



Draft FY 2025 -FY 2030 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) – Baltimore Regional Transit Commission (BRTC) Staff List of Concerns

As proposed, the draft CTP will present MTA with major issues for the safe, reliable and efficient operation of its existing systems with even less left to improve or expand them. We have profound concerns regarding the proposed deferrals to the MTA's core transit services in the Baltimore region.

These deferrals, detailed in the draft FY 2025–2030 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), will continue to disproportionately harm communities that are already underserved and historically disinvested in, in our region.



MTA Capital Needs Shortfall and the Impact on Communities

1 MTA Capital Needs Inventory

According to the MTA's (2022) Capital Needs Inventory, the agency requires significant reinvestment to maintain its current infrastructure and meet growing demand (\$500M/yr). According to the MTA March 2024 presentation to this body, this gap is expected to almost double (to over \$900M/yr) and we expect critical infrastructure will fail.

3 Core Bus User Demographics

The data is clear: 87% of core bus users are non-white, and 84% of those identify as African American. These riders bear the brunt of the system's underfunding, enduring service delays, breakdowns, and inadequate infrastructure.

2 Impact on the Communities in our Region

Disinvestment in MTA core services (particularly core bus services) has long affected the extent and quality of public transportation available to the residents in our Region, and these deferrals risk perpetuating that legacy.

4 Transit as a Necessity

For many, public transit is not just a choice—it is a necessity. Most core bus riders do not have access to a vehicle, and transit is their only lifeline to employment, education, and essential services.

Transit Usage and Economic Impact

1

Transit Usage by Income

Transit usage in the Baltimore region is highest among the highest and the lowest income brackets, with lower-income individuals twice as likely to rely on public transportation for basic mobility.

2

Employment and Transit Use

Seventy-one percent of transit users are employed. This underscores the vital role MTA plays in providing economic accessibility and opportunity for Baltimore's working-class and marginalized communities.

3

Economic Mobility Concerns

MTA service plays a vital role in providing economic accessibility and opportunity for Baltimore's working-class and marginalized communities. Any further disinvestment or delay in the system threatens to widen the gap in economic mobility for these groups, reinforcing existing inequities

4

Personal wealth

Public transit can save households significant money on car ownership, fuel, maintenance, and parking costs. This frees up disposable income, which is then reinvested into the local economy in other sectors, such as retail, education, and healthcare. According to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), every \$1 invested in public transit generates approximately \$5 in economic returns.

THE PROBLEM – MTA's Funding Challenges Are Not New

MTA faces two main challenges:

1. The urgent need to replace its aging vehicle fleets; and
2. A growing backlog of necessary repairs to core systems.

The need for funding and staff are a result of three main factors:

1. Basic systems maintenance keeps being deferred year over year and the costs to fix it keep rising. Emergency repairs divert agency focus and are more expensive;
2. Vehicle replacements are now critical and the physical systems necessary to operate are chronically underfunded; and
3. Expectations that promised major expansion projects will be delivered.



THE PROBLEM – Nothing left for Long Term Planning, Expansion and Innovation

The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) has significant challenges in maintaining and operating its existing infrastructure leading them to a necessary shift in focus, prioritizing basic maintenance and operations over system expansion or service improvements.

This reflects the urgent need to prevent service collapse but underscores the growing tension between maintaining the system's integrity and responding to evolving transit demands.

Consequently there is little to no funding left for system planning, expansion and innovations.





Proposed Deferrals for the MTA in the FY 25-FY 30 CTP

Total Deferrals (6-year CTP)	\$672 million
FY 2026 Deferrals	\$124 million
Core Bus Program Deferrals	\$410 million
Light Rail Program Deferrals	\$69 million
Metro Rail System Deferrals	\$65 million

Impact of Deferrals on Core Transit Services

1

Core Bus Program

Over \$400 million is deferred from the MTA core bus program, including the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the 80+ year old Eastern Bus Division and the entire electric/ZEV bus program. These projects are critical to the ongoing success of MTA's core bus operations and addressing key environmental goals promised by the Governor.

