3 PUBLIC OUTREACH – ROUND 1

3.1 Overview

The initial public outreach component of BNIP, which spanned eight months of the project timeline, sought public input in restructuring the system to make it more effective and efficient. The BNIP public outreach plan targeted two distinct groups for public involvement: key stakeholders and the general public. In order to communicate the purpose of BNIP with each group and to garner informed and constructive feedback from them, the BNIP project team created informational materials on the project, developed service improvement concepts, and conducted transit planning exercises that were used where appropriate at public outreach events, meetings, and through an online crowdsourcing public engagement forum called MindMixer (mtamaryland.mindmixer.com).

The BNIP project team, comprised of MTA and consultant staff, conducted more than 25 outreach events and meetings over four months.[1] The first phase of outreach focused on various organizational perspectives including customer service, operations, and other key stakeholders. The outreach team received service improvement suggestions from bus operators through events held at each division. A focus group meeting was also held with MTA Customer Relations Officers CROs) to record their input based on what they hear through their communication with the public. Additionally, meetings were held with the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Citizens Advisory Committee for Accessible Transportation (CACAT), where participants provided input about service improvements.

The second phase of outreach focused on MTA's citizens committees and the general public. The team received public input through six public meetings, three pop-up events strategically held in busy pedestrian areas with high levels of public transit access, and through MindMixer, the online crowdsourcing site.

Throughout the public outreach process, the BNIP Stakeholder Committee provided suggestions and insight on the public participation plan as well as service planning recommendations. Members of the stakeholder committee include representatives from a variety of departments within MTA as well as other agencies and local government representatives who are impacted by MTA service.

The results of the outreach effort will be used to develop the project's recommendations. The input that was received through the myriad outreach efforts serves as a wealth of information that, when combined with MTA data and service area characteristics, provides a deep understanding to guide the service planning components of the BNIP study.

[1] Six general public meetings, three pop-up events, one meeting each with the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Citizens Advisory Committee for Accessible Transportation (CACAT), three stakeholder committee meetings, four bus division meetings in August, eight bus division meetings in November, and one focus group with MTA Customer Relations Officers (CROs).

3.2 Advertising the Public Outreach Process

The public outreach process was promoted through a mix of digital and print media tools. For the general public, the following approaches were used:

- MTA created a BNIP webpage, advertised on MTA's website with banner ads, tweeted about the project and events on its Twitter feed, posted messages on its Facebook page, and used the MindMixer site to disseminate information about the project.
- MTA sent email announcements to 70 Community Based Organizations and local governments; Baltimore County then forwarded that email to all of their neighborhoods and communities.
- MTA printed overview brochures that described the project and provided information on how to get involved that were handed out by the Marketing Department's Street Team outreach team; 12,000 brochures were handed out.
- MTA printed 4"x9" cards that provided an overview of the project that were distributed in pockets on the buses and in Metro stations.
- Eight hundred interior bus cars were printed in English and 450 in Spanish and hung in MTA buses, encouraging riders to get involved by attending a public meeting and/or visiting the MindMixer site.
- MTA emailed fliers to each of the locations where public meetings were being held to be posted on their bulletin boards.
- MTA Administrator Robert Smith wrote an Op-ed about the project that was published in the Baltimore Sun, which led to two articles that discussed the public outreach aspect of BNIP; *Speak Up for Better Transit* (Smith, 2013) and *Public Input on Baltimore's Bus Network Sought* (Rector, 2013).

MTA issued a media advisory about the study and the outreach events. This resulted in two radio spots for the study:

- WYPR covered it on September 16, 2013 with Sheila Kast (interview with the Administrator).
- WEAA Morgan State covered it on September 23, 2013 on the Anthony McCarthy show.

For internal MTA staff, the study was announced through TransitLine, and the MTA's employee newsletter.

3.3 Meetings with Stakeholders

3.3.1 Stakeholder Committee

The Stakeholder Committee for BNIP was developed to ensure that internal and external stakeholders are engaged throughout the BNIP planning process. The committee met several times and input was received regarding the approaches to reaching out to the general public as well as about initial service change ideas. The Stakeholder Committee membership includes:

- Internal Offices
  - Service Development
  - Service Quality
  - Performance Measurement
  - Civil Rights
  - Customer Service
  - Marketing
  - Media Relations
  - Field staff (including operators and field supervisors)
  - Union Representatives
- External
  - Maryland DOT
  - City of Baltimore / Charm City Circulator
  - Central Maryland Transportation Alliance (CMTA)
  - Baltimore Metropolitan Council
  - Downtown Partnership
  - Greater Baltimore Committee
  - Transit Choices

Some of the key comments obtained from the Stakeholder Committee regarding service improvements and ideas included suggestions for the public outreach effort, making sure that the study focuses on access to jobs, and comments on particular draft service change recommendations.

3.3.2 CAC and CACAT

The BNIP project team met with the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Citizens Advisory Committee for Accessible Transportation (CACAT), respectively, to inform them about the project and to obtain their input. At the meetings, team members presented an overview of the project and heard initial comments and ideas; the team requested that the committees submit their recommendations for service improvements. The project team also encouraged members to participate in the public meetings and on the MindMixer website. During the meetings the team received comments and suggestions from several CAC and CACAT members and several members attended public meetings and gave additional comments. Comments received from the CAC and CACAT included suggestions to engage local employers in the planning process; suggestions on particular routes and recommendations to serve additional locations; a desire to leverage the capacity of Metro and LR by providing better feeder service; simplification of the network; and providing coverage so that disabled residents can easily access transit service. Specific comments provided by the CAC and CACAT are provided in Appendix B.

3.3.3 Operator Outreach

The BNIP project team met with MTA bus operators at each bus division in August and then again in November 2013 to encourage operators to get involved in the project and to solicit suggestions through in-person discussions and comment forms. During the August outreach BNIP project team members set up a table at each division interviewing operators in an informal atmosphere and distributing information about BNIP. The operators were encouraged to continue to share their ideas with the team through email or direct phone conversations. From the August operator outreach the team received over 150 unique suggestions for service improvement and suggestions and/or complaints on the service design of 39 different routes. These suggestions

were incorporated into the service planning concept display boards used in the public meetings, pop-ups, and on the MindMixer website.

Major themes from this first round of driver interviews included splitting longer routes in the downtown area (Route 10), adding runtime and lay over time to routes (Routes 5, 10, 14, 15, 21, 27, 54 and 91) adding additional buses to reduce overcrowding (Routes 10, 13, 15, 53 and 77) and reducing the number of stops or adding Quick Bus service to corridors (Routes 5, 13, 20, 22 and 35). The comments provided during these meetings are provided in Appendix B.

In November 2013 the project team returned to the bus divisions with the service planning concept display boards and at each division soliciting suggestions and handing out comment forms. The comment forms were the same ones used during the public meetings and asked participants to list routes that they thought could be improved using the following methods:

- Higher or lower frequencies
- Earlier or later start and end times
- Realignment
- Segment transfers
- Combination with another route
- Split into multiple routes
- Extended to certain places
- Places needing new routes
- Short-turn
- Altered service type
- Segment elimination
- Eliminated completely
- Other general feedback

As a result of the November 2013outreach events at the bus divisions, 40 comment forms from bus operators were received and additional comments were provided verbally by the operators and recorded by project staff. Overall, Route 35 received the highest number of comments with 28, followed by Route 15 with 19 comments and Route 10 with 16 comments. The higher/lower frequency category was most commonly cited as an improvement method, followed by route splitting and earlier/later start and end times. In the higher/lower frequency category, only one comment suggested lower frequencies (Route 30) while the remainder suggested higher frequencies. Route 15 received the most comments suggesting higher frequencies, followed by Routes 4, 20 and 35. Route 35 received the most comments suggesting a route split, along with Routes 10 and 15. Route 40 received the most comments suggesting earlier/later start and end times, followed by Routes 3, 4, 16 and 54.

A detailed list of comments received is included in the overall comment summary tables in Appendix B.

3.3.4 Customer Relations Officer (CRO) Focus Group

BNIP project team members held a focus group meeting in August with six MTA Customer Relations Officers (CROs) to learn what the participants see as the major themes that they hear in their conversations with customers who call the customer service information line. The focus group participants provided information on which routes and neighborhoods receive the greatest number of complaints and their stated service needs. The most common comments received, according to the focus group participants, are:

- The Windsor Hills and Forest Park neighborhoods do not have enough bus service between 7:00 AM and 9:00 AM; the Route 15 buses are overcrowded in that area.
- Service is needed on East Joppa Road and Loch Raven Boulevard.
- Service is needed further into Randallstown.

Participants also shared the most common types of service planning related complaints that they receive:

- Customers request more service on lines that run hourly; customers have expressed that they would like hourly lines to run every 30 minutes.
- Customers are concerned about reliability and complain when their buses do not run on time.
- Customers use the posted schedules and are very upset when a scheduled bus never arrives.
- Customers had a great deal of difficulty using the CharmCard® readers on the bus. This fare media creates boarding issues in the morning that frustrates customers and operators alike.

The feedback from the CRO focus group reinforced what the data had been communicating about several poorly performing routes and provided insight on how riders use and perceive the current service.

3.4 Virtual discussion

3.4.1 MindMixer

3.4.1.1 Overview

MindMixer is a crowdsourcing public engagement platform. The website functions like a "virtual town hall," a community forum where constituents can meet to discuss issues and share ideas with each other and decision-makers. This online engagement format has the benefit of existing without time and location constraints, generally making it more accessible to residents who have easy access to the internet via a computer or smart phone. The BNIP MindMixer page (mtamaryland.mindmixer.com) not only offered a forum for discussion, but also provided information about the project, including a video created by MTA to announce the launch of BNIP and supporting maps and document related to the project. Additionally, the site lets users know which MTA and local government officials are watching the site. The BNIP MindMixer site provides another public venue, in addition to in-person public meetings, to engage and educate large segments of the public. The MindMixer site was launched on September 11, 2013 and was kept open for comments through November 30, 2013. It will remain available in a read-only format during the next phase of the study and will be re-opened for comment when there are recommendations to share.

