[2] Estimated annual operating costs, assuming a fully-allocated cost per service hour of $56.48,[3] is $304,992.

Assuming this improvement is implemented in Fiscal Year 2019, the cost is estimated at $314,233, which results from increasing $304,992 by an annual 1% to account for inflation. Farebox revenues from this additional service are estimated at the same farebox recovery as shown in the FY16 ATP of 3.65%.

Increase Capacity with a User-Side Subsidy Taxi Program

CountyRide can increase capacity with a user-side taxi subsidy program. Such an option becomes particularly feasible assuming CountyRide adopts swipe card technology for fare payment.

This plan suggests that the taxi subsidy program be funded at $200,000 annually. This amount can be assessed after several years to determine ridership levels and effectiveness. At a minimum, the amount should be re-evaluated should there be an increase in the taxi rate structure. It is important to have an annual ceiling on the subsidy program so that CountyRide knows its maximum exposure for the year.

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[1] This assumes one vehicle in service provides 1,800 vehicle service hours per year.
[2] Per MTA's FY 2016 grant application, a 12 & 2 gas-powered vehicle costs $57,211.
[3] Cost per hour determined based on FY14 total operating costs shown on Form 2a for the FY16 grant application plus the county funds provided for FY14 to support CountyRide' operation.

Subsidies for riders could be configured in various ways, which is another advantage of a user-side subsidy program and the swipe card technology. For example, riders might be given the opportunity to buy each month a certain amount of funding for taxi trips at a 50% discount, 67% discount or a 75% discount. The degree of subsidy will directly correspond to how long the funds will last. Another option would be the provision of a greater discount for lower income riders. The various options should be discussed by the county and will depend on policy decisions. It is reported that CountyRide's prior taxi subsidy program typically ran out of funds before the end of the fiscal year.

For purposes of the plan, it is assumed that riders receive a 50% subsidy. This translates to a 50% farebox recovery.

Lengthen the Service Day

One of the issues identified by riders as well as stakeholders is a need to increase the service day. Currently, CountyRide tries to schedule riders' return trips in the afternoon no later than about 3:30 p.m. or 4 p.m. Adding more service hours in the afternoon would give riders more flexibility in scheduling their medical and other trips.

CountyRide should lengthen the service day so that there is capacity for trip pick-ups as late as 4:30 p.m. and 5 p.m. Given that demand for service is constrained at currently available capacity, this expansion with later afternoon service becomes feasible with the expansion of CountyRide service in the plan's longer term. For example, with three new vehicles in service as proposed with this plan in FY2019, driver shifts for two of the vehicles might be 10:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. This would allow for revenue service hours between 10:45 a.m. and 6:15 p.m. (minus lunch breaks).

No additional operating costs are shown in the plan for this improvement as it would be implemented with the additional CountyRide vehicles and service hours already included in the plan.

TITLE VI ANALYSIS

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Public transportation agencies have the ability and responsibility to enhance the social and economic quality of life for people in their communities. As such, public transportation agencies must ensure that changes in services do not have a disproportionately high negative impact on below poverty or minority populations. The Title VI analysis is particularly significant for fixed route services, as changes to routes affect access for the community to the transit service.

Baltimore County's CountyRide, however, is a demand response service and thus it responds to requests from all eligible riders as appropriate. CountyRide should continue to ensure that it responds to eligible riders regardless of their race, color, or national origin.

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

The proposed projects described in the service plan are summarized below in an implementation timeline. In general, the shorter term projects correspond to the current fiscal year (FY16) and FY 2017 and 2018. The longer term are shown in FYs 19, 20 and 21. A number of the projects shown in the shorter term are underway (e.g., the telephone menu and the taxi pilot), however others will depend on staffing resources to pursue and funding availability.

Base Year FY 2016 and Year 2, FY2017 and Year 3, FY 2018

- Scheduling process: address long telephone hold times.
- Revise scheduling policies
- Educate riders on policies and procedures.
- Enhance use of Trapeze.
- Pilot additional shopping trips to improve productivity.
- Fare payment: accept tickets only.
- Market rural service to military veterans' facilities and American Job Centers
- Taxi Pilot
- Computer system upgrade: this technology enhancement includes swipe cards for rider payment and a routing/scheduling module.

Year 4 (FY 2019)

- Add three CountyRide vehicles to increase capacity. This would add 5,400 service hours.
- Plan taxi subsidy program to be implemented in FY2020 to increase capacity and serve riders' same-day trips.

Year 5 (FY2020)

- Continue added service with increased CountyRide fleet.
- Implement taxi subsidy program.

Year 6 (FY 2021)

- Continue with the added capacity with the CountyRide operated service and the taxi subsidy program.

FINANCIAL PLAN FOR OPERATIONS

Table 5-1 provides the conceptual operations financial plan for CountyRide over the plan's six-year horizon. The estimated total budget shown for each year assumes the service improvements are implemented in the year proposed with this plan.

A building block for this conceptual financial plan is the total operating budget shown in CountyRide's FY2016 ATP for the 2016 fiscal year, which is $1,991,624.

It is noted that Table 5-1 holds constant the anticipated grant funds from the MTA through Section 5311 and SSTAP over the plan's time horizon. While it is possible there may be additional grant funds available in future years, we have taken a conservative approach for the plan and assume that grant funding levels remain at the levels of FY2016.

CAPITAL PLAN

This section provides a plan for the capital projects needed to implement the plan, including vehicles and technology.

Vehicle Fleet

Fleet Size and Composition

CountyRide's vehicle fleet and the vehicle characteristics are shown in Table 5-2, including their classification according to the MTA's categories, their current age and useful life expectancy based on the MTA's standards.

In recent years, the county has purchased vehicles for CountyRide (all but two of current CountyRide have been purchased with local funds). Irrespective of funding source, the information in Table 5-2 indicating vehicles' replacement years may be useful for county planning and budgeting.

