

The graphic features the City of Baltimore logo at the top, which includes the text "CITY OF BALTIMORE" and a central emblem of a ship. Below the logo are four circular icons, each containing a different water-related facility: a ship, a bridge, a stadium, and a ship. The background is a light blue gradient.

A stylized graphic featuring a dark blue silhouette of the Baltimore city map. Overlaid on the map are several light blue location pins, each containing a white icon representing a different mode of transportation: a ship, a train, a car, and a bus. In the foreground, a large, detailed illustration of a blue and white ferry boat is shown. In the bottom right corner, there is a logo for the 'dot' (Department of Transportation) of Baltimore City, which includes the text 'dot' in large orange letters, 'DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION' in smaller white letters, and 'BALTIMORE CITY' at the bottom. A small circular seal is also part of the logo.





Agenda

What is the Water Transit Strategic Plan?

1

Harbor Connector Service Evaluation

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Key Priorities & Recommendations

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What is the Water Transit Strategic Plan?



Water Transit Strategic Plan Background

What is the Water Transit Strategic Plan?

- Update to the 2015 Water Transit Strategic Plan
 - Are the previous plan's recommendations still applicable 10 years later?
- Operational Analysis of the Harbor Connector
 - How is the service performing in terms of ridership, and are there opportunities to improve efficiency or service delivery?
- Operational Analysis of the Harbormaster Office
 - Review best practices for other Harbormaster operations in peer cities, recommend ways to modernize this recently relaunched office
- Assessment of Inner Harbor Infrastructure
 - Recommend strategies to improve the state of waterfront infrastructure such as docks, bollards and cleats, and consider long-term infrastructure planning



