FAQs

RAISE BALTIMORE
TRANSIT PRIORITY PROJECT>>

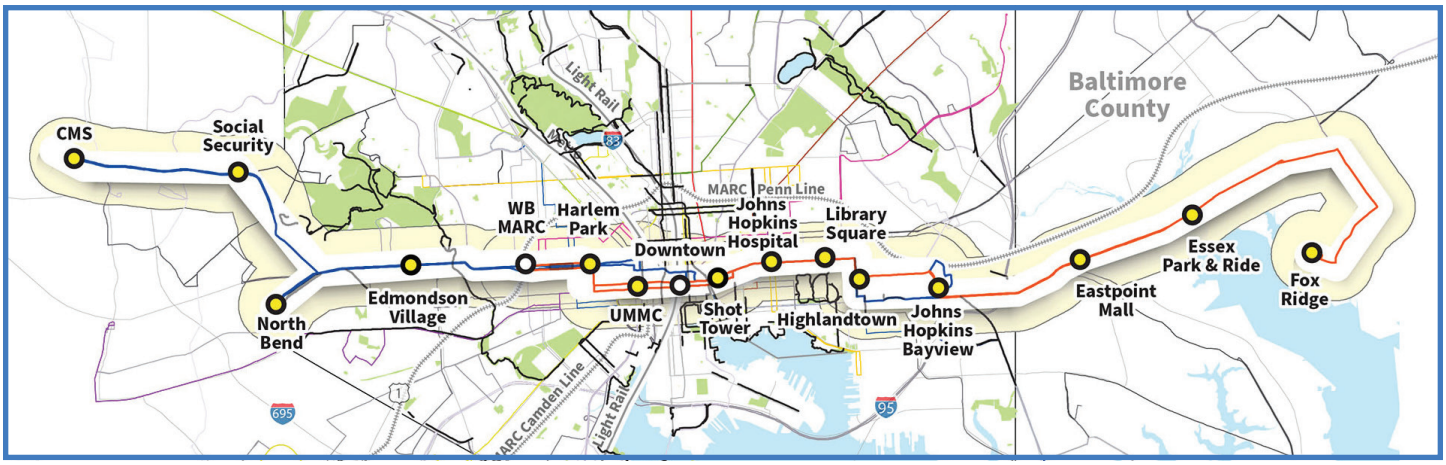
Project Details

1. Who is leading the RAISE Transit Priority Project (RAISE Project)?

The Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Transit Priority Project – or RAISE Project for short – is a collaborative effort between the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and the Baltimore City Department of Transportation (BCDOT) with the assistance of other agencies such as the State Highway Administration (SHA), and Baltimore County.

2. Where are the RAISE Project limits?

The RAISE Project spans from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in western Baltimore County through Baltimore City, including Downtown, to the Fox Ridge community in eastern Baltimore County. The RAISE Project will focus on two of the highest-ridership routes in the MTA transit system - the CityLink Blue and CityLink Orange.



3. What improvements are being considered as part of the RAISE Project?

The RAISE Project improves the reliability, speed, safety, and accessibility of transit by including the following elements:

- **Dedicated Bus Lanes (DBLs), Bus Bulbs and a Queue Jump** on select congested segments along the CityLink Blue & CityLink Orange bus routes (subject to change as the design advances):
  - Full-time DBL along Edmondson Avenue from Cooks Lane to North Woodington Road and from North Hilton Street to North Rosedale Street
  - Peak period DBL along Edmondson Avenue from North Woodington Road to North Hilton Street and from North Rosedale Street to North Longwood Street
  - Full-time DBL along West Franklin Street from North Longwood Street to North Warwick Avenue
  - Full-time DBL along Fayette Street from President Street to North Central Avenue (westbound only) (the queue jump is located within this segment)
  - Bus bulbs from North Washington Street to North Highland Avenue