Figures 3.4.1 and **3.4.2** provide snap-shots of different elements within the BNIP MindMixer site.

Figure 3.4.1 – BNIP MindMixer Information Page

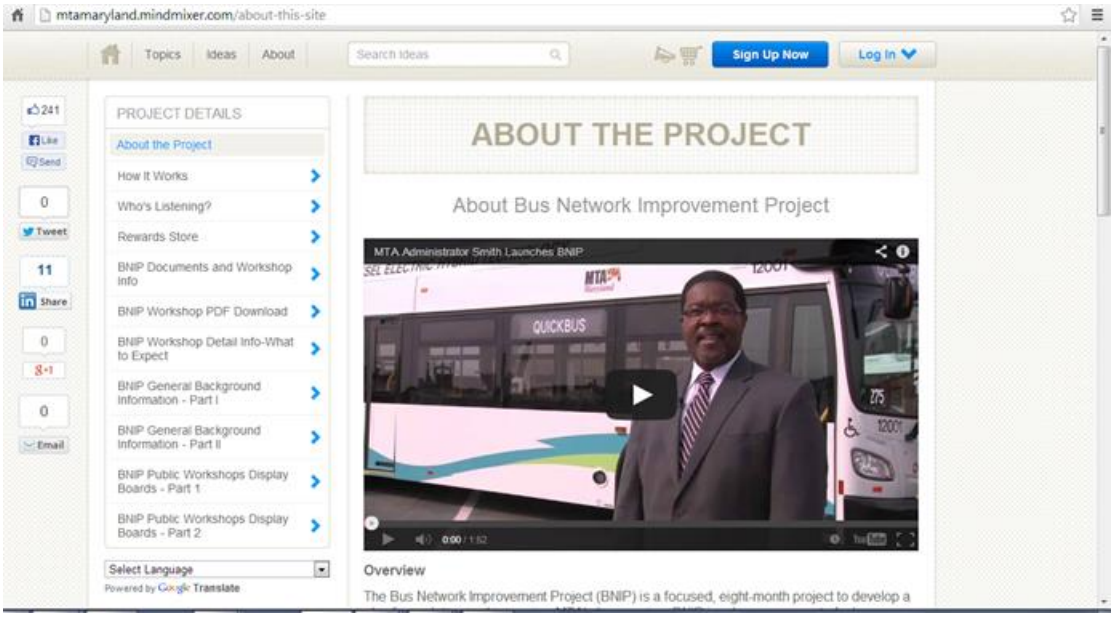
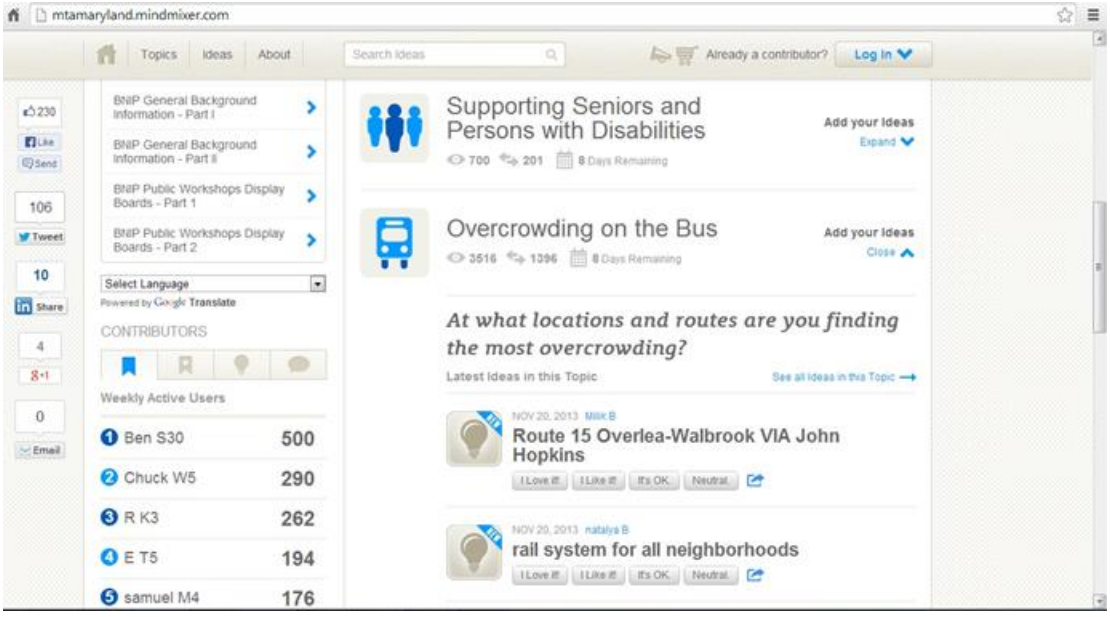


Figure 3.4.2 – BNIP MindMixer Discussion Board Example

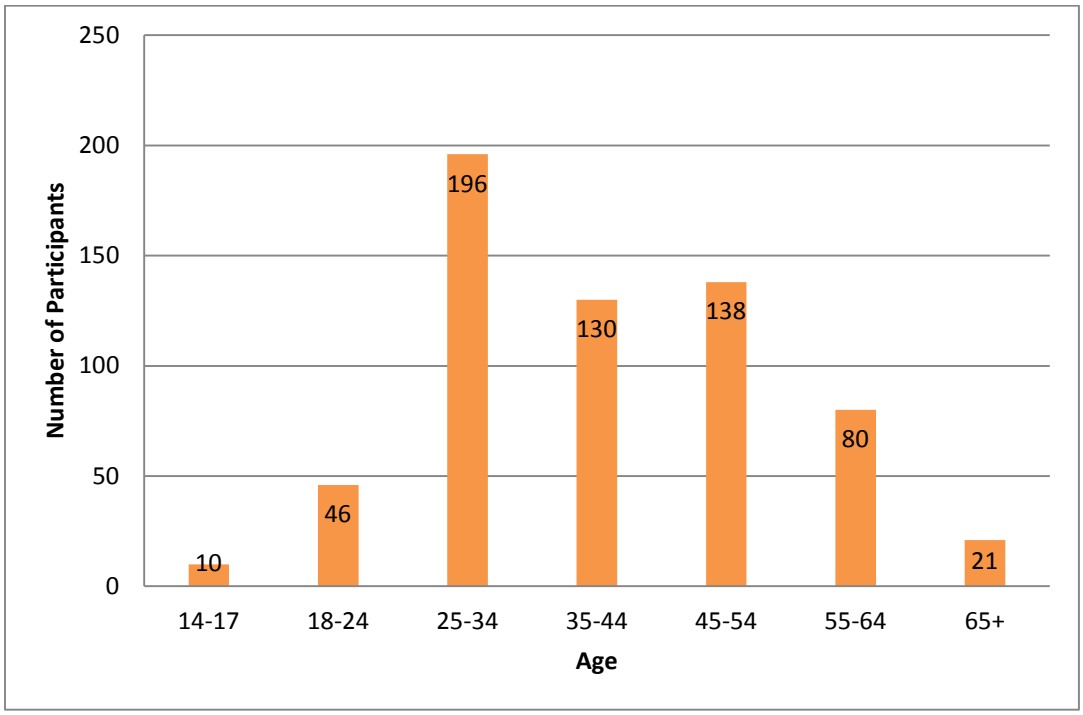


3.4.1.2 Participants

One of the major goals of the MindMixer website was to ensure that public participation in BNIP was substantial, diverse and inclusive of individuals who would not traditionally participate in public meetings and workshops. Ultimately, MindMixer was able to meet all these criteria and engage a significant number of MTA customers within the region. As of November 30, 2013, the close date for this phase of outreach, MindMixer had a total of 698 total participants, with 1,027 comments posted over an 80-day period.

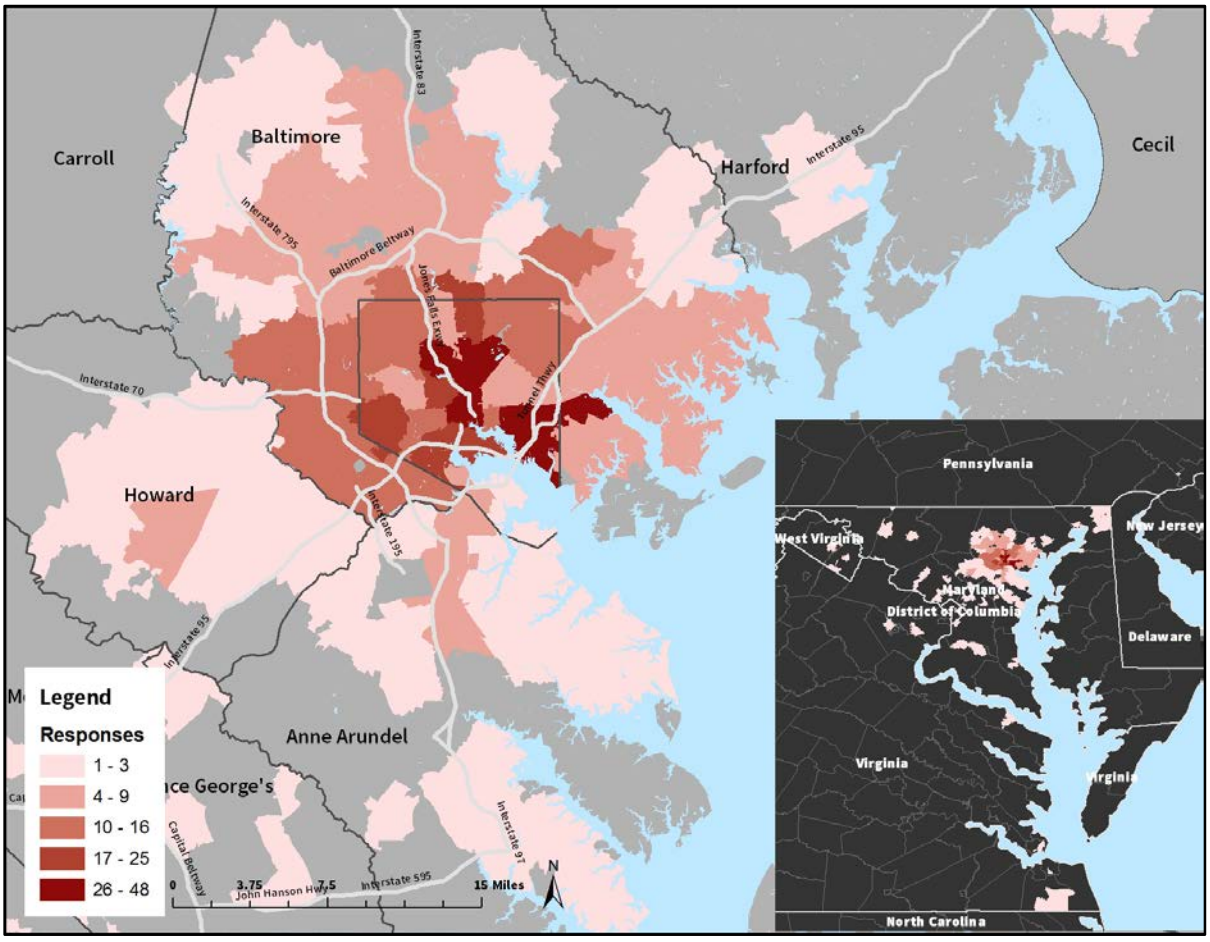
Overall, the breakdown of MindMixer participants was slightly more female than male, at 55 percent. This is comparable to the City of Baltimore's gender split of 52 percent female and 48 percent male. The average age of a MindMixer participant was 40 years old, however, as is evident in **Figure 3.4.3**, the most active participants ranged from ages 25 to 55. All age groups were represented on the website and there was even representation of youth and senior populations.