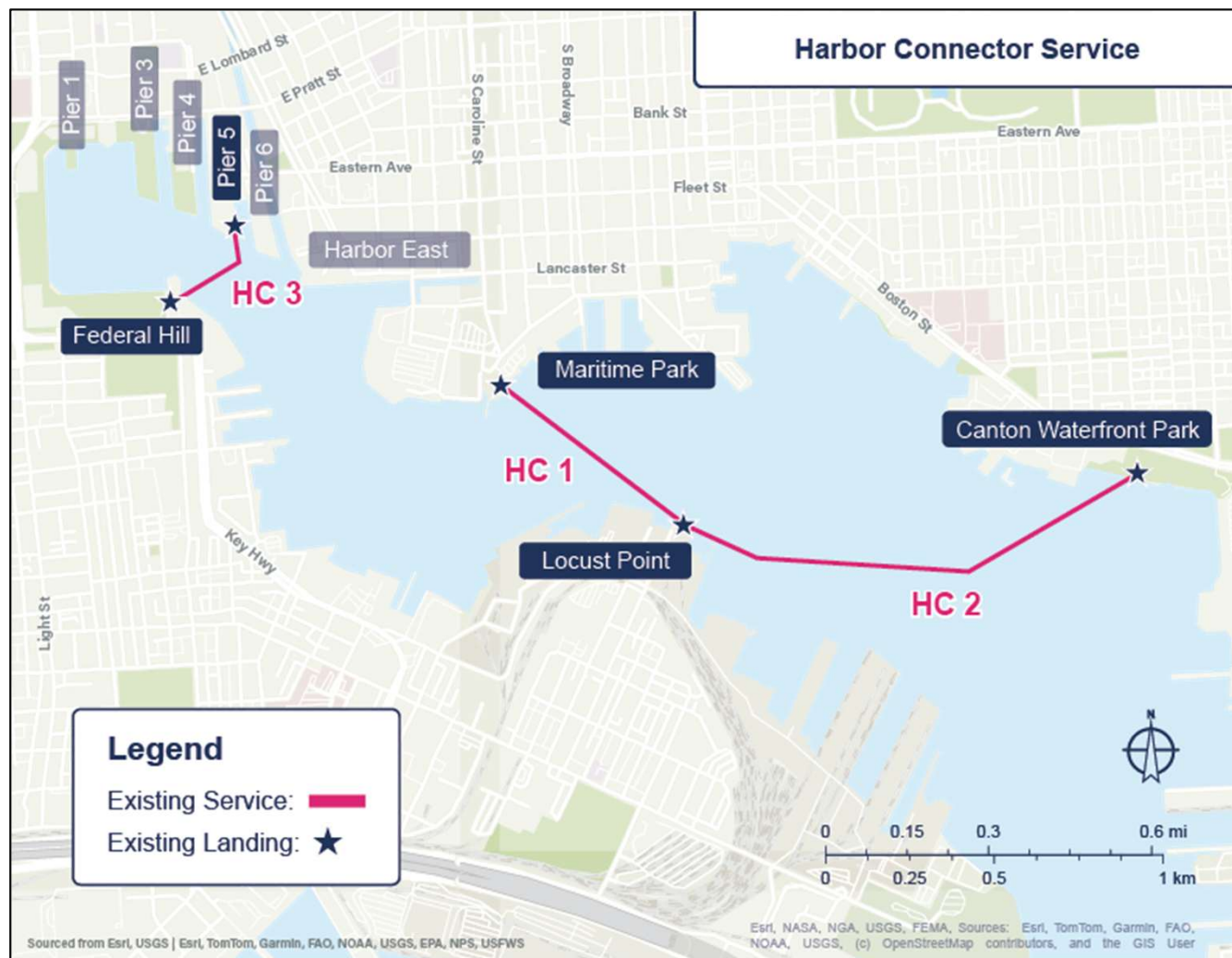
Harbor Connector Service Evaluation



The Harbor Connector – February 2026

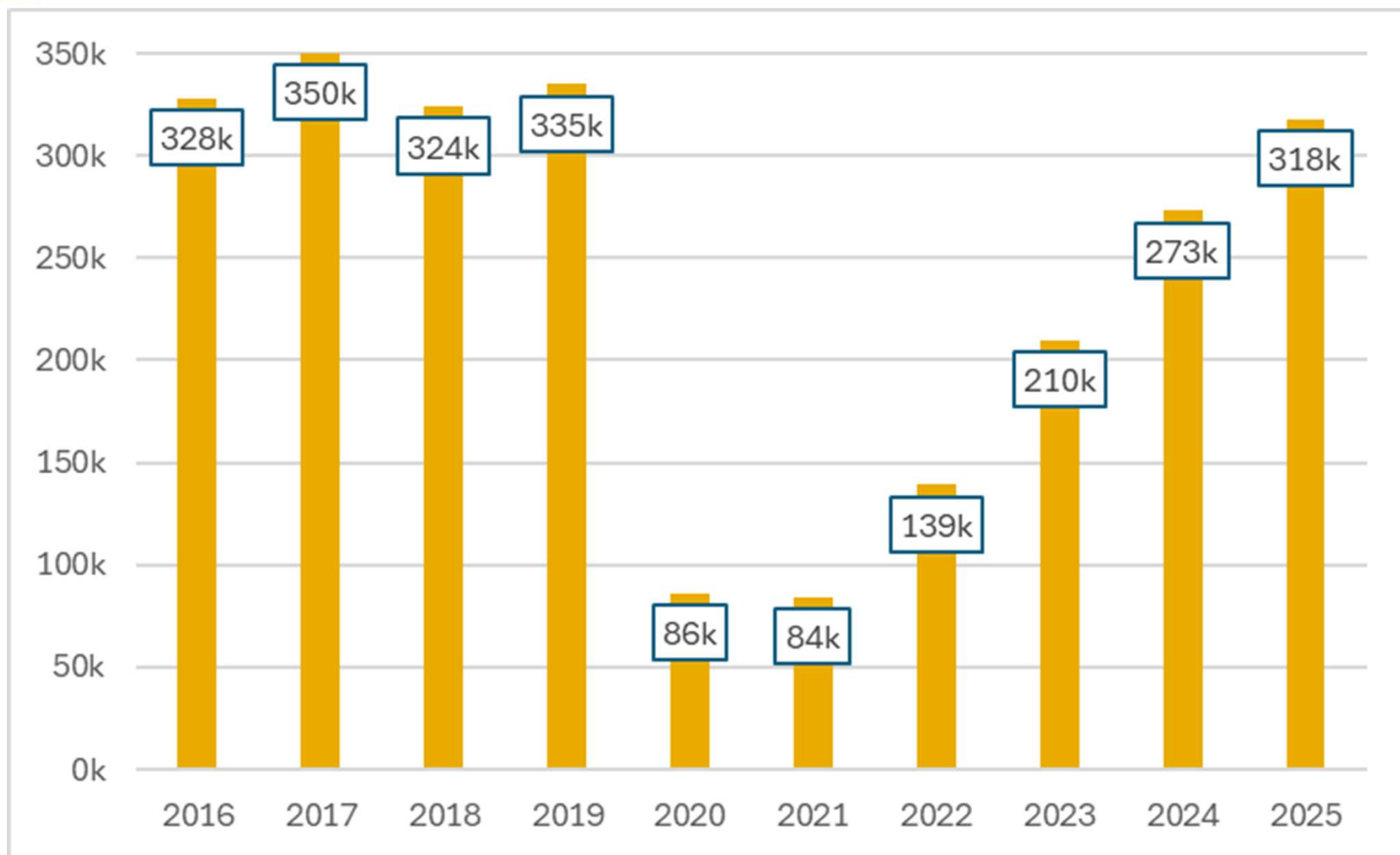
The Harbor Connector is made up of 3 routes operating Mon-Fri. from 6a-8p. The service is run using two city-owned vessels and one vessel owned by the contractor who is paid to run the service.