FAQs

RAISE BALTIMORE TRANSIT PRIORITY PROJECT>>

- **Transit Signal Priority** (TSP) at up to 55 traffic lights along the corridor to prioritize bus movements
- **Bus stop upgrades** at over 130 locations - ADA-compliant features shelters, benches, trash cans & pedestrian lighting
- **Signage upgrades** at high-transfer activity 'hubs' - wayfinding and real-time arrival information
- **Pedestrian & bicycle safety improvements** - trees, lighting, curb extensions, sidewalks & new crosswalks
- **Bicycle connection** between Downtown Baltimore and West Baltimore MARC rail station

4. What improvements are being considered for pedestrian and people with mobility challenges?

This Project emphasizes improving the safety of pedestrians and people with mobility challenges by addressing infrastructure gaps, missing links, and barriers to access that disproportionately impact those who do not have alternative means of transportation. The RAISE Project will improve ADA access to over 100 bus stops to allow individuals with disabilities to access transit and sidewalks that are currently inaccessible. These improvements will be focused in areas with the highest crash rates, which are disproportionately in communities with higher poverty rates.

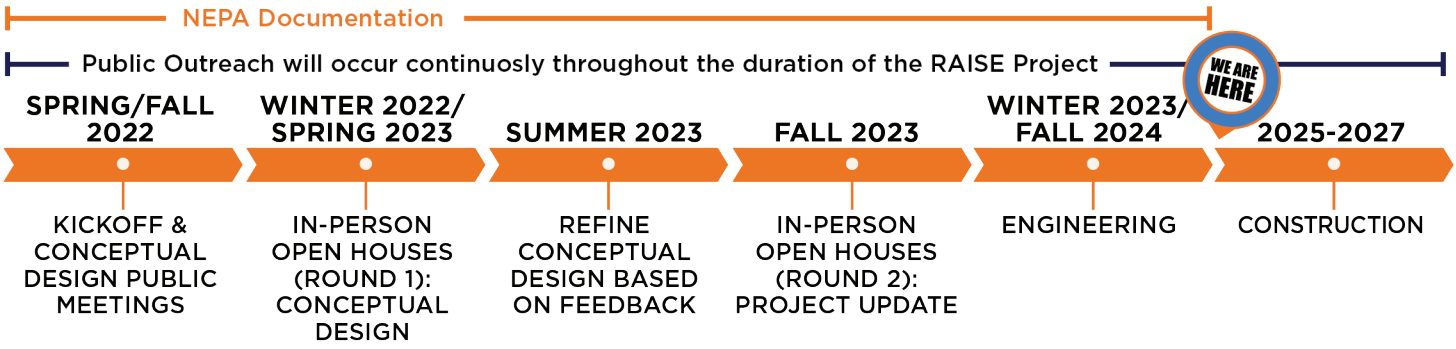
5. Will the RAISE Grant add additional service along the project corridor?

No. But if the buses can be more reliable and travel faster, they can make more trips in a given amount of time.

6. What is the RAISE Project schedule?

MTA and BCDOT have worked together and with local stakeholders to identify a conceptual design for transit priority treatments such as Dedicated Bus Lanes (DBLs), bus bulbs and a queue jump along the corridor with high transfer activity. Pre-construction activities are anticipated to be completed by 2025, including compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). At this time, construction is scheduled to be substantially completed in 2027, with all funds expended by September 30, 2029.

PROJECT SCHEDULE:



7. How much will the RAISE Project cost and where is funding coming from?

The $50 million project will be funded by a $22 million grant from the United States Department of Transportation's (USDOT) 2021 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program, as well as a $18 million investment from the Maryland Department of Transportation and $10 million from the Baltimore City Department of Transportation. Visit **mta.maryland.gov/articles/325** for more information.

FAQs

RAISE BALTIMORE TRANSIT PRIORITY PROJECT>>

8. Will any property impact or displacements be required for the RAISE Project?

No residential or commercial displacements would occur as a result of this project. The RAISE Project would only have potential impacts to existing bus stops, curb ramps and sidewalks, of which the majority reside on State, City or County owned property. Small amounts of property may be needed for this project.