Table 5-2: Vehicle Fleet and Replacement

CountyRide Fleet Number	MTA Vehicle Classification	Model Year/ Year Placed into Service	Status as of Nov 2015	Current Age (Years)	Useful Life Expectancy per MTA Standards		Jan 2015 Mileage (per FY 2016 ATP)	Year Useful Life in Years Attained	Estimated Year Miles Used Life Attained	Recomm-ended Replace-ment Priority	Fiscal Year for Vehicle Replacement				
					Years	Miles					FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
Current Fleet															
33	Light Duty Small Bus	2003	Retired	12	6	200,000	202,643	2009	2014	already replaced					
54	Light Duty Small Bus	2004	Back-up/ Spare	11	6	200,000	174,759	2010	2016	already replaced					
55	Light Duty Small Bus	2004	Retired	11	6	200,000	177,665	2010	2016	already replaced					
61	Light Duty Small Bus	2005	Active	10	6	200,000	187,638	2011	2016	highest - recommend replacing with new vehicle in procurement					
62	Light Duty Small Bus	2005	Active	10	6	200,000	155,804	2011	2018	highest - recommend replacing with new vehicle in procurement					
63	Light Duty Small Bus	2005	Active	10	6	200,000	179,553	2011	2016	highest - recommend replacing with new vehicle in procurement					
64	Light Duty Small Bus	2005	Active	10	6	200,000	179,464	2011	2016	highest - recommend replacing with new vehicle in procurement					
71	Light Duty Small Bus	2006	Active	9	6	200,000	166,996	2012	2017	high	X				
72	Light Duty Small Bus	2006	Active	9	6	200,000	151,890	2012	2018	high	X				
73	Light Duty Small Bus	2006	Active	9	6	200,000	141,443	2012	2019	high	X				
74	Light Duty Small Bus	2006	Active	9	6	200,000	140,675	2012	2019	high	X				
81	Light Duty Small Bus	2008	Active	7	6	200,000	112,181	2014	2020	high		X			
82	Light Duty Small Bus	2008	Active	7	6	200,000	113,845	2014	2020	high		X			
83	Light Duty Small Bus	2008	Active	7	6	200,000	114,263	2014	2020	high		X			
84	Light Duty Small Bus	2008	Active	7	6	200,000	106,410	2014	2021	high		X			
91	Light Duty Small Bus	2009	Active	6	6	200,000	108,918	2015	2020	moderate		X			

CountyRide Fleet Number	MTA Vehicle Classification	Model Year/ Year Placed into Service	Status as of Nov 2015	Current Age (Years)	Useful Life Expectancy per MTA Standards		Jan 2015 Mileage (per FY 2016 ATP)	Year Useful Life in Years Attained	Estimated Year Miles Used Life Attained	Recomm-ended Replace-ment Priority	Fiscal Year for Vehicle Replacement				
					Years	Miles					FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
Current Fleet															
92	Light Duty Small Bus	2009	Active	6	6	200,000	107,777	2015	2020	moderate		X			
93	Light Duty Small Bus	2009	Active	6	6	200,000	97,626	2015	2021	moderate		X			
101	Light Duty Small Bus	2010	Active	5	6	200,000	90,600	2016	2021	moderate			X		
102	Light Duty Small Bus	2010	Active	5	6	200,000	93,689	2016	2020	moderate			X		
103	Light Duty Small Bus	2010	Active	5	6	200,000	65,802	2016	2023	moderate				X	
104	Light Duty Small Bus	2010	Active	5	6	200,000	71,184	2016	2022	moderate				X	
105	Light Duty Small Bus	2010	Active	5	6	200,000	64,017	2016	2024	moderate				X	
141	Light Duty Small Bus	2015	Active	0	6	200,000	2,161	2021	2027	low					X
142	Light Duty Small Bus	2015	Active	0	6	200,000	2,479	2021	2027	low					X
143	Light Duty Small Bus	2015	Active	0	6	200,000	2,046	2021	2027	low					X
144	Light Duty Small Bus	2015	Active	0	6	200,000	2,931	2021	2027	low					X
906	Sedan	2011	Active	4	4	150,000	33,821	2015	2024	moderate				x	

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Table 5-2: Vehicle Fleet and Replacement (continued)

Vehicles Currently Being Procured										
New	Will Replace Existing Vehicle	Light Duty Small Bus	2016	In procurement	N/A	6	200,000	N/A	2022	2028
New	Will Replace Existing Vehicle	Light Duty Small Bus	2016	In procurement	N/A	6	200,000	N/A	2022	2028
New	Will Replace Existing Vehicle	Light Duty Small Bus	2016	In procurement	N/A	6	200,000	N/A	2022	2028
New	Will Replace Existing Vehicle	Light Duty Small Bus	2016	In procurement	N/A	6	200,000	N/A	2022	2028

Other Capital – Technology

As described in this chapter, CountyRide plans to acquire new technology for fare payment, using swipe cards, and a module for scheduling. MTA granted funding for this capital improvement in FY2016, as shown in Table 5-3. However, given the lead time needed to prepare an RFP and conduct a competitive procurement, as well as time to implement the technology once received, Table 5-3 puts implementation in FY2018. According to CountyRide's 2016 ATP, there is an ongoing maintenance cost for the technology in addition to the one-time capital cost.

Table 5-3: Financial Plan for Facilities, Equipment and Other Capital

Projects	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
Computer System Upgrade[1]	$ 165,040	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Computer System Maintenance			$ 32,000	$ 32,000	$ 32,000	$ 32,000
Total Projected Non-Vehicle Capital Expenses	**$ 165,040**	**$ -**	**$ 32,000**	**$ 32,000**	**$ 32,000**	**$ 32,000**
Anticipated Funding Sources	**FY 2016**	**FY 2017**	**FY 2018**	**FY 2019**	**FY 2020**	**FY 2021**
Federal/State (5339 Grant)	$ 148,536		$ 28,800	$ 28,800	$ 28,800	$ 28,800
Local	$ 16,504		$ 3,200	$ 3,200	$ 3,200	$ 3,200
Total Projected Non-Vehicle Capital Funds	**$ 165,040**	**$ -**	**$ 32,000**	**$ 32,000**	**$ 32,000**	**$ 32,000**

Notes:

[1]Funding for computer system upgrade provided in FY16 but plan places the improvement in FY18 given lead time needed for competitive procurement, contract award and implementation.

CONCLUSION

CountyRide provides a vital transportation service to the riders it serves in Baltimore County. This is demonstrated by the very positive feedback we received through the TDP planning process from both riders and stakeholders as well as the fact that demand for service outstrips available capacity.