Ridership on the service varies throughout the year, but in April 2026, average daily ridership was about 1,457 per day.



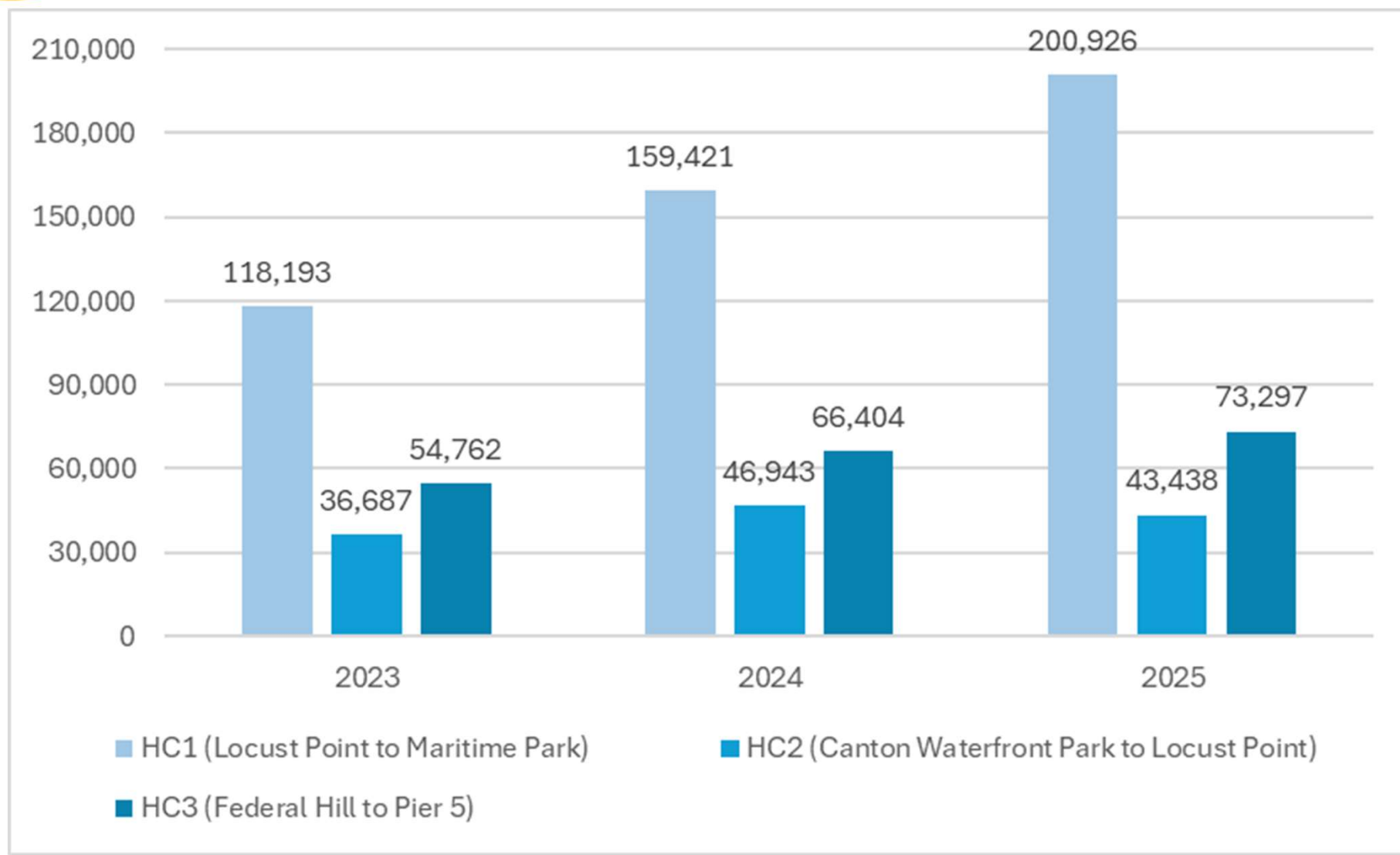


Ridership





Ridership by Route





Harbor Connector - Cost Per Trip (April 2025)

Ridership on HC1 is generally strong throughout the day. Ridership on HC2 is very low in the early morning hours and relatively low overall. Ridership on HC3 is also low in the early mornings and is moderate throughout the rest of the day.

Harbor Connector		HC1	HC2	HC3	Total
Early Morning (6 - 6:59am)	Riders	23	1	2	26
	Cost per Trip	\$4.95	\$92.07	\$49.00	\$12.88
AM Peak (7 - 8:59am)	Riders	222	10	25	257
	Cost per Trip	\$1.02	\$23.68	\$8.93	\$2.64
Midday (9am - 3:59pm)	Riders	264	92	169	526
	Cost per Trip	\$2.98	\$8.46	\$4.55	\$4.45
PM Peak (4 - 5:59pm)	Riders	221	50	96	367
	Cost per Trip	\$1.00	\$4.43	\$2.28	\$1.80
Evening (6 - 8pm)	Riders	102	56	85	243
	Cost per Trip	\$2.21	\$4.54	\$2.67	\$2.91
Weekday Total	Riders	832	209	378	1,417
	Cost per Trip	\$1.89	\$7.64	\$4.11	\$3.33



Ferry Crowding

July 2025			
Locust Point		Maritime Park	
Depart Time	% Trips at Capacity (45+)	Depart Time	% Trips at Capacity (45+)
7:52 AM	13%	4:45 PM	4%
8:07 AM	22%	5:00 PM	17%
8:22 AM	61%	5:15 PM	36%
8:37 AM	48%	5:30 PM	23%
8:52 AM	30%	5:45 PM	9%
9:07 AM	4%	6:00 PM	4%

Ridership data shows that in the mornings, HC1 trips from Locust Point to Maritime Park are at capacity, meaning some riders are forced to wait for the next ferry. The same issue occurs in the afternoons and evenings, with trips from Maritime Park to Locust Point being at capacity.