9. What environmental reviews have occurred or will occur in the future for the RAISE Project?

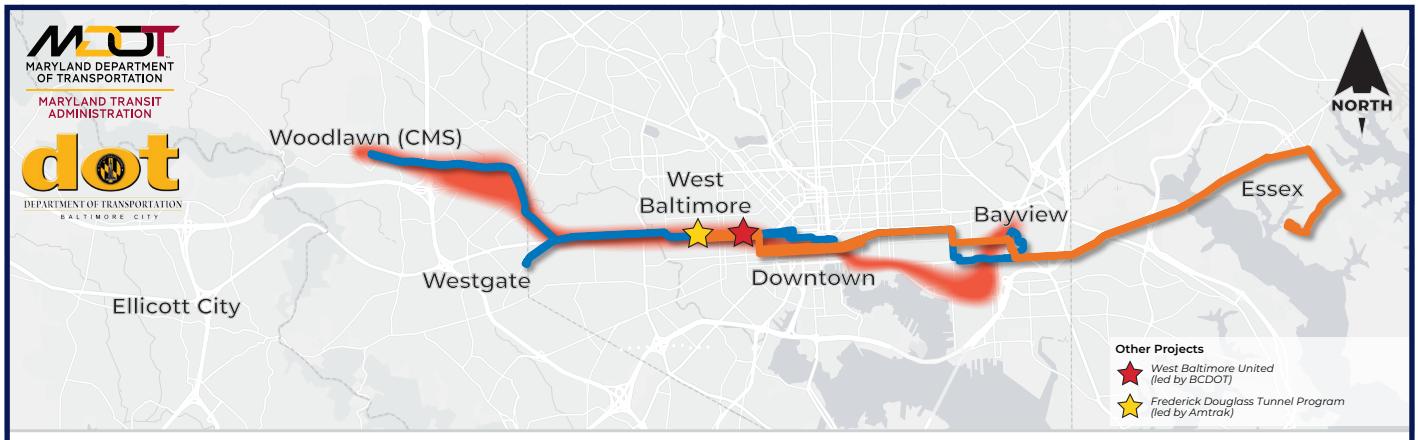
MTA has already begun investigating the potential for environmental impacts from the RAISE Project and expects them to be minimal. This Project is expected to qualify for a Categorical Exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). MTA is working with federal partners to complete the NEPA process that is running concurrently with preliminary engineering and design of the RAISE Project.

Project History

1. How is the RAISE Project different from the Red Line?

The RAISE Project will improve existing transit services sooner along the CityLink Blue and CityLink Orange routes through the addition of dedicated bus lanes, bus bulbs, a queue jump, transit signal priority, and bus stop amenities. The Red Line is a high-frequency, high-capacity new rail line for the Baltimore Region. The RAISE Project is funded for construction to begin in 2025. The Red Line team is preparing a funding strategy to apply for federal funding through the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program.

While the Red Line is a longer term investment in a new rail line, the RAISE Project will **improve existing transit** services along the CityLink Blue and CityLink Orange routes through the addition of dedicated bus lanes, bus bulbs, a queue jump, transit signal priority, and bus stop amenities. The RAISE Project is scheduled to begin construction as soon as 2025 while the Red Line could take 7 years or more to implement.



Short Term (1–2 Years)	**MDOT MTA Annual Service Changes**	MDOT MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION / MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION	*MDOT MTA regularly evaluates routes alignments, scheduling, and bus stop locations during three yearly service changes. In August 2023, MDOT MTA launched the QuickLink 40, a pilot express bus service with more buses and fewer stops that run along the CityLink Blue and CityLink Orange routes.*
Mid Term (3–5 Years)	CityLink Blue / CityLink Orange	RAISE BALTIMORE TRANSIT PRIORITY PROJECT>>	*$50M investment of City, State, and Federal dollars to add dedicated bus lanes, transit signal priority, real-time signage, sidewalk, and accessibility improvements for the CityLink Blue and CityLink Orange.*
Long Term (5–10 Years)		RED LINE	*The Red Line is a high-frequency, high capacity light rail line for the Baltimore Region, and will be an investment in residents' access to jobs, education, services, and opportunities. In June 2024, MTA confirmed that light rail will be the recommended mode for Baltimore's Red Line. MTA is advancing work on the alternatives, updating the environmental documentation while preparing a funding strategy to receive federal funding through the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grant (CIG) Program.*