2

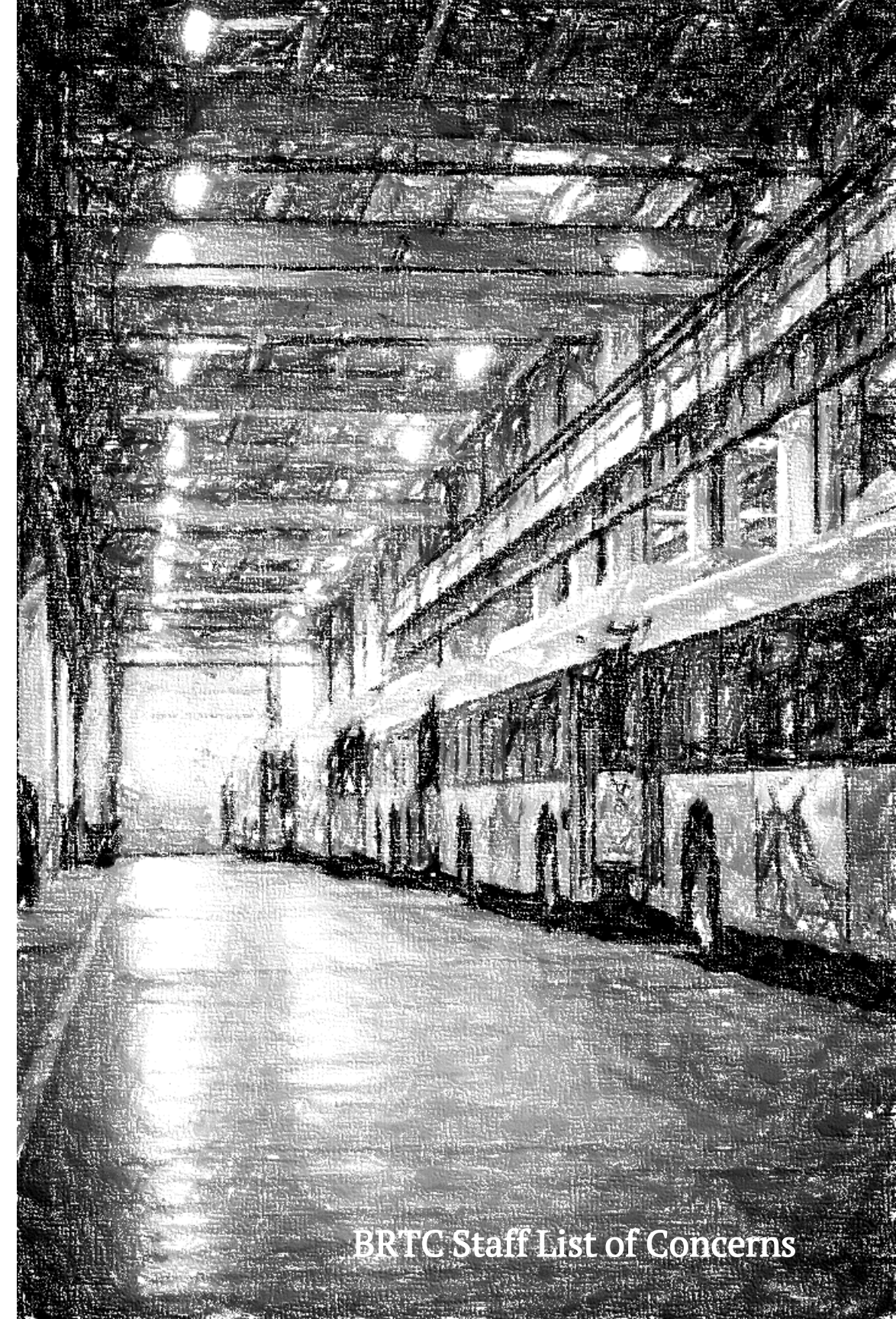
Light Rail Modernization

\$69 million was deferred from the MTA Light Rail program, including the long-overdue rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Howard Street section, and other system improvements. Rail and systems fixes such as the switch heater system replacement are also to be deferred. Station Improvements necessary for new vehicles is left unaddressed, raising concern about how the system will function.

3

Metro Rail System

Ten project deferrals totaling \$65 million will impact the Baltimore Metro rail system, particularly affecting station and facility rehabilitation and system improvements. Deferring interlocking/turnout renewals will likely cause service disruptions and operational risks. Postponing station improvements and lighting programs will lead to higher maintenance costs and potential emergency closures.