Figure 3.4.3 – Ages of BNIP MindMixer Participants



In terms of the geographic representation in Baltimore City and the surrounding region, there was substantial participation from residents of the downtown core; however, there was also participation from residents of the more far-reaching segments of the service area. The highest levels of participation were in the neighborhoods of Waverly, Hampden, Mount Vernon, Patterson Park, East Case, Tremont, Govans, Druid Hill and the Inner Harbor. Those who utilize MTA's commuter services were also reflected in the discussions, representing passengers on MARC train service in West Virginia, Commuter Bus service in Howard County, local bus service in Anne Arundel and Prince George's County, as well as Washington DC's Metrobus and Metrorail services. The number of participants by zip code is shown in **Figure 3.4.4**.

Figure 3.4.1 – BNIP MindMixer Participant Locations by Zip Code



3.4.1.3 Discussions

The BNIP project team posted 27 topic areas on the BNIP MindMixer website that utilized different discussion formats such as instant polls, open ended questions, and mapping exercises. Users were able to provide answers to the questions posted and generate ideas to share with MTA, while other users were able to comment on and/or "like" an idea posted by another participant. **Table 3.4.1** provides a list of the topics that were posted. The ideas posted and survey responses for each MindMixer topic are provided in Appendix B.

MindMixer also allows for instant polls, and these provided some important demographic and preference data of the participants. The top mode utilized by participants is the local bus, followed by LR and then the Metro service. Many of the participants only utilized the commuter services such as the MARC train and commuter bus a few times or had yet to utilize the service. In terms of wait time, participants overwhelmingly preferred to wait 15 minutes or less and wanted the most frequent service to be at peak periods (mornings and evenings). When asked about the focus of MTA service, respondents stated that MTA should "focus on connecting all residential neighborhoods in the region to employment and other needs." Another major item addressed in the instant poll

was the need to improve the presentation of the system map, both on-line as an interactive tool and in defining high frequency service and transfer points on the static service map.

Table 3.4.1 – MindMixer Discussion Topics

Question	Answer Choices
What MTA services do you use: daily/a few times a week/a few times a month/a few times a year/never?	Local Bus, LR, Metro, Commuter Bus, Mobility, MARC Train, Express Bus, None
What do you think is an appropriate amount of time between buses in the middle of the day?	A. 10-15 minutes B. 15-30 minutes C. 30-45 minutes D. 45-60 minutes
Do you think MTA service (Baltimore bus services, Metro, LR) is satisfactory? Do you see it as a good transportation option? What do you like about it and what don't you like?	Open-ended
Do you think the existing transit options in Baltimore are adequate, or could they be improved? In what way?	Open-ended
What areas or points of interest do you feel are unserved or underserved by transit? Show us areas or points of interest (employment centers, medical facilities, schools, shopping centers, etc.) in the Baltimore region you feel are unserved or underserved by transit service. If you could redesign where transit serves, what locations would you put new or expanded transit service? Place a pin on the map to show the general location.	Open-ended
How far would you be willing to walk to a bus route that comes every 10 minutes?	A. 15 minutes B. 10 minutes C. 5-10 minutes D. 5 minutes or less
What resources do you normally use to plan your transit trip on MTA? (Check all that apply.)	A. Google maps trip planner B. Paper schedules C. Web-friendly schedules D. Calling the transit information center E. A trip planning app (specify below) F. Other (specify below)
And yes, we know you want real-time information for buses, and we're currently working on that… so, what else? Different map designs? Different displays on the website? More wide-spread distribution (and where)? Different signage?	Open-ended

Question	Answer Choices
Has there ever been a time you have felt unsafe on MTA service? How can we make your riding experience more secure and safe?	Open-ended
What improvements should MTA focus on for improving the speed of its buses? Do you support dedicated bus lanes? Prioritizing buses through traffic signals? Limiting the number of stops to speed up service? Any other ideas? Where do you think these changes are needed most (be specific)?	Open-ended
How long is too long a wait for a bus to arrive?	A. 3-5 minutes B. 5 minutes C. 10 minutes D. 15 minutes E. 30 minutes
What time of day would frequent (10-15 minutes) service benefit you most?	A. Early Morning (4am-6am) B. Peak Morning Hours (6am-9am) C. Peak Morning Hours (6am-9am) D. Mid-Day Hours (10am-3pm) E. Peak Evening Hours (4pm-6pm) F. Night Hours (9pm-12pm)
What should MTA focus its service on to meet riders' needs (Choose One)?	A. Service should focus on high demand locations where ridership is high B. Service should focus on connecting all residential neighborhoods in the region with employment and other needs C. Service should focus on human service agencies and hospitals D. Service should focus on employment centers
Does transferring (from bus route to bus route or bus route to LR/Metro) discourage you from using public transit? If so, do products like the Charm Card make it easier to make transfers?	Open-ended
Is there any advice you would give to MTA for providing better and easier to access transit information?	Open-ended
Have you seen examples in other cities or countries where improvements have been made to bus service that you find unique or interesting? Please post a picture of the improvement and why you think it's a good idea.	Open-ended

Question	Answer Choices
Is there a bus route you take that is in need of an improvement? Please tell us about the challenges you face on this route and how we can fix it.	Open-ended
What should MTA's main goal be for transit in Baltimore in the next five years? How do you define success for the service in serving Baltimore?	Open-ended
Please review the map that includes employment centers in the region. Please indicate which employment centers you think MTA service should serve and recommend employment locations that are not currently listed.	Open-ended
There has been a lot of discussion about bus stop spacing. What do you believe is the ideal amount of spacing between bus stops?	Open-ended
Which bus vehicle feature or amenity is most important to you?	A. Hybrid-Electric Vehicles B. Wi-Fi on buses C. Longer buses (Articulated Buses) D. More comfortable seating E. Bus Seating Layout Redesign
How can the fixed route local bus service better support the needs of persons with disabilities and seniors?	Open-ended
At what locations and routes are you finding the most overcrowding? Please let us know the location, time of day, and route where you experience this issue.	Open-ended
Are there any locations where signage to locate transit service is confusing or inadequate? Please describe the location and we will see how we can help.	Open-ended
What should be MTA's top priority in improving safety for our riders?	A. Improve Safety Training for Driver B. Better Lighting at Bus Stop C. Increase Security Personnel D. Install more Security Cameras E. Reduce Overcrowding
What can MTA learn from other cities' transit systems? What have you observed or read about that you think MTA should implement?	Open-ended

Question	Answer Choices
What are some of the ways that MTA can better utilize its system map?	A. Interactive System Map Online B. Highlight Transfer Points in the System C. Show increase/decrease in frequency/span of service through stylistic detail D. Include Local Area Maps at bus shelters to help with wayfinding E. Highlight Points of Interests/Neighborhoods

Certain issues and ideas were raised by participants under various topics and fostered extended discussions. Those popular discussion topics yielded recurring requests and recommendations. Beyond route specific service recommendations, which are included in the greater service planning process, analysis of the MindMixer comments yielded three distinct feedback categories: Service Reliability, Resource Information and Customer Experience.

Comments made describing the reliability of MTA service focused on the lack of trust riders have in the system's ability to meet their day-to-day needs. Some of the major points of discussion in this feedback category called for enhanced operational oversight, improved service planning, and long range system planning. Additionally, requests were made to improve the frequency and span of service to high demand locations and new employment centers; better support, education, and infrastructure for the CharmCard®; improvements to bus stop amenities; and a focus on bus priority lanes for high demand corridors.

MTA customers had thoughtful discussions on the need for innovative resource information tools. The most requested resource product was real time arrival information. This included the introduction of a real time mobile application, real time displays at bus stops and mobile text message services. Other significant resources requested were improved bus stop and headway signage, more detailed maps and schedules, and greater online resources.

In evaluating the customer experience found by riders of MTA service, there were recommendations made to improve the level of professionalism of MTA operators and staff and the overall customer service experience. Many participants on MindMixer found it difficult to track their complaints lodged through the Call Center and wanted an improved user experience when calling the customer service line. Additionally, riders found operator courtesy and student rider behavior to have a significant impact on their comfort and safety when riding the service. Participants stressed that if greater training and enforcement of standard protocol and procedures were to take place, there would be significant improvement to the quality of their experience and ultimately make an impact on the operation of the transit service as well.