FAQs

RAISE BALTIMORE
TRANSIT PRIORITY PROJECT>>

Public Comment, Equity & Accessibility

1. How may I become more involved in the RAISE Project?

- **On-going feedback** is encouraged throughout the life of the RAISE Project. You may:
  - Visit the project website at **RAISEBaltimore.com** to learn more about the project and upcoming public meetings, submit a **comment form** and view interactive web mapping
  - Email the project team at **info@RAISEBaltimore.com**
  - Join the project mailing list by sending a request to **info@RAISEBaltimore.com** or by completing a **comment form**.
- **MTA and BCDOT "Street Teams"** have been visiting various locations with the RAISE Project kiosk along the corridor since 2022. During these "Street Team" events, we talk one-on-one to users of the corridor to gather feedback on needed improvements and distribute project information. If you see us set up at the RAISE Project kiosk, stop and say Hello!

  MTA and BCDOT have hosted four in-person Open Houses in 2023:
  1. January 31, 2023 at St. Bernardine's Catholic Church Harcum Hall
  2. February 25, 2023 at Enoch Pratt Free Library – Patterson Park Branch
  3. December 9, 2023 at Enoch Pratt Free Library – Patterson Park Branch
  4. December 12, 2023 at Edmondson-Westside High School

Note: If you would like the project team to bring the kiosk to your location for a single event or for a multi-day stay, please send an email to **info@RAISEBaltimore.com**.

2. What if I cannot attend a Virtual Public Meeting or in-person Open House for the RAISE Project?

Don't worry if you cannot attend a meeting. All information presented at our public meetings will be available on this project webpage for viewing, and the project team can be reached at any time using the contact information provided.

3. How may I comment on proposed improvements for the RAISE Project?

You may provide comments via email to **info@RAISEBaltimore.com** or by completing a **comment form**. All comments received will be given equal consideration.

You may comment directly within interactive mapping developed for this project:
RAISE Baltimore Transit Priority Project Comment Map

FAQs

RAISE BALTIMORE TRANSIT PRIORITY PROJECT>>

- Featured within this map are the locations of existing CityLink Blue and CityLink Orange Line bus stops, pedestrian facilities, transit signal priority areas, and proposed and existing dedicated bus lanes, bus bulbs and queue jumps.
- Comments and concerns can be expressed using pushpin icons for the following categories:
  - Bus Stop Amenities
  - Bus Operations
  - Traffic Congestion
  - Pedestrian / Bicycle Facilities
  - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- If there's a location where you'd like to comment, please add it to the map by following these steps:
  1. Select an icon from the menu bar on the right
  2. Click on the map where you want to add the feature
  3. Fill in the pop-up with any additional comments that you may have
  4. Click Save to finalize the addition

Title VI & Accessibility

1. Who do I contact if I need special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or require language translation services?

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the MTA Transit Information Contact Center – 410-539-5000; 866-743-3682; TTY 410-539-3497; MD Relay users dial 7-1-1. Or, MTA Office of Equal Opportunity Compliance Programs (EOCP) -- ADA/Title VI Coordinator at (410) 767-3944, email address: **MTAEqualAccess@mta.maryland.gov**, or, Bart Plano at **bplano@mta.maryland.gov**.

Transit Basics

1. How are Dedicated Bus Lanes (DBLs) being evaluated?

Dedicated bus lanes will be evaluated by their ability to improve the following metrics:

- Travel Time Reliability - The consistency of travel time from day to day and at various times of the day.
- Travel Delay - Anything which interferes with bus travel including traffic congestion, crashes, or operational failure. Travel delay is the main source of poor travel time reliability.

