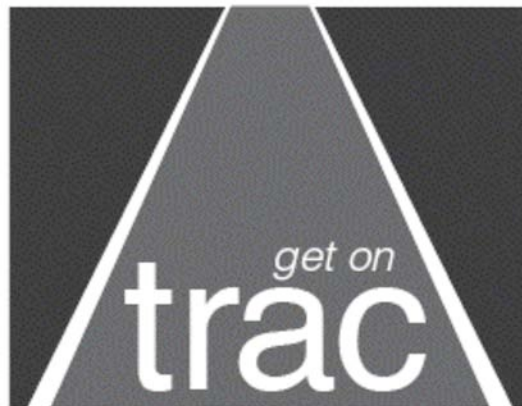


**A Comparison of the Number of Travelers Riding Baltimore's  
Metro Subway and Light Rail and Driving I-795 and I-83  
*between the Hours of 6 and 9 a.m.***

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## Summary

The Baltimore Metro Subway at Owings Mills attracts a significant fraction of the peak rush-hour traffic from I-795 and thus reduces highway congestion. The central Light Rail also attracts traffic from I-83, although its corridor share is significantly less than the subway share. This study highlights the significant fraction of corridor traffic the subway can attract and compares it to the lower corridor traffic share of the Central Light Rail. The hope is to improve rush-hour commutes into Baltimore.

A comparison of the people boarding the Baltimore Metro Subway at Owings Mills Station with the number passing the station on I-795 southbound between 6:00 and 9:00 a.m. reveals that 14% of the southbound corridor traffic is on the Metro Subway. Between the peak hour of 7:00 to 8:00 a.m., 17% of the inbound corridor traffic is on the Metro Subway. While not part of the intent of this study, approximately 2% to 3.5% of the outbound traffic was on the Metro Subway despite the fact that most outbound passengers must transfer to a bus, which is viewed as an inconvenience.

The 2003 “Report of the MTA Citizen’s Advisory Committee: Proposal and Discussion on Phase I of the Baltimore Transit Plan” by Edward Cohen, which was approved by the MTA’s Citizen Advisory Committee on 16 December 2003, found that 54% of the morning traffic into Baltimore’s Central Business District (CBD) from the northwest were on the Metro Subway.

The high quality of subway service is able to compete with the automobile and carry a significant fraction of the corridor traffic. This is true even though many people describe the Metro Subway line as one that “doesn’t go anywhere” or goes “from nowhere to nowhere by way of nowhere” or, as it is sometimes asked, “Baltimore has a subway?”

A similar comparison of the number of people on the Light Rail at Mt. Washington station with the number driving on I-83 across the Baltimore County/City Line shows that 3.0% of the southbound corridor traffic is on the train between 6:00 and 9:00 a.m. and 3.5% of the inbound corridor traffic is on the Light Rail during the peak between 7:00 to 8:00 a.m. At Northern Parkway, the light rail corridor share rises to 3.4% between 6:00 and 9:00 a.m. and to 4.0% during the peak 7:00 to 8:00 a.m. hour. While not the intent of this study, about 5% of the northbound corridor traffic was on the Light Rail.

The aforementioned 2003 “Report of the MTA Citizen’s Advisory Committee” found that 5.4% of the morning traffic into Baltimore’s Central Business District (CBD) from the north was on the Light Rail.

The Light Rail captures a far smaller fraction of the corridor traffic compared to the Metro Subway. While the low share in this study may be due to the Light Rail’s long closure and recent partial reopening only four weeks before this study, the similarity of this study’s results with the 2003 results suggest the lower corridor share is real. The lower share may be due to better competition from the highway (both I-83 and the Light Rail go downtown), to less desirable station locations and destinations, or to lower performance of the Light Rail as compared to the Metro Subway.