In terms of route specific requests, there were a total of 406 new route and route modification requests made on MindMixer. As is evident in **Figure 3.4.5**, the most common request was to serve new locations through the introduction of new routes. The second and third most requested service changes were to increase frequency of specific routes and realign routes and segments. Overcrowding was also a commonly reported problem, without a specific service request made in many instances as to how to fix the issue. These requests are being considered as a part of the larger service planning process. Most comments were made in an effort to improve the efficiency of the service, increase on-time performance, and better serve locations that are unserved or underserved.

Figure 3.4.5 – MindMixer Participants' Service Requests

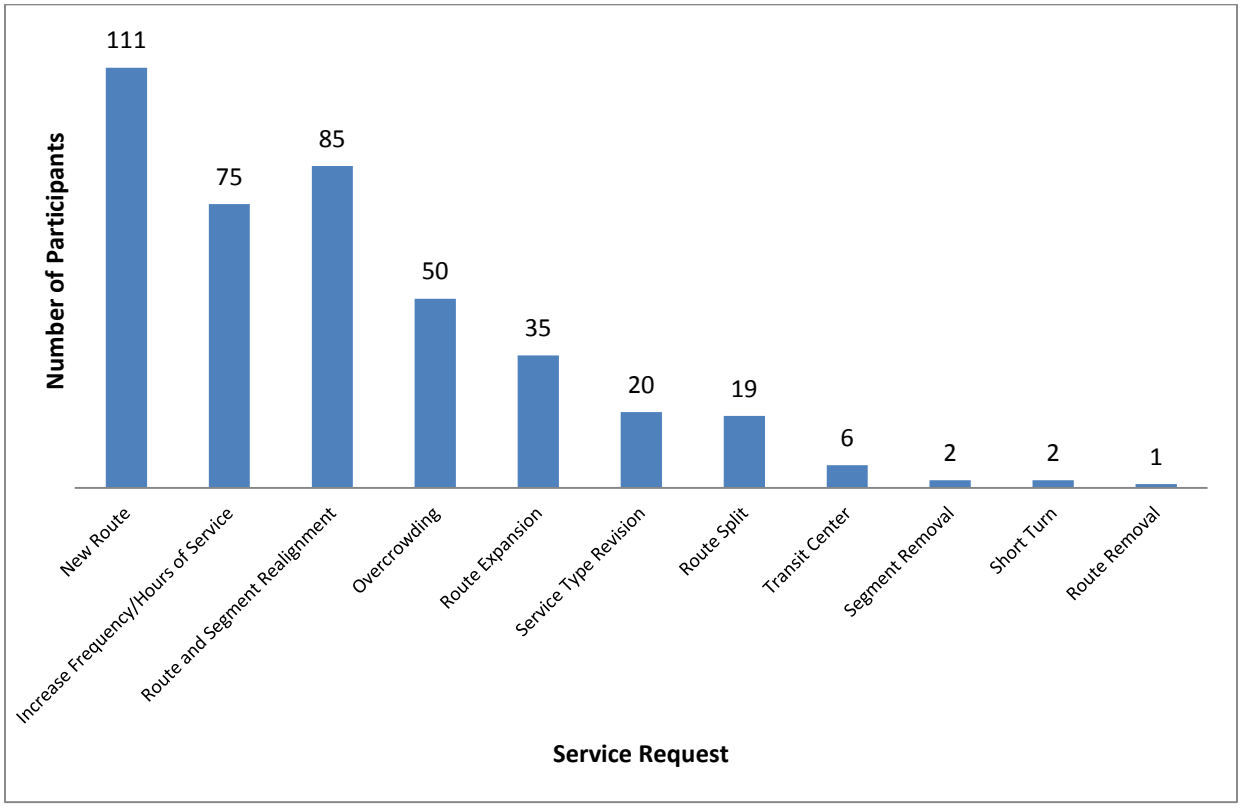


Table 3.4.2 shows the top 15 most requested locations for new service in the MTA service area. Some of these locations are currently served by one or more MTA modes; however, it appeared to be underserved to participants. Howard County was the most requested location by participants, with specific interest in the Columbia Mall and historic Ellicott City. Suggestions for increased service to Owings Mills, the BWI Business Corridor, White Marsh, Greenbelt Metro Station, Hampden, Towson, Annapolis and Arundel Mills were all made in an effort to connect to the greater Baltimore-Washington region for jobs, shopping and recreation. The National Business Park is one of the only locations named which is not currently served by any of MTA's service.

Table 3.4.2 – Top 15 Requested New Service Locations on MindMixer

Location	Comments Received
Howard County	10
Owings Mills	8
BWI Area	6
White Marsh	6
Greenbelt Metro	5
Hampden	5
Towson	5
Annapolis	4
Arundel Mills	3
Mill No. 1 (3000 Falls Road)	3
National Business Park	3
Randallstown	3
York Road	3
Dundalk	2
Forest Park, Ashburton, Arlington, Park Heights / Pimlico	2

3.5 Telephone

A telephone number with a voice mailbox was provided on BNIP brochures, bus cards, and the website to provide the public with an additional way to communicate their comments. One hundred fifteen comments were received through the call-line. The most common comment provided by callers was to improve the frequency of specific routes, making up 37 percent of the calls placed to the number. Other key inputs pertaining to improving the service included extending the span of service in the evenings and weekends for specific routes, better coordination between routes to facilitate transfers, and to improve operator courtesy and student rider behavior.

3.6 Public Meetings

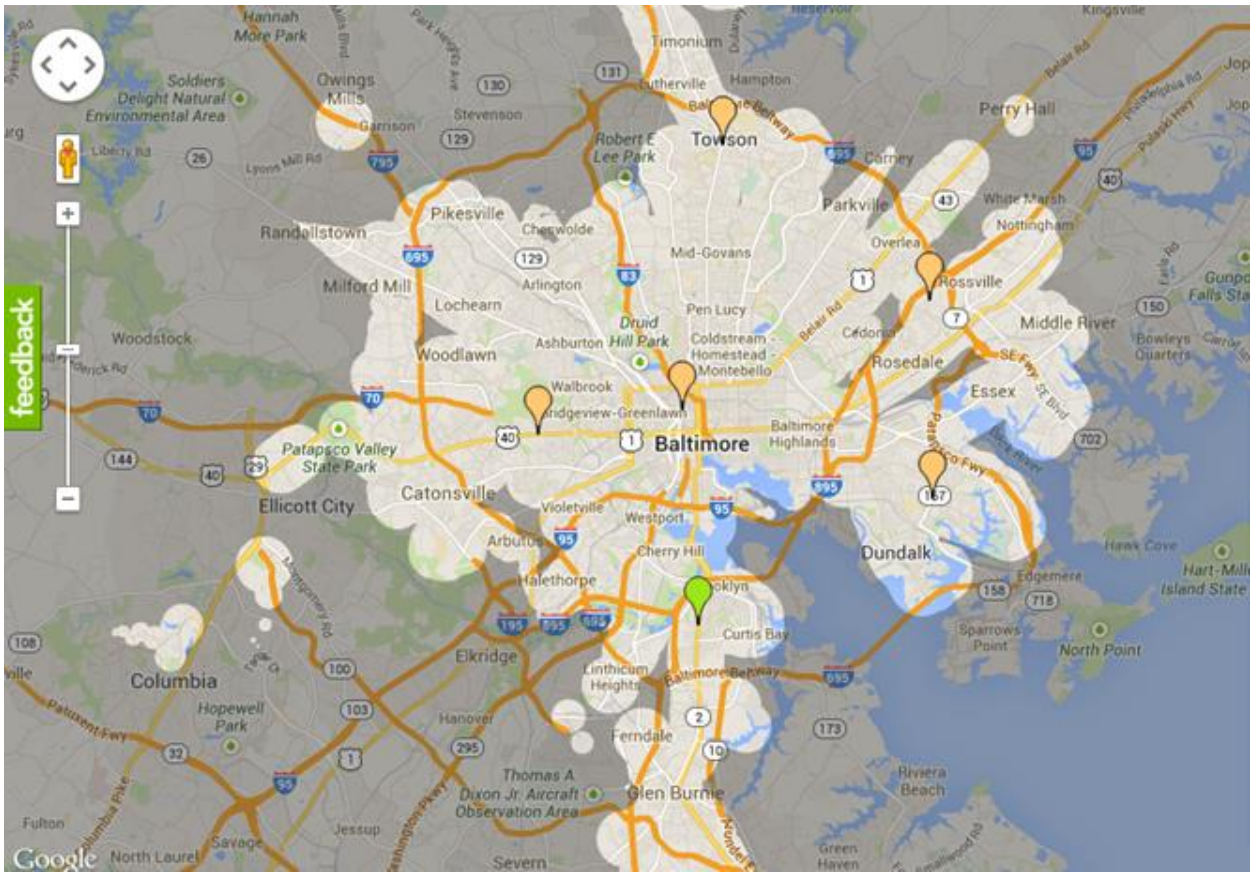
3.6.1 General Public Meetings

3.6.1.1 Overview

The BNIP project team held six general public meetings in different parts of the service area in the City of Baltimore and Baltimore and Anne Arundel Counties. The meetings were held at a range of times and days (**Table 3.6.1**), with a mid-day meeting in a commercial area, State Center in Baltimore, and meetings in the evenings and on a Saturday in more residential areas.

It was important that the meetings were located throughout the service area to provide an opportunity for all interested members of the public to participate. The map in **Figure 3.6.1** shows the location of each event and the areas from which the meetings can be reached using public transportation in 45 minutes or less.

Figure 3.6.1 – General Public Meetings Public Transportation Travel Time Map



Source: www.mapnificent.com[2], November 22, 2013

[2] www.mapnificent.com uses the General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS), developed by Google, to calculate travel time.