Funding Disparities

1

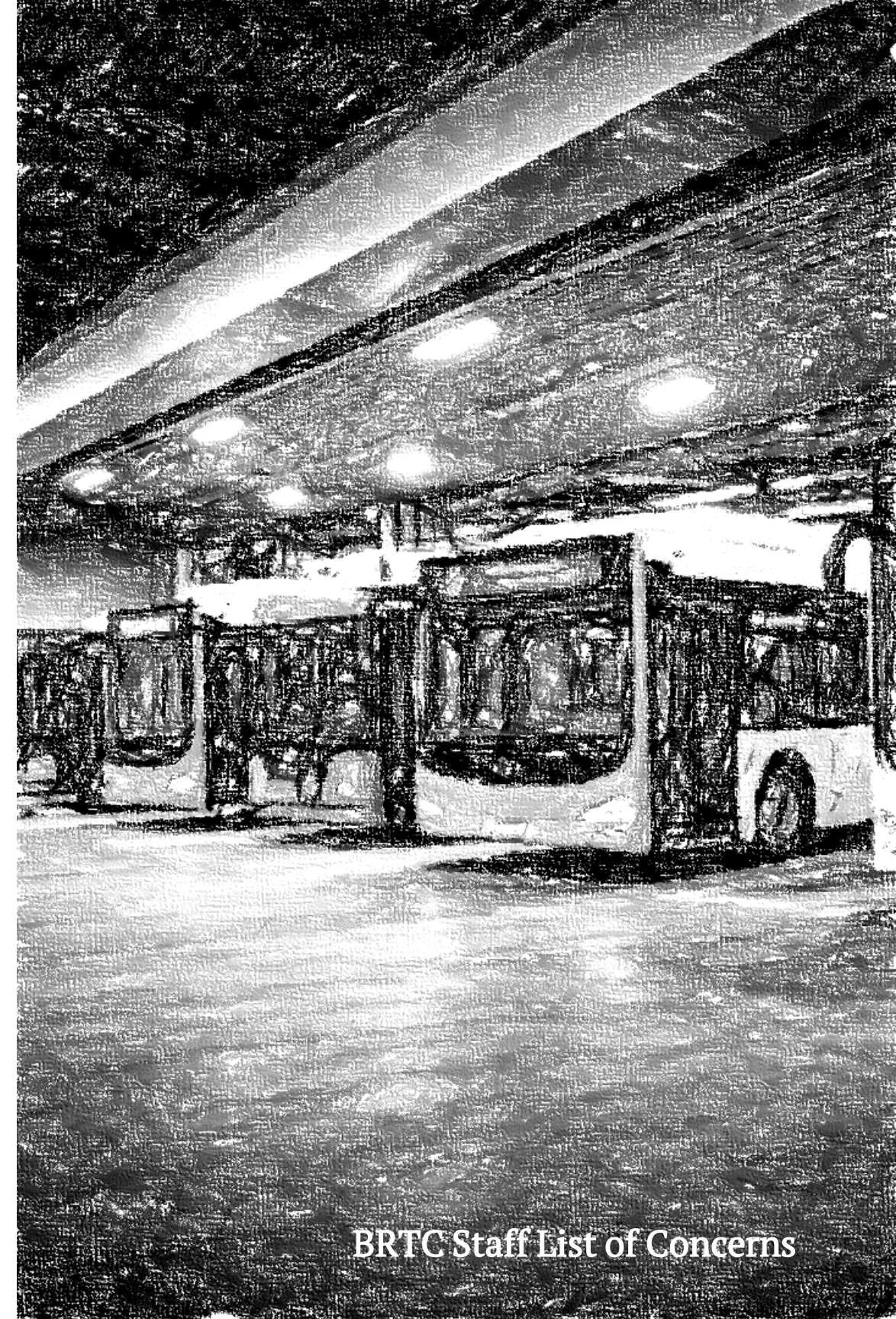
Purple Line Cost Overruns

The Purple Line project continues to see dramatic cost overruns, increasing its six-year capital program by \$240 million from the FY 2024 CTP to the FY 2025 CTP. The Purple Line increases represent much of the total increase provided to MTA. The Purple Line consumes one-fourth (25%) of MTA's total capital budget and nearly one-half (48%) of all the state money available to MTA over the 6 year period FY24-FY30.

2

The WMATA system will face no cuts or deferrals

The WMATA system will receive an additional \$147.4M in capital and operating funds. This amount does not include any funds programmed for WMATA in the FY 2030 operating budget and we note that WMATA's operating allocation continues to increase year over year.



Compliance Concerns

1 Transit Safety and Investment Act Violation

The Transit Safety and Investment Act of 2021 mandated MTA State of Good Repair funding at \$450 million for Fiscal Years 2025 and 2026. It appears that the CTP proposes not to honor that mandate, budgeting only \$336 million in FY 2025 (a shortfall of \$113 million) and \$376 million in FY 2026 (a shortfall of \$73 million).

2 Zero-Emission Bus Transition Act Concerns

The Zero-Emission Bus Transition Act of 2020 requires the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) to only purchase zero-emission buses for its transit fleet starting in 2023. This past July, the Board of Public Works approved the \$80 million purchase of fifty 40-foot hybrid electric and twenty 40-foot battery-operated electric buses. Given the deferral of the ZEV program, we question if further consideration should be given to continuing this contract and if the Department can use this money to address other pressing system rehabilitation and repairs outlined in the MTA deferral list.





Funding Priorities and Statutory Compliance

Selective Law Compliance

While the Commission fully supports Locally Operated Transit System and WMATA funding, we do not understand how the proposed CTP can choose to follow certain state laws, such as the one mandating funding levels for Highway User Revenues and funding for Locally Operated Transit Systems, but ignore other state laws regarding MTA.

WMATA Funding Priority

We also do not understand how a voluntary multi-state agreement for WMATA funding can take precedence over Maryland state law.

Urgent Need for Increased Funding

The program of deferrals for MTA, totaling over \$672 million across six years, underscore the urgent need for increased funding to ensure service reliability and community satisfaction.

Call for Reconsideration

MDOT must act now to find the resources to address these critical projects. We urge MDOT to reconsider the current proposed cuts to MTA's state of good repair and look for a more equitable share of the burden of the reduced revenues.



Call to Action

Reconsider Deferrals to MTA

We urge MDOT to reconsider the proposed deferrals to MTA's core transit services in light of the growing needs outlined in the MTA's Capital Needs Inventory and especially the impacts these will have on Baltimore's African American and transit-dependent populations who rely on the services.

Protect State of Good Repair

The current deferrals jeopardize not only the state of good repair but also the future well-being of the communities that rely most heavily on public transportation and will set the MTA system's state of good repair back by decades.

Secure Additional Funding

We urge the Maryland Department of Transportation to take immediate action to secure additional funding for the MTA.