This plan describes an organized process for improving and developing this vital transportation service. The shorter term options include a number of revisions and suggestions for both policy and operational improvements that will allow CountyRide to be incrementally more productive – that is, serve somewhat more trips with the current resources. The longer term options add resources, through both an expansion of the CountyRide fleet and through a taxi subsidy program, the latter expanding capacity without the need to add vehicles.

The ability of Baltimore County to pursue all of the improvements outlined in this plan depend on the continuing availability of grant funding from the MTA, possible growth in those grant funds, and the ability of the county to contribute its funds to support CountyRide. Given the fact that funding at all levels – federal, state, and local – is not a given, this plan should be viewed as just that, a plan providing a road map that Baltimore County may use to develop and improve CountyRide's transportation services.

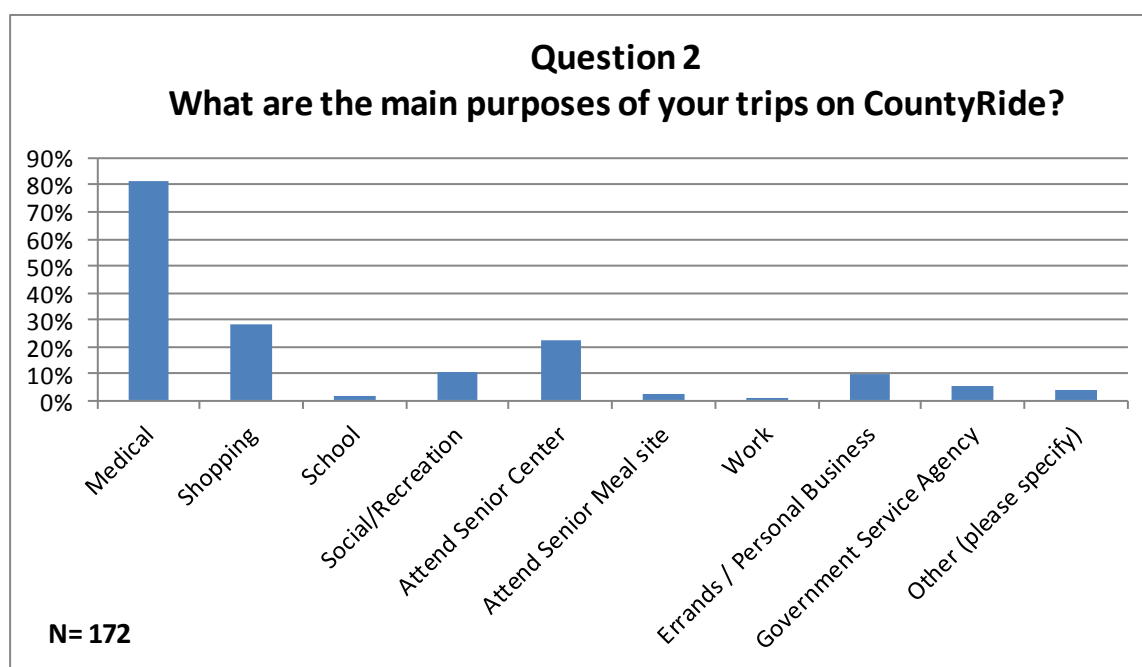# Appendix A:
Complete Rider Survey Results

Appendix A: Complete Rider Survey Results

Question 1
In what city, town, or community do you live?

N= 164

Question 2
What are the main purposes of your trips on CountyRide?

N= 172

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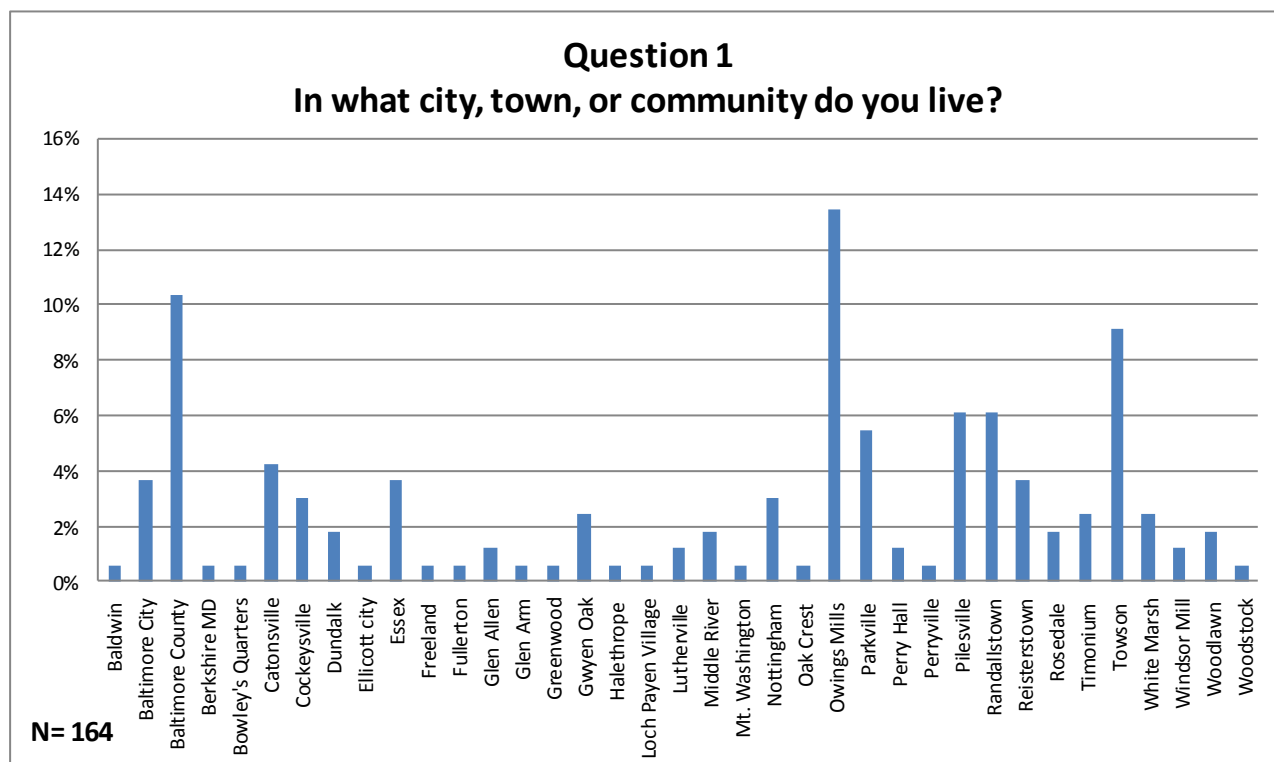
Question 3
How often do you use CountyRide?
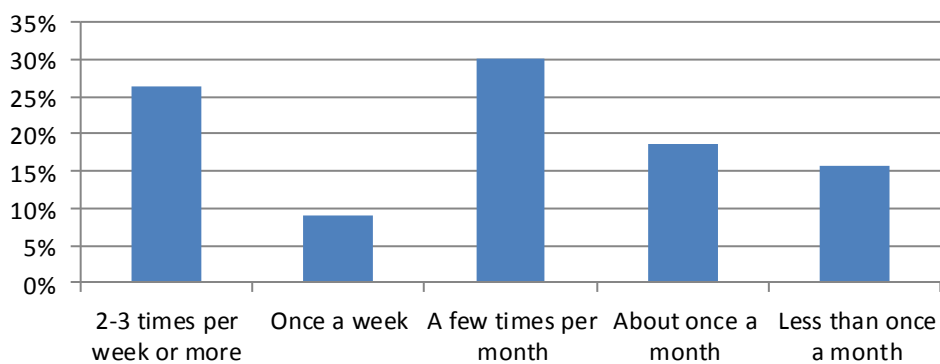
N=166