Table 3.6.1 – General Public Meetings – Fall 2013

Date	Time	Location	Participants
Tuesday, October 15	12:00 pm- 2:00 pm	Central State Center 201 W. Preston Street Baltimore, MD 21201	41
Wednesday, October 16	5:00 pm-7:00 pm	Central- West Rosedale Library 6105 Kenwood Avenue Rosedale, MD 21237	7
Saturday, October 19	12:00 pm- 2:00 pm	East North Point Library 1716 Merritt Boulevard Baltimore, MD 21222	8
Monday, October 21	5:00 pm- 7:00 pm	North Towson Library 320 York Road Baltimore, MD 21204	28
Wednesday, October 23	5:00 pm- 7:00 pm	West Enoch Pratt Free Library Edmondson Avenue Branch 4330 Edmondson Avenue Baltimore, MD 21229	21
Thursday, October 24	5:00 pm- 7:00 pm	South Brooklyn Park Library 1 East 11th Avenue Brooklyn, MD 21225	12
Total Number of Participants			**117**

State Center, 10/15/13

State Center, 10/15/13

Edmondson Library, 10/23/13

Brooklyn Park Library, 10/24/13

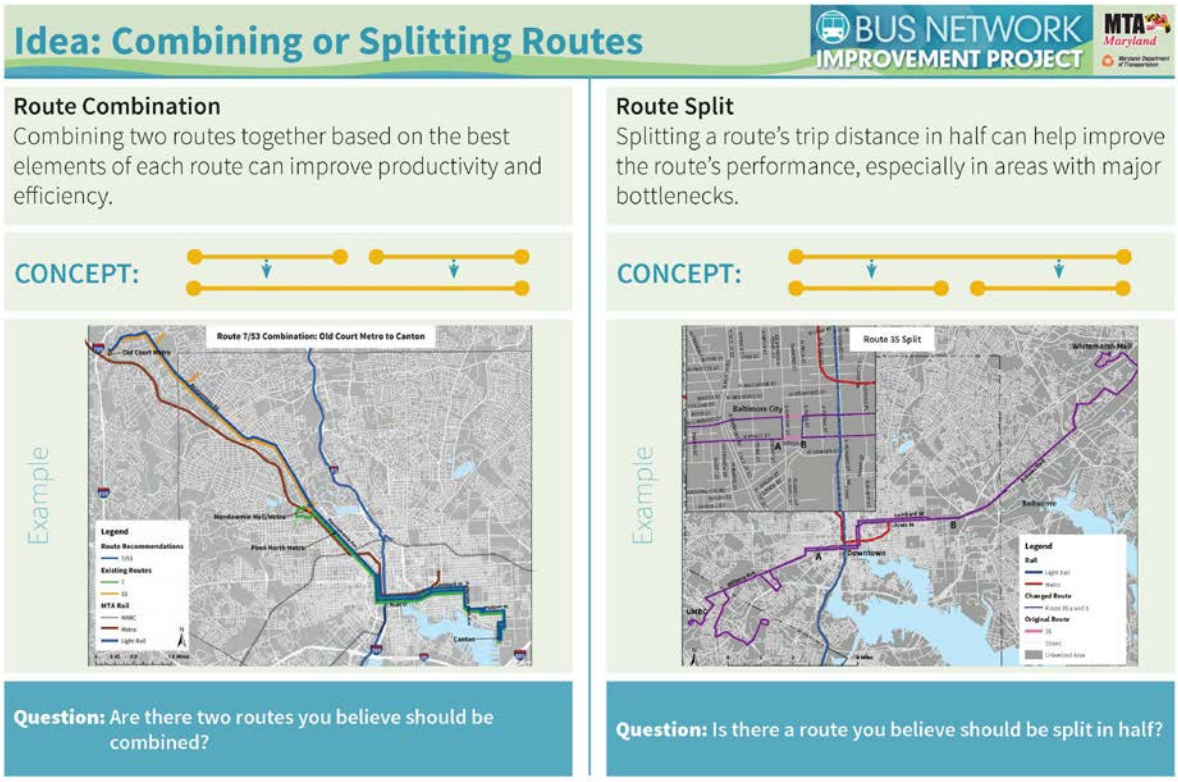
3.6.1.2 Meeting Content

The general public workshops were held for two hours each in an open house format. To facilitate this type of accessible and flexible meeting style, the public workshop spaces were divided into three main areas: 1) greeting/check-in table and BNIP informational slideshow presentation; 2) MTA service planning background and concept boards; and 3) public workshop exercises. Participants were led through these three areas sequentially, building upon each section and imparting critical knowledge about the program and the planning process.

Attendees signed in and noted whether or not they would like to be contacted for project updates and future workshops at the check-in table, where they were also provided with a BNIP brochure and the feedback form that was utilized during the public workshop exercises. A slideshow displayed a looping series of slides that describe the BNIP Study, a brief description of the MTA service area, and a demonstration of the MindMixer site was projected on a screen to provide participants with needed background information about the study.

The display boards had two main themes: 1) overview of MTA service area and background information about the system and the service area, and 2) service planning concept boards. The overview boards provided the participants with an overview of MTA local bus service, the service area, and key demographics. These included regional travel patterns, bus service productivity, and transit propensity based on a number of factors. The service planning concept boards provided an explanation and example of seven types of bus service modifications that the project will consider. Each board provided an explanation of the type of service change, an example of that type of change, and a question to the participant. **Figure 3.6.2** displays an example of a service concept board; Appendix C contains all of the display boards. The service planning boards covered the following concepts: Changing Level of Service (increase/decrease frequency/hours of service), New Connections (route and segment realignment, segment transfer), Combining or Splitting Routes, New Markets (route expansion/new routes), New Alignments (short turns, service type revision), and Service Removal and Other Ideals (segment removal, route removal).

Figure 3.6.2 – Example Service Planning Concept Board

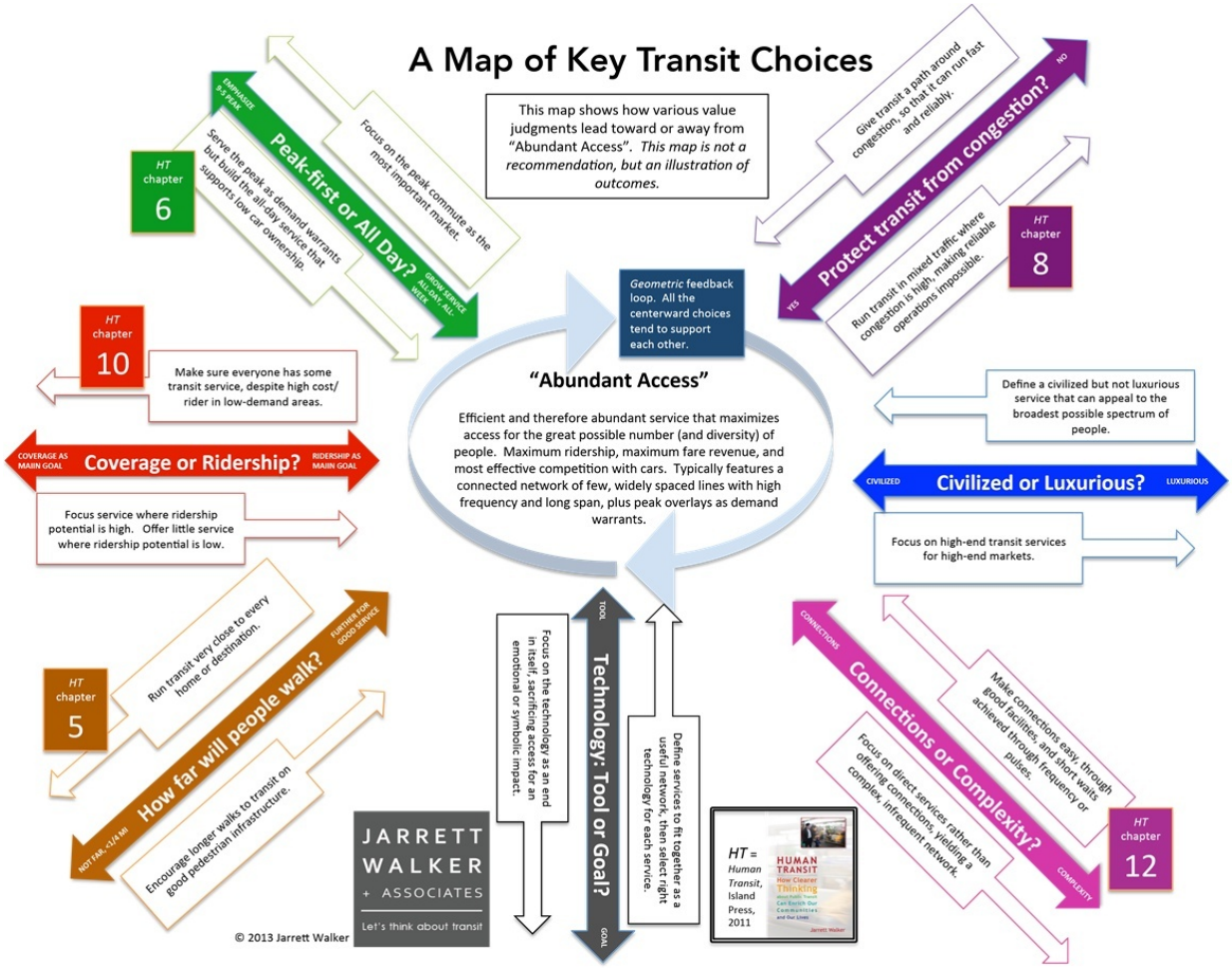


Each service planning concept board posed questions to the participants; these questions were repeated on a comment form (see Appendix D) to obtain written input.

In addition to responding to the questions posed on the display boards, there were two public workshop exercises: a trade-off exercise, where participants were asked to make a decision about what elements of service are most important to their optimal transit experience, and an origin and destination (OD) mapping exercise where participants were asked to identify their origins, most frequent destinations, and one location that they would like to get to, but is currently not served, by transit.

The trade-off exercise was based on the "Abundant Access Diagram" developed by Jarrett Walker in his book *Human Transit.* The diagram, shown in **Figure 3.6.3**, was positioned next to the trade-off exercise and provided users with a deeper understanding of the decisions communities must make in improving a transit system based on their outstanding needs and preferences.

Figure 3.6.3 – Abundant Access Transit Trade-Offs Diagram



Source: *Human Transit* by Jarrett Walker, 2011

3.6.2 Pop-Up Events

3.6.2.1 Overview

The pop-up events were designed to reach community members who might not come to public workshops but would engage in conversation and provide feedback in a place where they already are. To that end the pop-up events were held in outdoor public areas near public transit service with a lot of foot traffic. **Table 3.6.2** lists the date, time, location, and number of participants at the three pop-up events. The number of participants at the pop-up events is based on the number who participated in a short exercise that was conducted by project team staff; in all cases more people were spoken with and given brochures about BNIP.