2. Who may use Dedicated Bus Lanes (DBLs)?

Only buses, emergency vehicles, school buses and bicycles are permitted to travel in the bus only lanes (full-time and peak-period). Other vehicles are permitted to enter a bus lane in order to make a right turn at the next intersection. For full-time DBLs, other vehicles may enter a bus lane to access parallel parking spots next to the bus lane. For peak-period DBLs, vehicles are allowed to park in the bus only lane outside of peak periods which can include overnight and weekends.

3. How will Dedicated Bus Lanes (DBLs) be enforced?

Baltimore City Transportation Enforcement Officers, the Baltimore Police Department, and MTA Police handle violation enforcement. Parking or stopping in a bus lane may result in a $250 fine, and driving in the bus lane may result in a fine up to $500.

FAQs

RAISE BALTIMORE
TRANSIT PRIORITY PROJECT>>

4. What changes can be expected along the RAISE corridor from the proposed improvements?

Creating dedicated bus lanes, bus bulbs and a queue jump along the RAISE corridor will have an impact on the movement of automobiles; however, several benefits will also be created for the many residents that depend on transit to access jobs, education, and recreational activities. The dedicated bus lanes will improve travel times and transit reliability for two of the highest ridership routes in our system and will overall be beneficial to the transportation network. The proposed improvements will result in removal of some parking spaces and slight changes in traffic operations. Peak-period DBLs are proposed in some areas, which will use existing parking restrictions and maintain residential parking.

5. Is this considered a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project?

No. The RAISE Baltimore's project purpose is to provide enhancements to the exiting CityLink Blue and CityLink Orange bus routes; whereas a BRT project would include additional service, upgraded stations, dedicated guideway and the potential for new branded vehicles.

6. How can I find out where the proposed improvements are located?

You can see proposed improvement locations by viewing mapping at the project website: **RAISEBaltimore.com**, attend a public meeting, or talk with a project team member at a pop-up meeting along the RAISE corridor.

You may also request a virtual or in-person community meeting with the project team by sending an email to **info@RAISEBaltimore.com** or by submitting a comment on the **project website**.

GLOSSARY

The **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** of 1990 prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity and access for persons with disabilities. This act works to ensure nondiscriminatory transportation in support of its mission to enhance the social and economic quality of life for all Americans.

Complete Streets - Complete Streets will be designed to address safety, be accessible, improve mobility, ensure equity, and reflect Baltimore's unique communities, while prioritizing the movement of the streets' most vulnerable users. Baltimore's citywide modal hierarchy—recommended by the Complete Streets Advisory Committee and endorsed by Baltimore City Department of Transportation—is prioritized as:

1. Walking
2. Cycling / Public Transit / Micromobility
3. Taxi / Commercial Transit / Shared Vehicles
4. Single Occupant Automobiles

Complete Streets Manual _ March 2021

FAQs

RAISE BALTIMORE
TRANSIT PRIORITY PROJECT>>

Curb Extensions (Bus Bulbs) are widened sidewalks that, when built at bus stops, expand the bus boarding area into the travel lane. By allowing buses to stop within the travel lane, buses avoid having to wait to re-enter traffic after stopping, creating travel time savings for bus riders. Curb extensions also improve pedestrian safety by shortening the crossing distance at intersections and physically and visually narrowing the roadway to slow vehicular speeds.

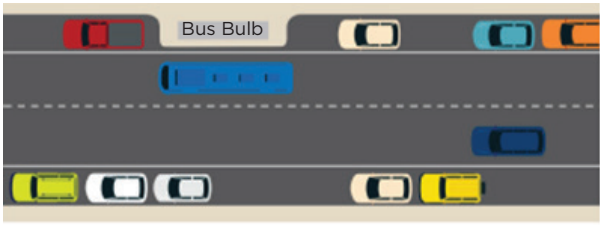
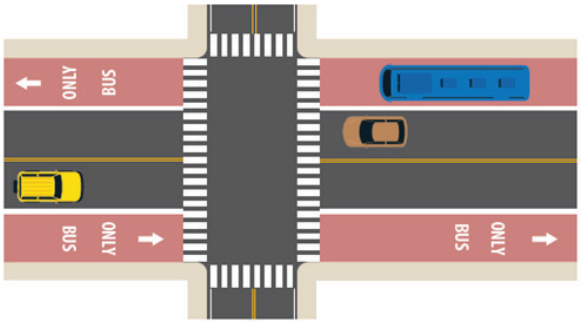