Question 4
How long have you been using CountyRide?
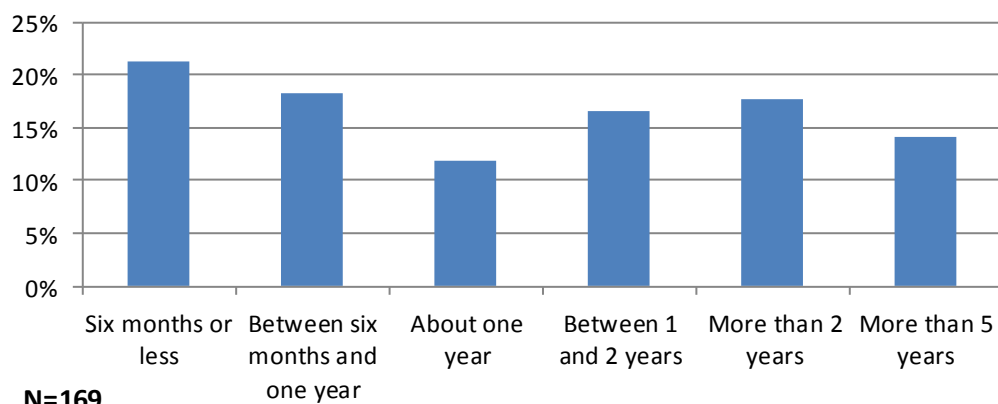
N=169

Question 5
Please rate your satisfaction

Categories (top to bottom):
- Usefulness of CountyRide website
- Safety and comfort of your trips
- Availability of information
- Driver courtesy
- Cleanliness of the vehicles
- Cost of service
- Hours of service availability
- Days of your availability
- Travel time on the vehicle of your trips
- On-time performance
- Telephone customer service
- The trip scheduling process

Legend:
- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Very Unsatisfied

* Some answer options had fewer response

N=172

Question 6
What type of vehicle is most appropraite for your needs when traveling on County Ride?

N=154

Categories: Sedan, Small van, Caravan, Large van

Question 7
Are there places in Baltimore County where you would like to go on a regular basis, but you cannot get to becausethere is no public transportation?

N=148
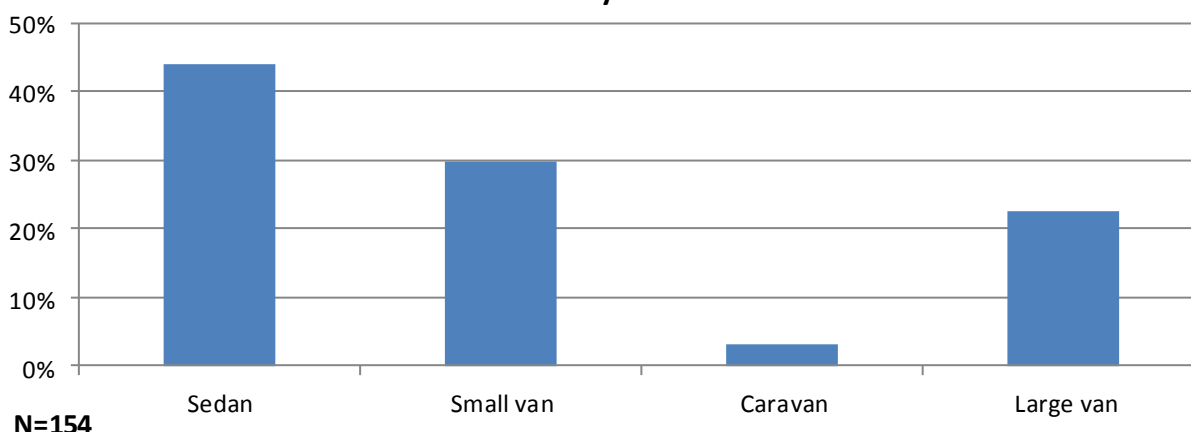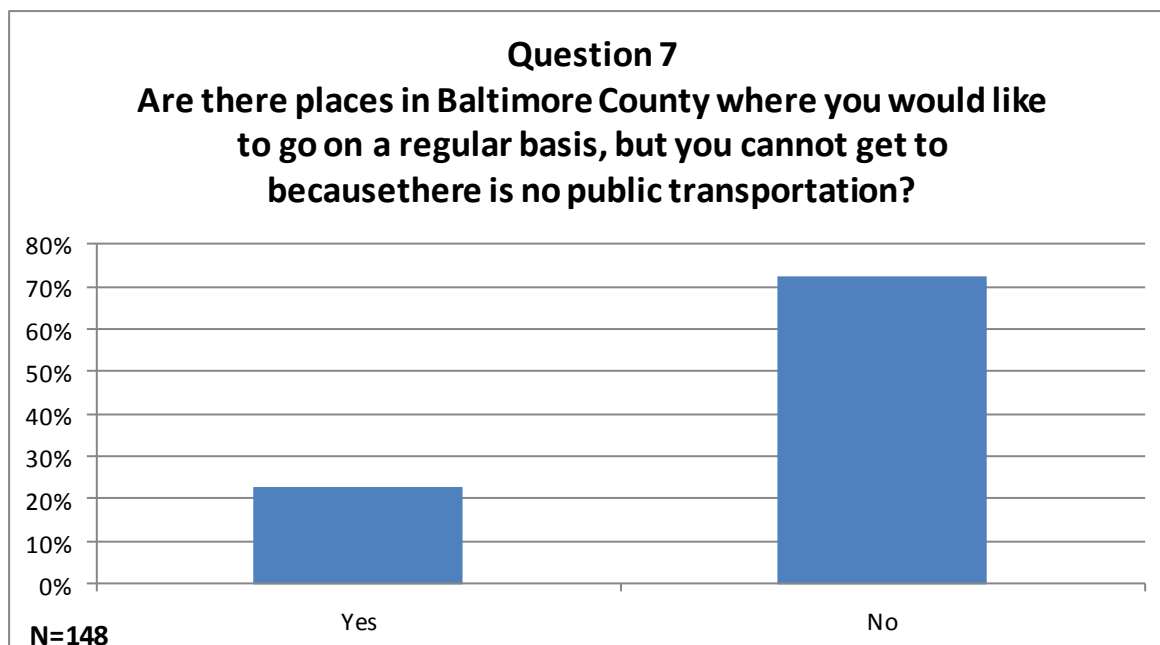
If yes then where?
Walmart and Gershecks and Mars. There is no bus near me.
Doctors Offices
Doctors office
any grocery store
From Owings Mills to Reisterstown
Downtown
Home to Irvine Nature Center
York Road
Baltimore Towson and Whitemarsh
Shopping Centers
From home to a friend's house
Downtown
From home to a variety of stores
City, Park, Service Center
To Millford Mill Road
From home to Reisterstown
From home to a variety of stores
Carrol County MD
Library
White Marsh
Giant
Bel Air Road beyond Route 43
White Marsh
Hospitals
Shopping Malls
Shopping Centers