Table 3.6,2 – Pop-up Events, Fall 2013

Date	Time	Location	Participants
Tuesday, October 15	4:00 pm- 6:00 pm	Randallstown Walmart 8730 Liberty Road Randallstown, MD 21133	32
Wednesday, October 16	11:00 am-1:00 pm	Mondawmin Metro Station 2307 Liberty Heights Avenue Baltimore, MD 21215	146
Wednesday, October 23	11:00 am-1:00 pm	Baltimore Area 201 W. Baltimore Street Baltimore, MD 21201	105
Total Number of Pop-up Participants			**282**

3.6.2.2 Event Content

The project team set up a tent at each location to attract attention and encourage participation; project team members wore bright green t-shirts to indicate that they were a part of the project. At the pop-up events members of the public were given BNIP brochures and asked if they would be willing to participate in the trade-off exercise that was also administered at the public workshop events. At the end of the trade-off exercise participants were asked if they had any comments or concerns about MTA local bus service and were given an opportunity to verbally express their ideas to members of the project team who recorded the comments on comment sheets. The public was very responsive to the project team at these events, as reflected by the high participation rates at Baltimore Arena and Mondawmin Metro Station. The lower participation rate at the Randallstown Walmart had largely to the store's policy on not approaching their customers, Walmart shoppers being predominantly automobile dependent, and the distance from Walmart's front door to the nearest transit stop location on Liberty Road.

Mondawmin Bus Loop, 10/16/13

3.6.2.3 Exercise Results

Origin-Destination Exercise

For the origin-destination mapping exercise, participants at the public workshops were given seven numbered stickers each and asked to place the stickers on a large printed map. Participants were given one yellow sticker to indicate where they live, five green stickers to indicate major destinations they typically travel to, such as work or shopping, and one blue sticker to indicate a destination they would like to access on a bus but currently cannot do so due to a lack of service. Numbers were placed on each set of stickers in order to link origins and destinations by participant. Overall, 56 origins, 202 destinations, and 44 destinations that are not served or are underserved by transit were identified. **Figures 3.6.4** and **3.6.5** summarize the results of the origin-destination exercise.

Figure 3.6.4 – Origin-Destination Exercise, Map Results

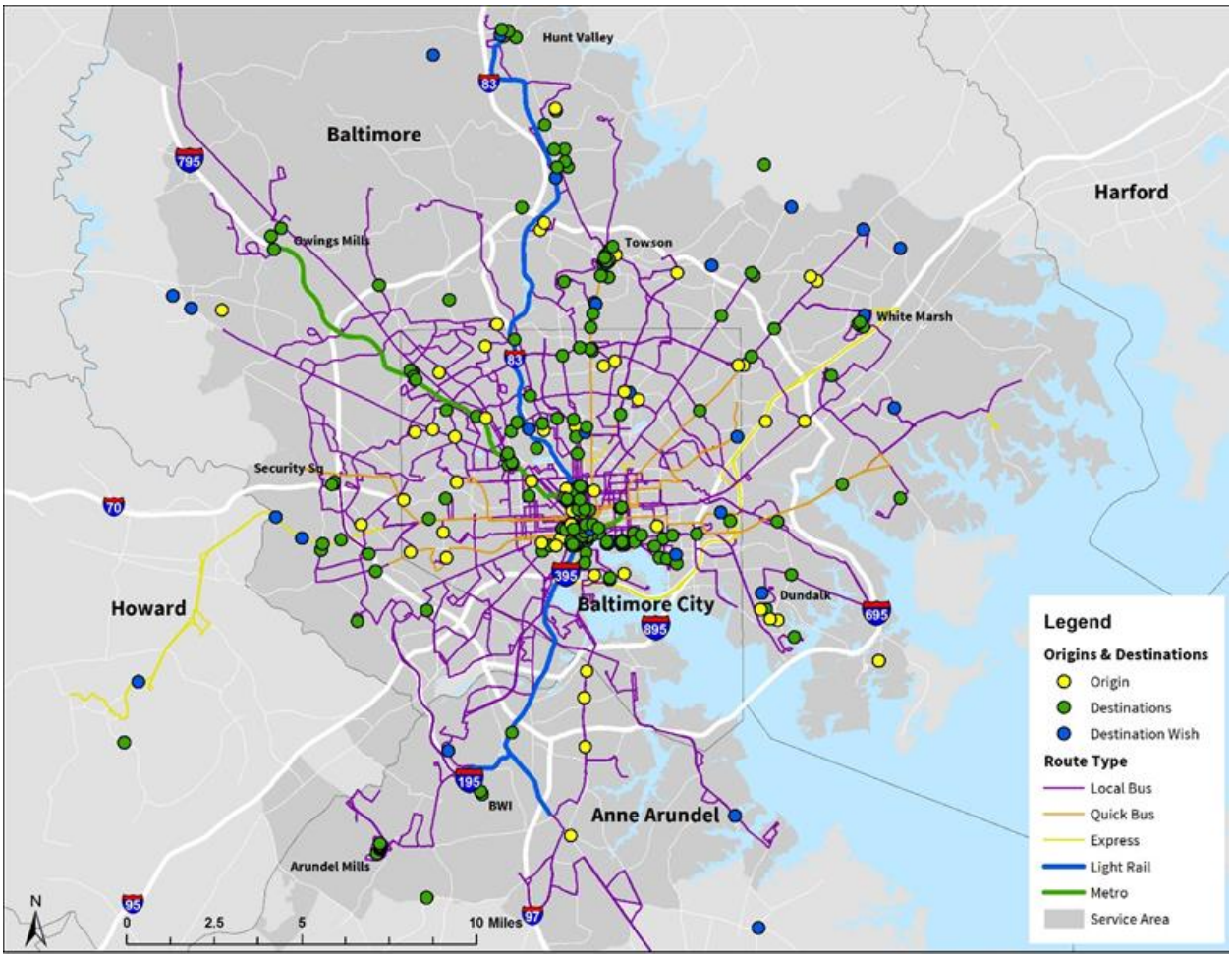
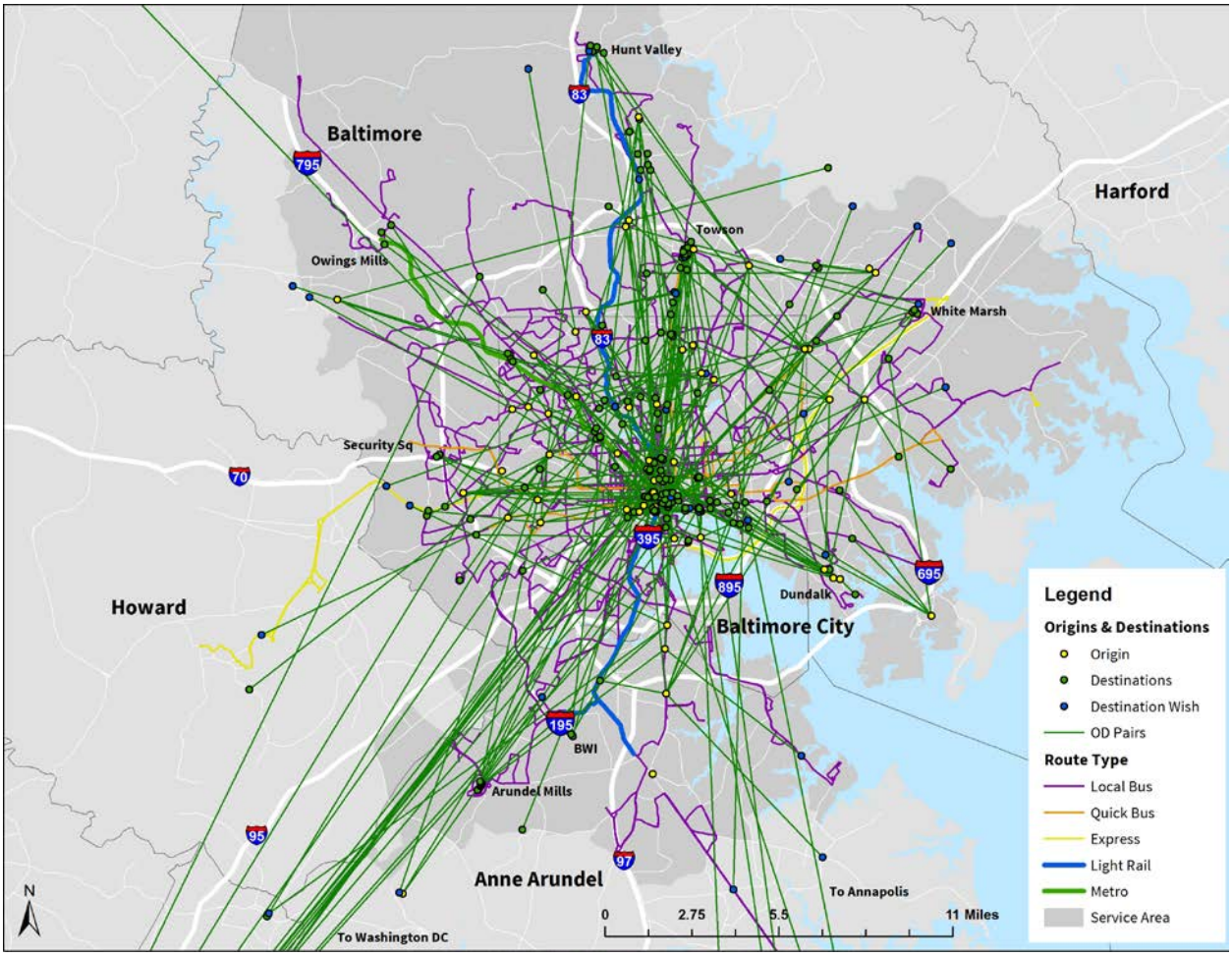


Figure 3.6.5 – Origin-Destination Exercise, Origin-Destination Pairs



Several key areas stand out as having a high number of destinations, including Downtown Baltimore, Mount Vernon, Camden, Arundel Mills Mall, Mondawmin, Towson, White Marsh, Reisterstown Plaza, Hunt Valley and Timonium. Origins were more spread out than destinations, though some clustering is evident in Dundalk, Ritchie Highway, Liberty Heights Avenue and northeast of Downtown Baltimore. **Table 3.6.3** summarizes the origins of the major destination clusters found in this analysis.