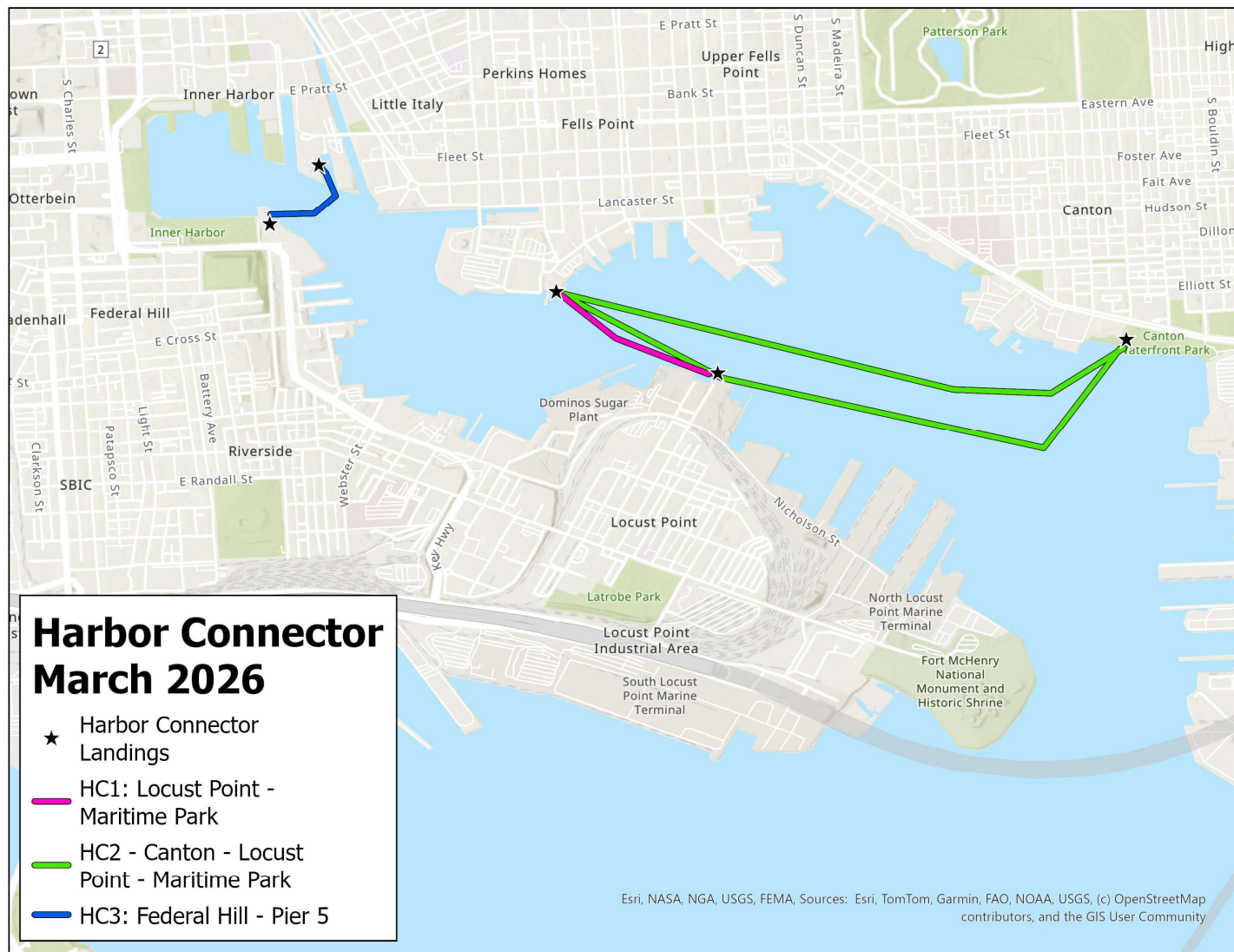


Harbor Connector – March 2026

HC1: Continues to serve Locust Point and Maritime Park, operating 6a-8p

HC2: Now serves Canton, Locust Point and Maritime Park, operating 7:15a-11:25a; 3:40p-8p

HC3: Continues to serve Federal Hill and Pier 5, operating 7a-8p





Harbor Connector – Spring 2025 vs. Spring 2026

March-April 2025			
	Passengers	Revenue hours	Passengers/VRH
HC1	33,565	591.13	56.8
HC2	7,487	590	12.7
HC3	13,987	587.5	23.8
Total	55,039	1768.63	31.1

March-April 2026			
	Passengers	Revenue hours	Passengers/VRH
HC1	35,649	612.50	58.2
HC2	7,626	365.29	20.9
HC3	14,148	613.75	23.1
Total	57,822	1591.5	36.3

Passengers Per Revenue Hour Difference	
HC1	+2.4%
HC2	+64.6%
HC3	-0.4%
Total	+16.7%



Harbormaster Operational Analysis



Harbormaster

The Mayor relaunched the Harbormaster Office in June of 2025. This position had been vacant since 2019. The Harbormaster is part of Baltimore City's Department of Transportation and monitors a variety of maritime activities:

- Manage Baltimore City Municipal Piers (23 locations) and collect docking fees (General Fund)
- Review and help negotiate wharfage agreements impacting waterfront access and revenue
- Inventory maritime infrastructure and prioritize maintenance for state of good repair (SOGR)
- Coordinate safety and emergency response with regional Harbor Safety Committee
- Plan water logistics for events (Sail250 Maryland and Airshow Baltimore, Sail Baltimore)
- Create rules and regulations governing maritime activity and encourage regulatory compliance
- Assist in strategic planning initiatives for dredging, waterfront redevelopment and transit
- Identify, pursue, win and manage grant funding
- Provide outstanding customer service and serve as an ambassador for Baltimore Harbor