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Question 8: What do you like most about CountyRide Service?
prompt- courteous
It's a special service for those who don't drive and have no one to drive us.
I can get to the store
Convenience
driver is very kind
driver safety, prompt service
always on time, drivers courtesy, clean vehicles
very nice drivers, reasonable cost
courteousness of drivers
drivers are helpful
nothing
When they say I will be on standby but I have to call back the day before my appt
It was so helpful when I could not get someone to take me or drive myself
very convenient
Very good service
polite and knowledgeable drivers
dedicated drivers and dispatchers
Convenience
Drivers are courteous
Adherence to scheduled times
The drivers are courteous and polite
The service is excellent
The drivers are nice
It helps me get to my appointments
I feel comfortable with the service
The availability
There are kind dependable drivers
Courtesy of the drivers
The drivers are very nice
They are always on time
Door to door service
The service gets me to Dr. appointments
Driver Courtesy
The drivers are nice
Courteous drivers
The drivers are really good
The availability of the service
The drivers are courteous and very prompt. The service is helpful
Gets me to Dr. appointments
It gets me where I need to go
Always on time

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They put me on standby for appointments
Gets me safely where I need to go
The vehicles are on time for pickup
The courtesy and helpfulness of the drivers
Door to door service
Cheap rides to doctors and food
The availability, courtesy, helpfulness, and early appointments
It helps me to get to my appointments
It is punctual
The service is always on time
They are on time and the drivers are friendly
The drivers are very nice
The drivers are friendly and the service is widely available
The availability of the service
I love the service
It works
It helps to allow me to be independent
The availability and ability to get to my appointments
The courtesy of drivers
dependable
How courteous the drivers are and the schedules
Great service by all
There are courteous and friendly drivers
It is convenient
Convenience and courtesy of the drivers
They are always there for you
2 weeks notice and reliable service
Everything
It is very convenient
Everyone is helpful and polite
Convenience and dependability
People
It helps me with transportation, because I do not have a car
Most of the drivers have been delightful
The service is on time, clean and courteous
Ability to get to required appointments
Dependability
The drivers are cool
Takes a long time
The drivers
The drivers are nice
Availability

The service is nice and the drivers are really great
CountyRide is usually on time for pick ups
The friendly staff
The drivers are courteous and polite
The cost
Comfort
Polite Drivers
Door to door service
Price/ door to door
Great service
They have friendly drivers
There are excellent drivers
They are always dependable
They are efficient, time conscientious and very very strict
It is a convenient service and the drivers are friendly
The drivers are very nice and get you where you need to go
If they have scheduled your ride, they are always true to the times the get there
The service is great and drivers are the best
The drivers are pleasant and convenient
The drivers are always nice drivers that are helpful and convenient
I like the drivers and how clean the bus is
The drivers
Everything
The availability of the service
The bus is on time and clean
Pick up from the door
On time
The price
Dependable
Driver courtesy
Everything
Nice staff
The kind and friendly drivers
Polite Drivers
Some drivers are very courteous and helpful
The 2 week window for scheduling a ride for appointments
Availability to get to places
I like the service
Everything
I like being able to get a trip from my phone
The drivers are courteous and polite
Helpful and polite drivers

They pick you up and bring you back
There are prompt rides to hospitals in Baltimore County
There are helpful and friendly drivers
Always on time and efficient
Timing is good
excellent driver courtesy
On time
Drivers are courteous and available service
The service is affordable
The drivers are really nice
Efficiency Timelines
Comfortable
Very Courteous
Reliable service
Driver courtesy, door to door service
Its convenient
Everything
Very effective operators
convenience
The dependability and courtesy of the personnel
Courteous and friendly drivers
The service is clean, air conditioned, and there are nice drivers
clear air conditioned van , nice drivers
Polite drivers
Door to door service

Question 9: What do you like least about CountyRide Service?