Table 3.6.3 – Major Destinations Paired with Origins

Destination	Origins
Downtown Baltimore	Baltimore City (Patterson Park, Riverside, Pigtown, Morgan State University, Cameron Village, Glen, Towanda, Howard Park, Irvington, Overlea, Johns Hopkins); Towson, Dundalk, Rosedale, Glen Burnie, Fort Meade
Mount Vernon	Baltimore City (Hampden, Glen, Dorchester, Riverside, West Hills); Brooklyn Park, Dundalk, Towson (Essex Farms), Edgemere,
Penn Station	Baltimore City (Riverside, Hampden, Glen, Dorchester); Towson (Essex Farms), Dundalk, Edgemere, Brooklyn Park
Camden	Baltimore City (Fells Point, Bolton Hill, Glen, Yale Heights, Mount Washington); Carney, Catonsville
Mondawmin	Baltimore City (Towanda, Dorchester, UMD, Irvington, Westgate)
Reisterstown Station	Baltimore City (Morgan State, Towanda, Dorchester); Randallstown
Towson	Baltimore City (Pigtown, Downtown, Fell's Point, Stadium, Mount Vernon, Westgate, Morgan State University, Hillen, Glen Oaks, Overlea); Brooklyn Park, Rosedale, Towson (Essex Farms), Carney
Hunt Valley	Towson (E Joppa Road), Parkville, Perry Hall, Baltimore City (Overlea)
Arundel Mills	Baltimore City (Glen Oaks, Uplands, Madison Park); Perry Hall, Brooklyn Park, Towson

The destinations that were marked as desired but inaccessible were generally found on the outskirts of the service area or outside the service area completely. Locations identified outside of the current service area included Laurel, Mountain Road in Pasadena, Columbia, Oregon Ridge Park in Cockeysville and the North Plaza Shopping Center on Joppa Road in Parkville. Based on the input obtained at the six public meetings, expanding the existing Local Bus system to reach these destinations should be considered, particularly in the case of Randallstown and Perry Hall. **Table 3.6.4** summarizes these desired destinations and their origins.

Table 3.6.4 – Inaccessible Desired Destinations Outside of Service Area and their Origins

Destination Desired	Origin
Deer Park S.C., Randallstown	Johns Hopkins U, Howard Park
Honeygo Center, Perry Hall	Fell's Point
Laurel	Brooklyn Park
Mountain Road, Pasadena	Brooklyn Park
Columbia	Westgate
Oregon Ridge Park, Cockeysville	Mt. Washington
Joppa Road, Parkville	Carney (east)

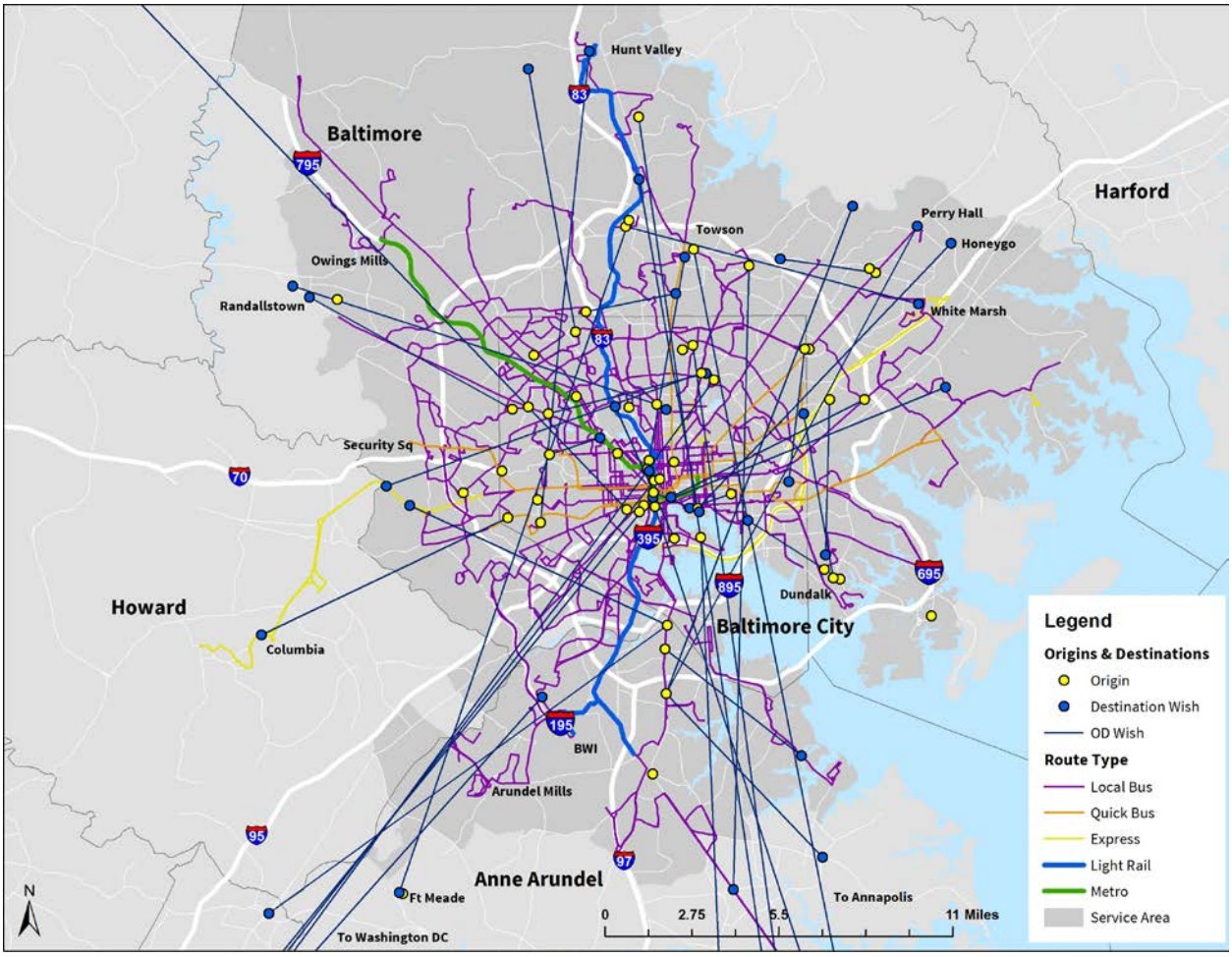
Locations identified as desirable but difficult to access by transit that currently have MTA Local Bus service included the BWI Business Park, Dundalk, White Marsh Mall, Towson, Timonium, Hunt Valley, US-40 west of Rolling Road in Catonsville and several locations within Baltimore. Locations within Baltimore included Fells Point,

Mondawmin, downtown Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Bayview, Woodberry, and Morgan State University. Based on the input obtained at the six public meetings, these locations would benefit from increased service levels and longer spans of service. **Table 3.6.5** summarizes these desired destinations and their origins. **Figure 3.6.6** illustrates all destinations and their origins that were identified by public meeting participants as needing better transit access.

Table 3.6.5 – Destinations within Service Area in Need of Better Transit Access

Destination Desired	Origin
BWI Business Park	Washington, DC
Dundalk	Rosedale
White Marsh Mall	Towson (Essex Farms)
Towson	Bolton Hill
Timonium	Fell's Point
Hunt Valley	Yale Heights
US-40, Catonsville	New Northwood, Brooklyn Park
Fell's Point	UMBC, Patterson Park
Mondawmin	Madison Park
Downtown Baltimore	Rosedale, Washington DC
Bayview	Overlea
Woodberry	Riverside
Morgan State University	Dorchester

Figure 3.6.6 – Destinations in Need of Better Transit Access and their Origins



Trade-Off Exercise

The trade-off exercise that asked public meeting participants to select between competing priorities was also employed at the the pop-up events. The exercise was slightly redesigned into a smaller in order to create a more portable exercise. The trade-off exercise was also posted on MindMixer to obtain input on priorities in bus service from online participants. Participants were asked to pick between two transit service choices for seven topics and choose the one that most reflected their values. The list of topics and choices are listed in **Table 3.6.6** and the results of the trade-off exercise are listed in **Table 3.6.7** by the outreach location. The overall results are also shown in **Figure 3.6.7**.