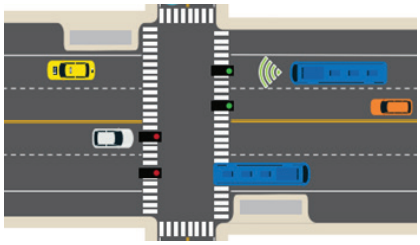
Photo: MDOT MTA Transit Priority Toolkit

Dedicated Bus Lanes (DBL) convert existing travel or parking lanes in each direction to a bus-only lane using striping, markings, red paint and signage. Red paint emphasizes that the lane is for transit only and deters drivers from using the lane, thus reducing the amount of time that buses are slowed by traffic congestion. DBLs would also allow safe shared use with bicycles.



Photos: MDOT MTA Transit Priority Toolkit

Far Side Bus Stop - When a bus stop is placed on the far side of an intersection, the bus moves through the intersection then pulls over to the bus stop. Generally, “far side” bus stops are preferred since they’ve been shown to reduce stop time and increase safety for motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists.

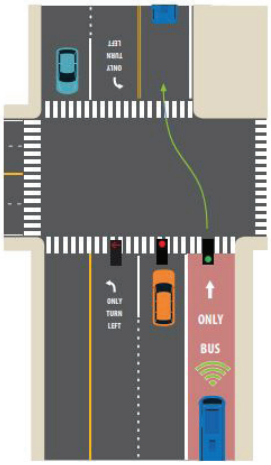


Photos: MDOT MTA Transit Priority Toolkit

FAQs

RAISE BALTIMORE
TRANSIT PRIORITY PROJECT>>

Queue Jumps are a short section of transit only lane prior to the intersection. “Right turn except bus” signage and a bus only traffic signal are typically used to allow buses to jump in front of the queue and proceed through the intersection ahead of the adjacent vehicles. As the bus approaches the intersection it receives a green light, while the general traffic lanes wait at the red light. The gap created on the far side of the intersection allows the bus to merge into the travel lane seamlessly.

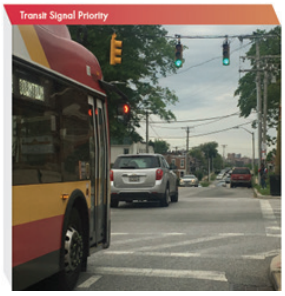


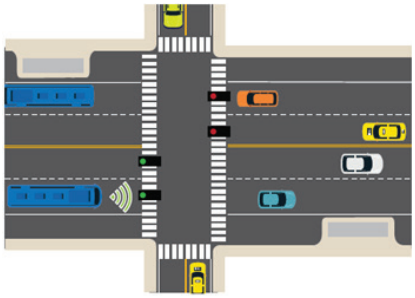
Photos: MDOT MTA Transit Priority Toolkit

Real-time Information Signs (RTIS) are digital signs that display route destinations, frequencies, and estimated arrival times for buses, pulling data from several information technology systems to provide valuable information for bus riders. Buses in MTA’s system are equipped with GPS systems to report real-time data, which is shared through a mobile app and real-time signs at several transit hubs.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is a type of urban development that maximizes the amount of residential, business and leisure space within walking distance of public transport. It promotes a symbiotic relationship between dense, compact urban form and public transit use.

Transit Signal Priority (TSP) is a technology that adjusts the traffic signal timing when transit vehicles are present to allow them to more quickly travel through the intersection. This technology can significantly reduce bus delay, which improves travel time and reliability for transit riders. MTA has implemented TSP at 66 intersections in the MTA system and a previous analysis showed that run times along certain segments implementing TSP improved by as much as 20% during peak period.





Photos: MDOT MTA Transit Priority Toolkit