busy phone
It doesn't go to Howard County and Anne Arundel County
Availability. Having to call a week in advance
having to call 2 weeks ahead for medical appt sometimes don't know in time
hours of operation
longer routes to destinations
weekend service
it was hard to get through on the phone
contacting County Ride is a bit hard
can't think of anything
change in management last 2 years
Trying to schedule online
Scheduling
Setting up trips to Dr. Appointments
I am not able to reserve a ride until the day before
Limited hours
There is not enough leg room in the front seat
Wait on the phone
The wait on the phone
You can't get into the city
Difficult to get a live person on the phone
It conflicts with making appointments with doctors
Scheduling Process
Phone service
I can't make Dr. appointments
It's difficult to deal with the staff via phone
2 week window for making appointments
The wait to schedule trips
I cannot use this service to take my pets to the vet
Allow more bags for groceries
No problems
They don't have service in specific areas
That we can only go to certain areas 2 times a year
Nothing
It's hard to go where you want to go
The lack of evening hours
I wish that hours of operation were longer
No rides in the city
Some of the buses are very old
Not enough vehicles
No noon phone

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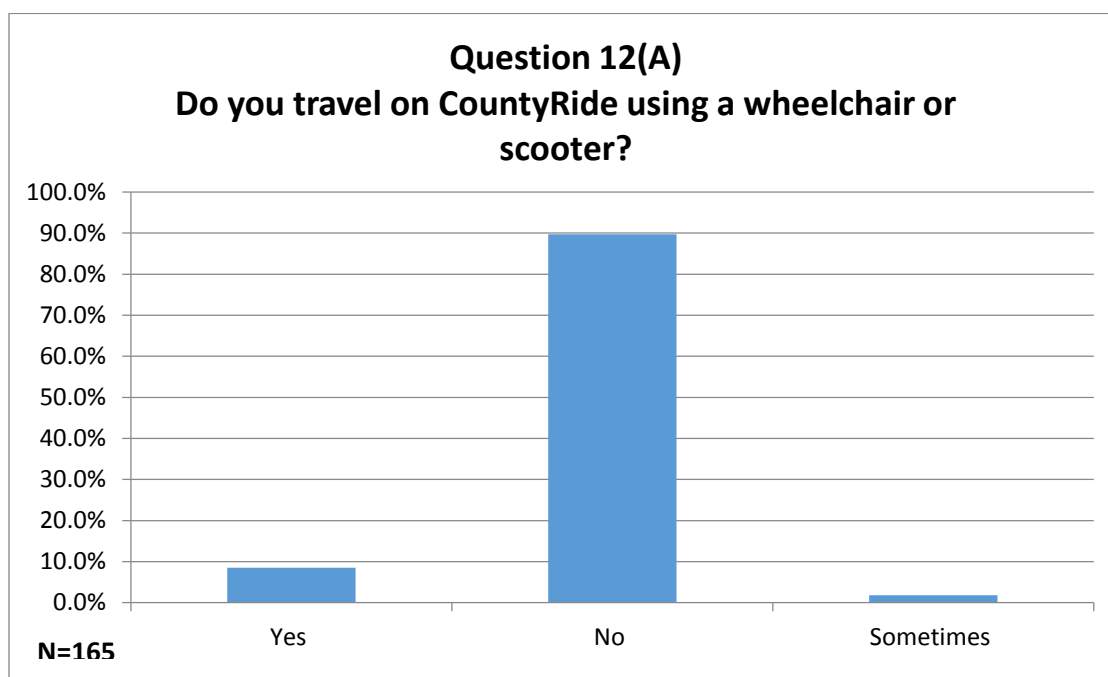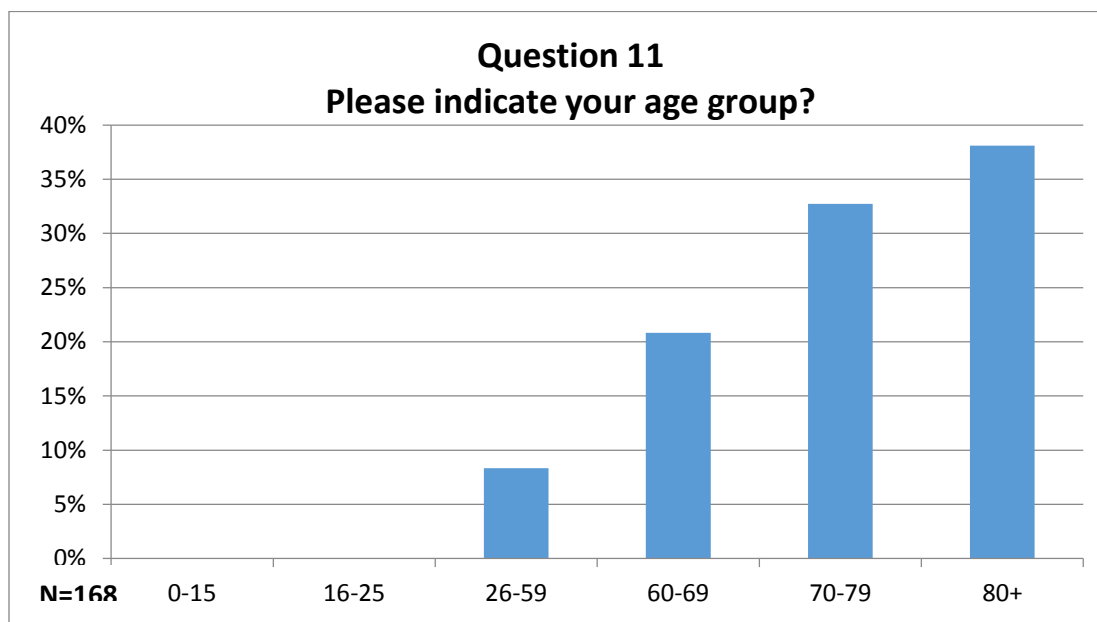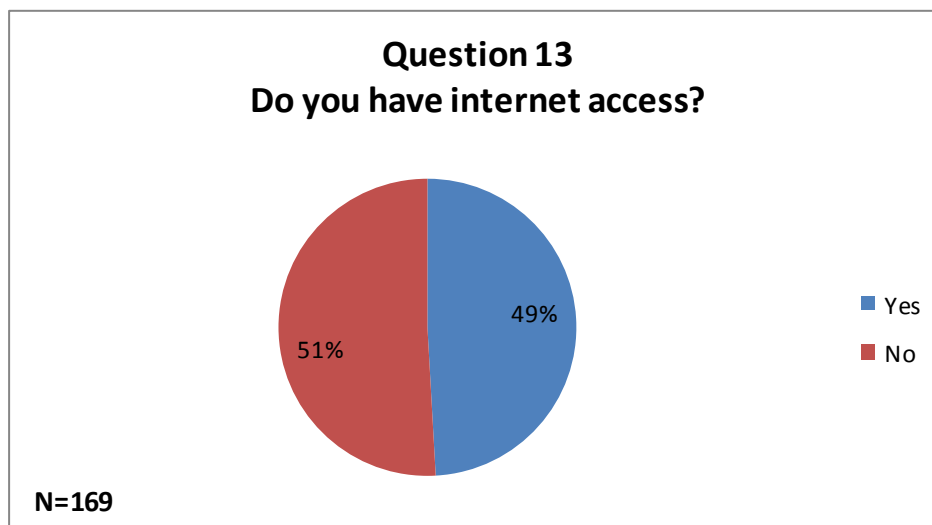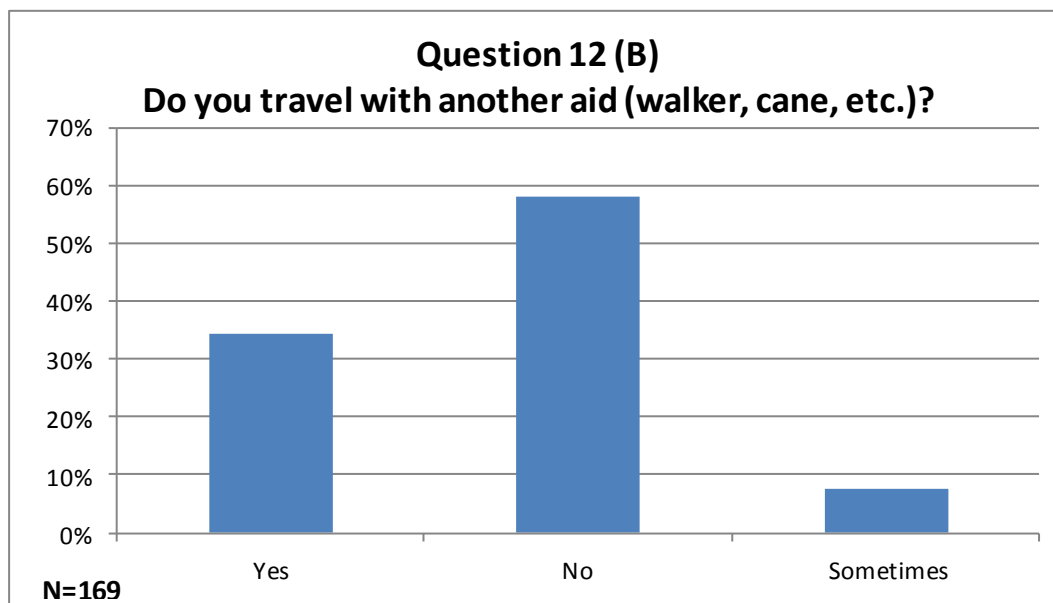| |
|---|
| being the only person in a big van is noisy |
| Not having service when |
| Less than 2 weeks notice |
| I love the drivers |
| The hours |
| They come too early to help me sometimes |
| Very nasty drivers |
| Bumpy Ride |
| The automated system can be very inflexible |
| Not enough times per week to travel |
| Consistency of service |
| Cost of service |
| The schedule does not include nights, weekends and holidays |
| The waiting time for pick up |
| Only runs on 2 days |
| wait to talk to someone |
| Having to call in every week for a ride |
| Need more than two days a week service |
| They schedule only twice a week at times |
| It only comes twice a week |
| Having to call every week for a ride |
| Does not reach Carrol county |
| Nothing |
| The cost of the service |
| The ride is bumpy |
| Nothing |
| Sometimes the pick up time is too early |
| Too long of a wait |
| Wish I could take it once a week |
| Limited to only 2 times a week |
| Drivers who do not get up from their seat to help customers |
| The small vans |
| Telephone wait |
| Not being able to get Rides |
| The bumpy ride |
| Having to call early in the morning exactly 2 weeks before appointments |
| Not available on time |
| None |
| limited availability |
| have no complaints |
| Problems with the return trips |
| Schedules |