Table 3.6.6 – Trade-Off Exercise Questions

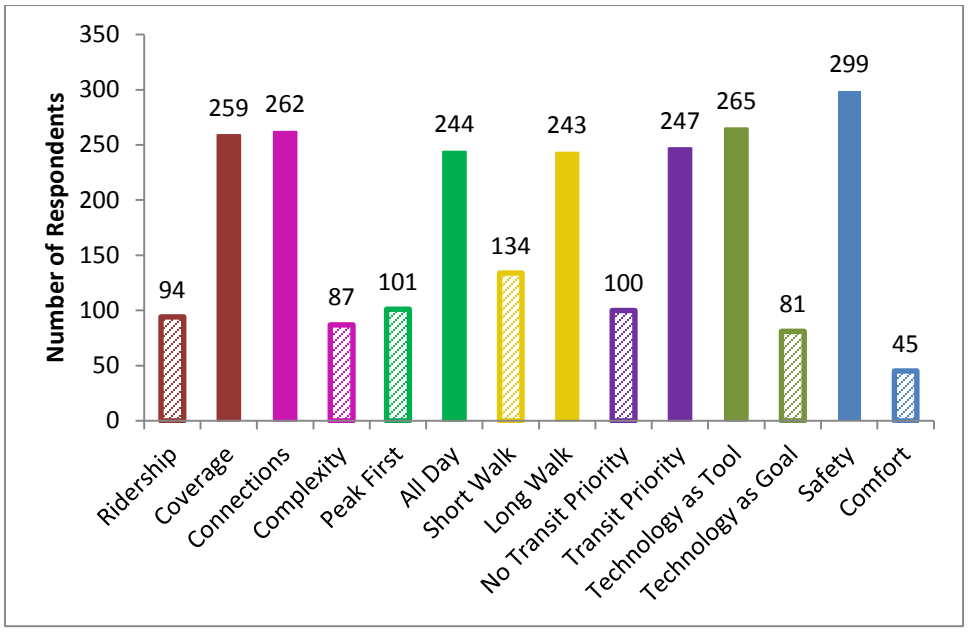
Question	Option
RIDERSHIP OR COVERAGE?	I want bus service to serve places with high rider demand.
	I want bus service to serve every neighborhood.
CONNECTIONS OR COMPLEXITY?	If my service runs more frequently, I would be willing to transfer.
	I will wait a long time for a bus if it means I don't have to make a transfer.
PEAK-FIRST OR ALL-DAY SERVICE?	I want service that has high frequency during peak commuting hours
	I want all day service at a moderate frequency
HOW FAR WILL YOU WALK?	I want a short walk to my bus stop even if it means the bus will run less frequently.
	I would rather walk farther to my bus stop if it means the bus will come more often.
SHOULD TRANIST BE PROTECTED FROM TRANSIT?	I want to keep all travel lanes open to cars, with no separation between cars and buses.
	I believe investment should be made in priority treatments for buses, such as exclusive bus lanes or lanes that allow the bus to go to the head of the line at traffic lights.
TECHNOLOGY: TOOL OR GOAL?	I want transit programs to invest in technology that improves day to day service.
	I want transit programs to invest in cutting edge technology.
CIVILIZED (SAFETY) OR LUXURIOUS (COMFORT)?	I think transit should be safe and get me where I need to go
	I want my bus to have more amenities, such as Wi-Fi and nicer seats

Table 3.6.7 – Trade-Off Question Results by Outreach Event Location

	Ridership	Coverage	Connections	Complexity	Peak First	All Day	Short Walk	Long Walk	No Transit Priority	Transit Priority	Technology as Tool	Technology as Goal	Safety	Comfort
Workshops														
State Center	12	15	27	0	15	13	3	24	2	24	26	1	28	0
Rosedale	6	1	5	2	6	1	5	32	6	7	0	7	0	0
North Point	2	3	1	4	4	1	5	0	2	3	3	2	5	0
Towson	7	6	10	3	1	11	2	11	1	11	10	4	15	0
Edmondson Library	2	10	9	3	2	8	2	10	3	9	10	2	10	2
Brooklyn Park	3	3	6	0	1	5	2	5	0	7	6	1	7	0
Pop-Up Events														
Walmart	5	27	20	11	13	19	14	18	5	27	26	7	29	3
Mondawmin	28	118	105	40	29	111	66	76	49	90	98	40	117	23
Baltimore Arena	29	76	79	24	30	75	35	67	32	69	86	17	88	17
Grand Total	**94**	**259**	**262**	**87**	**101**	**244**	**134**	**243**	**100**	**247**	**265**	**81**	**299**	**45**

Figure 3.6.7 provides the combined total of votes from all of the outreach events for each trade off. The solid bars represent the winner between each choice set.

Figure 3.6.7 – Trade-Off Exercise Results



For each trade-off there were clear winners in each question set. Participants stated that they:

- Prefer bus service in every neighborhood rather than focusing on high ridership areas;
- Would be willing to transfer for added frequency;
- Favor moderate levels of all day service over adding more service during the peak periods;
- Would be willing to walk further to a bus that comes more frequently;
- Favor investments in priority treatments for transit;
- Would like technology that improves service and day to day operations; and
- Want transit that is safe and gets them to where they need to go rather than more comfortable service.

The choice with the smallest vote differential was the "How far will you walk" question, as the response to this largely was impacted by the age and overall health of the customer. The choice with the greatest vote differential was the "civilized vs. luxurious" question, where the vast majority of participants chose civilized, indicating that function was much more important than comfort.

3.6.2.4 Comments Received

Overall, 457 specific comments were received during the public meeting outreach effort across the six different meeting locations. These comments included responses to the questionnaire associated with the service planning concept boards, which accounted for the majority of the feedback, as well as general comments either written down or received by the public meeting facilitators. **Table 3.6.8** details the comments per meeting location, showing that the most comments were received at Edmondson Library, with 136 comments, while the meeting held at State Center accumulated 115 comments.

Table 3.6.8 – Public Meeting Response by Location

Location	Comments Received
Edmondson Library	136
State Center	115
Brooklyn Park Library	77
Towson Library	46
Rosedale Library	37
North Point Library	32
N/A	14
Total	**457**

The majority of the comments were in response to the service planning concept questionnaire, which helped group the response by category. For example, question 1 of the feedback form asked respondents to identify which routes they feel should either have increased or decreased. **Table 3.6.9** illustrates the comments received by category, showing that a majority of the category specific comments were related to bus service frequency (90 comments), span of service (53 comments), and which routes should receive route extensions (43 comments).

The general feedback category (99 comments) combines all comments that were not specific to any of the other categories.

Table 3.6.9 Public Meeting Response by Category

Category	Comments Received
General Feedback	99
Frequency	90
Span	53
Route Extension	43
Split Routes	40
New Routes	36
Realignment	28
Service Type Change	17
Combine Routes	14
Short Turns	12
Segment Transfer	9
Route Elimination	8
Segment Elimination	8
Total	**457**

When possible, public meeting participants were asked to direct their comments toward specific routes. Overall, there were 332 mentions of specific routes, with some comments mentioning more than one route or a grouping of routes. The top ten routes with respect to comments received are shown in **Table 3.6.10**. Route 3 was cited most often, with 23 comments received, followed by Route 20 with 21 comments, and Route 10 with 18 comments.

Table 3.6.10 – Public Meeting Response by Route

Route	Comments Received
Route 3: Cromwell Bridge/Sheppard Pratt Hospital to Inner Harbor	23
Route 20: Security Mall-CCBC Dundalk/ Marine Terminal	21
Route 10: U.S. Route 40 & Rolling Road/ Paradise to Dundalk/ Bull Neck Road	18
Route 15: Security Square Mall/ Westview to Overlea/ Perry Hall	15
Route 14: Patapsco LR Stop to Jumpers Hole/ Annapolis	13
Route 35: White Marsh Mall/ UMBC/ Blind Industries	13
Route 30: Edmondson Village- Bayview Medical Center	12
Route 27: Reisterstown Plaza Metro Station- Port Covington	11
Route 64: Rivera Beach/ Curtis Bay/ Energy Parkway to North Avenue	11
Route 77: Old Court Metro/ UMBC/ Patapsco LR	10
Route 11: Towson Town Center- Canton/ Fell's Point	10

During the Pop-Up sessions, respondents were given the opportunity to provide additional comments after participating in the trade-off exercise. There were 325 comments collected at the three Pop-Up meetings located at the Baltimore Arena, the Mondawmin Metro Station, and the Randallstown Walmart. **Table 3.6.11** details the number of comments received by location.

Table 3.6.11 – Pop-Up Comments by Location

Location	Comments Received
Baltimore Arena	106
Mondawmin Metro Station	161
Randallstown Walmart	33
Post Pop-Up Submission	25
Total	**325**

As with the public meeting comments, responses were grouped by category to help better quantify and understand the responses. Similar categories were used to describe the Pop-Up responses; however, since these sessions were more general in nature and respondents were not given specific questionnaires to answer, the categories to describe the responses has been slightly expanded, including additional categories, such as operator courtesy, safety/security, and school children. **Table 3.6.12** illustrates the comments received by category, showing that a majority of the category specific comments were related to service reliability (43 comments), frequency of service (39 comments), and operator courtesy (37 comments). The general feedback category (143 comments) combines all comments that were not specific to any of the other categories.

Table 3.6.12 – Pop-Up Comments by Category

Category	Comments Received	Category	Comments Received
General Feedback	143	Realignment	3
Reliability	43	Route Extension	3
Frequency	39	Combine Routes	1
Operator Courtesy	37	Route Elimination	1
School Children	20	Segment Elimination	1
Span	12	Segment Transfer	1
Safety/Security	9	Short Turns	1
Modify Routes	7	Split Routes	1
New Routes	3	**Total Comments**	**325**

As comments were received, the Pop-Up session facilitators made a note of any route specific comments that were discussed. Of the 325 comments taken during the Pop-Up meetings, 114 comments were route specific. **Table 3.6.13** shows the top ten route specific comments that were made during the Pop-Up sessions, and shows that Route 16 received the highest number of comments, with 14, while Route 54 received the second most, with 10 comments, and Route 77 received 8 comments. Of the routes mentioned at the Pop-Up events, most were in close proximity to the locations of the Pop-Ups.

Table 3.6.13 – Pop-Up Meeting Response by Route (Top Ten)

Route	Comments Received
Route 16: Mondawmin Metro Station- Brooklyn	14
Route 54: Randallstown/ Milford Mill to Penn-North Metro Station	10
Route 77: Old Court Metro Station/ UMBC Patapsco LR Station	8
Route 14: Patapsco LR Station to Jumpers Hole/ Annapolis	6
Route 15: Security Square Mall/ Westview to Overlea/ Perryhall	5
Route 5: Mondawmin Metro- Cedonia	4
Route 10: U.S. Route 40 & Rolling Road/ Paradise to Dundalk/ Bull Neck Road	4
Route 53: Old Court Metro Station- Mondawmin Metro Station	4
Route 1: Sinai Hospital/ Mondawmin to Fort McHenry	3
Route 4: Turner Station- C.C.B.C Essex	3
Route 23: U.S. Route 40 & Rolling Road- Fox Ridge	3
Route 27: Reisterstown Plaza Metro Station- Port Covington	3
Route 36: Northern Parkway and York Road- Riverview/Monroe Street	3
Route 40: Security Boulevard at C.M.S/ Middle River	3
Route 44: Security Square Mall/ Rosedale Industrial Park	3
Route 57: Security Square Mall/ Social Security Administration to Rogers Avenue Metro Station	3