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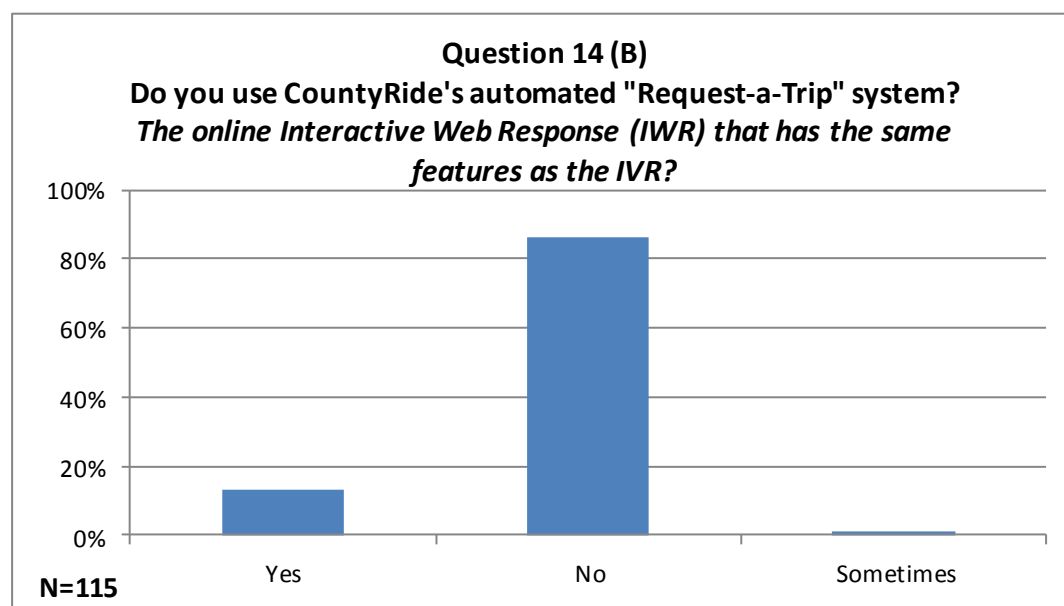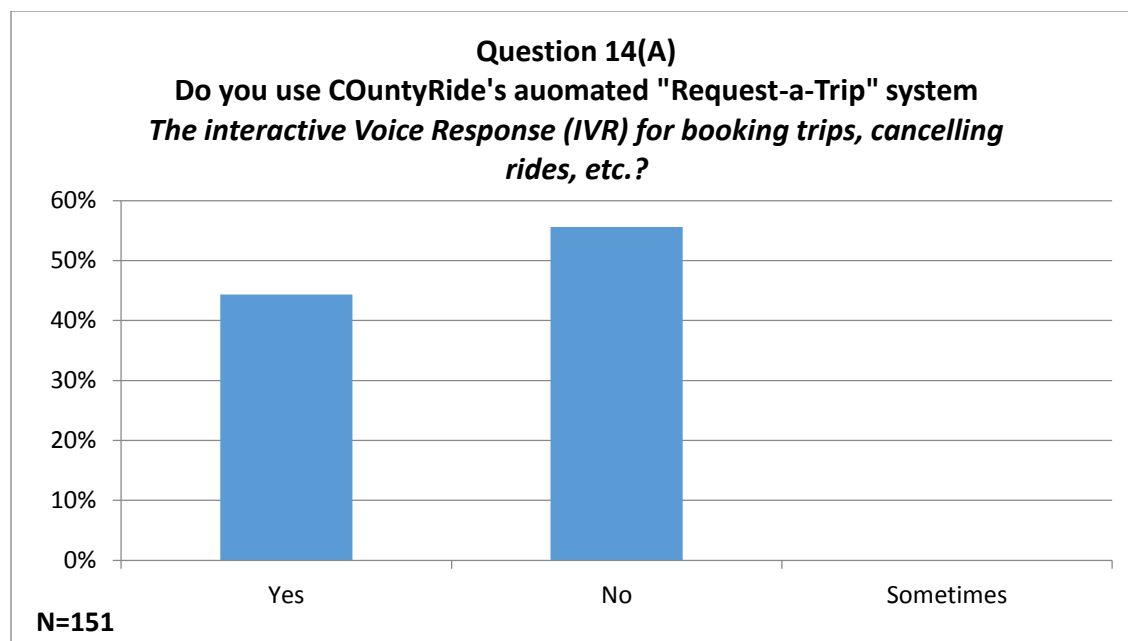| |
|---|
| Sometimes the schedules differ |
| They don't go to the city |
| There are only 2 trips per week |
| No complaints |
| the one week in advance reservations |
| the one week in advance reservation |
| Only 2 days |

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Question 10: If CountyRide were to make service improvements, what would be your top three choices?

* Answers have been summaried to reflect the top three most frequent comments in each category. *

Category 1	Category 2	Cateogry 3
Trip Scheduling	Expand hours of operation	Number of trips allowed
Number of trips allowed	Telephone Service	Telephone Service
Telephone Service	Trip Scheduling	Expanding service hours

Question 11
Please indicate your age group?

Question 12(A)
Do you travel on CountyRide using a wheelchair or scooter?

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Question 12 (B)
Do you travel with another aid (walker, cane, etc.)?

N=169

Question 13
Do you have internet access?

49%

51%

Yes
No

N=169

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Question 14(A)
Do you use COuntyRide's auomated "Request-a-Trip" system
The interactive Voice Response (IVR) for booking trips, cancelling rides, etc.?

N=151

Question 14 (B)
Do you use CountyRide's automated "Request-a-Trip" system?
The online Interactive Web Response (IWR) that has the same features as the IVR?

N=115

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Question 15
Was a car available today for this trip?

Yes
No

41%

59%
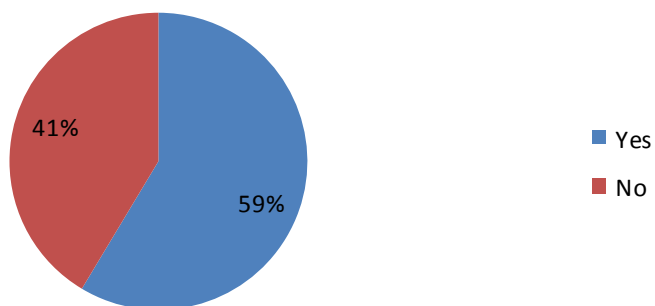
N=128

Question 16
Do you have your driver's license?

Yes
No

45%

55%

N=166

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Comments

The service is excellent and they are always on time

I need County Ride because I am 69 1/2 years old and I have arthritis on my two legs. I find it a bit difficult to walk to the bus stop. This service helps me out.

This is a great service and a great way for my mother to get around.

I would like to get out to Carrol County to shop

The hospital sets up my rides and please keep up the great job

They don't perform a satisfactory job

Would be nice if 3 times a week for medical trips made available to

More MTA bus service to White Marsh and more taxis for senior citizens if possible.

There are always room for improvements

There used to not be much available in Baltimore, however, I am very happy that transportation is available.

The bus should go further down to Baltimore

Sometimes I wait for 2 hours for a return trip home. I am disappointed in the service

I am very pleased with the service. I have no complaints

The service is affordable , however the schedule needs to be improved and the hours could be longer

I am totally dependent on CountyRide

I used a wheel chair van

The driver, Mr. Lee was great. Give him a raise.

Cannot understand conversation talk too fast

I am very satisfied with the services!

I do not use Balto Co. public transportation. Need to appoint permanent employees.

I am very grateful for this service. I would not be able to make Dr. appointments and not be able to volunteer in "Mission of Mercy" Thank You

Thank you for the wonderful service

I appreciate your service

There have been 2 mistakes with scheduling . The trip I scheduled was cancelled and I had to call a cab.

The service will pick you up, but the driver may not get you close enough to where you need to be

Occasionally I have my ride canceled and had to re-schedule

Thank you for great help and wonderful people

County Ride is my only source for doctors and food. I ride 2-3 times per week.

This has helped me to make my Dr. appointments. It is a wonderful service

The service is wonderful

I have not used the service

I am grateful to have this service. I would not be able to make Dr. appointments

I had a car accident and this service helps me out immensely

Thank you for providing this service

The service is always there for you and is always helpful

I am impressed with the prompt and swift service

I request that the vehicles be available at a shorter notice, the service centers should pick people up before 9:00 am and should be more prompt.

There are minimal trips to shopping/grocery stores.

It would be helpful if CountyRide had holiday transportation

Keep up the good work