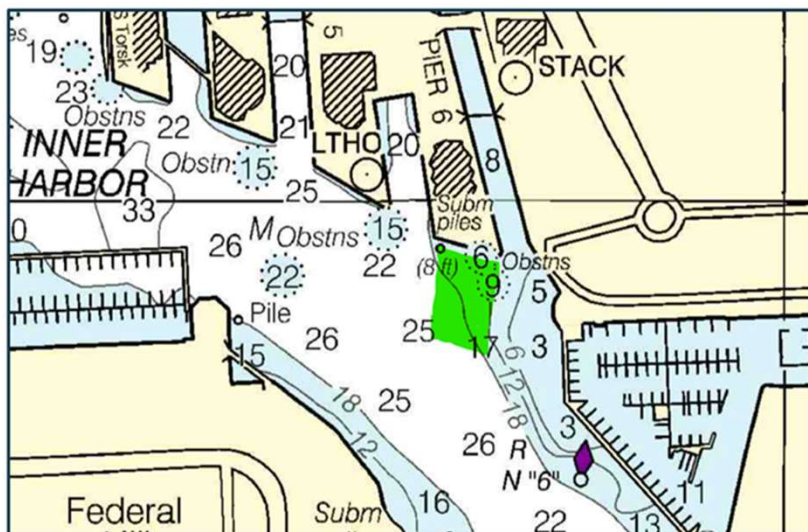


Baltimore City Municipal Piers

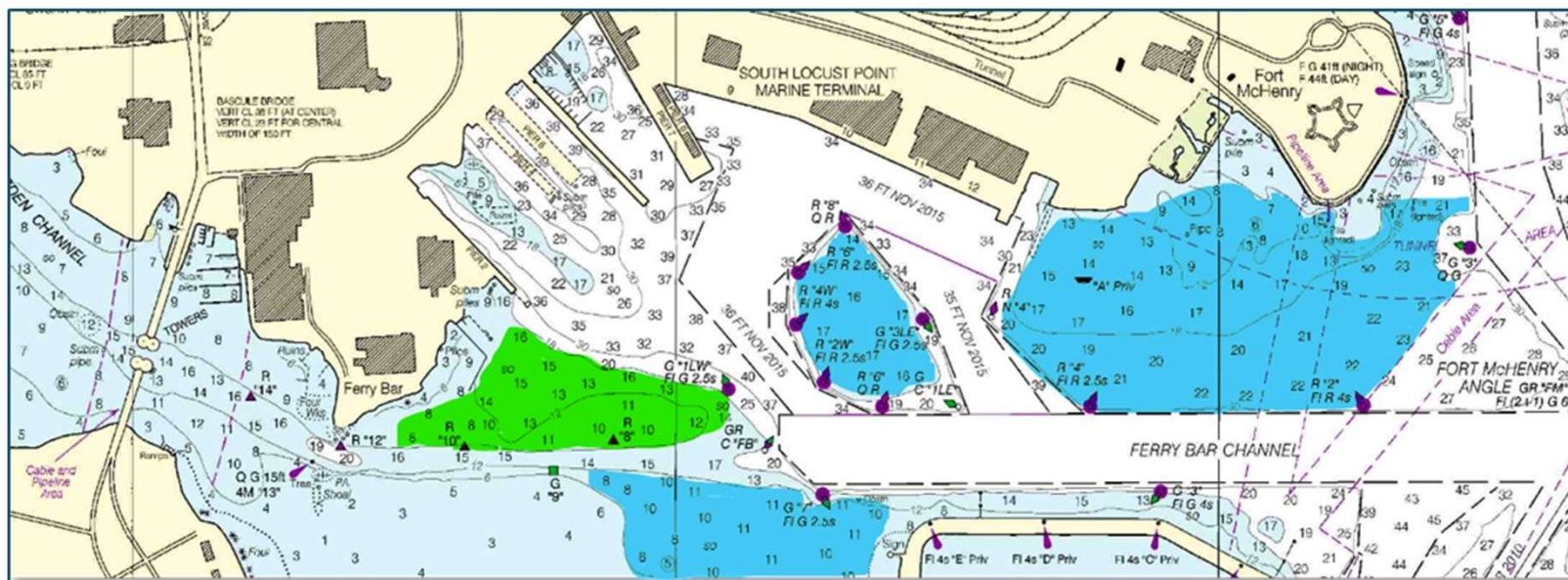




Concepts for Future Moorings



Pier 6



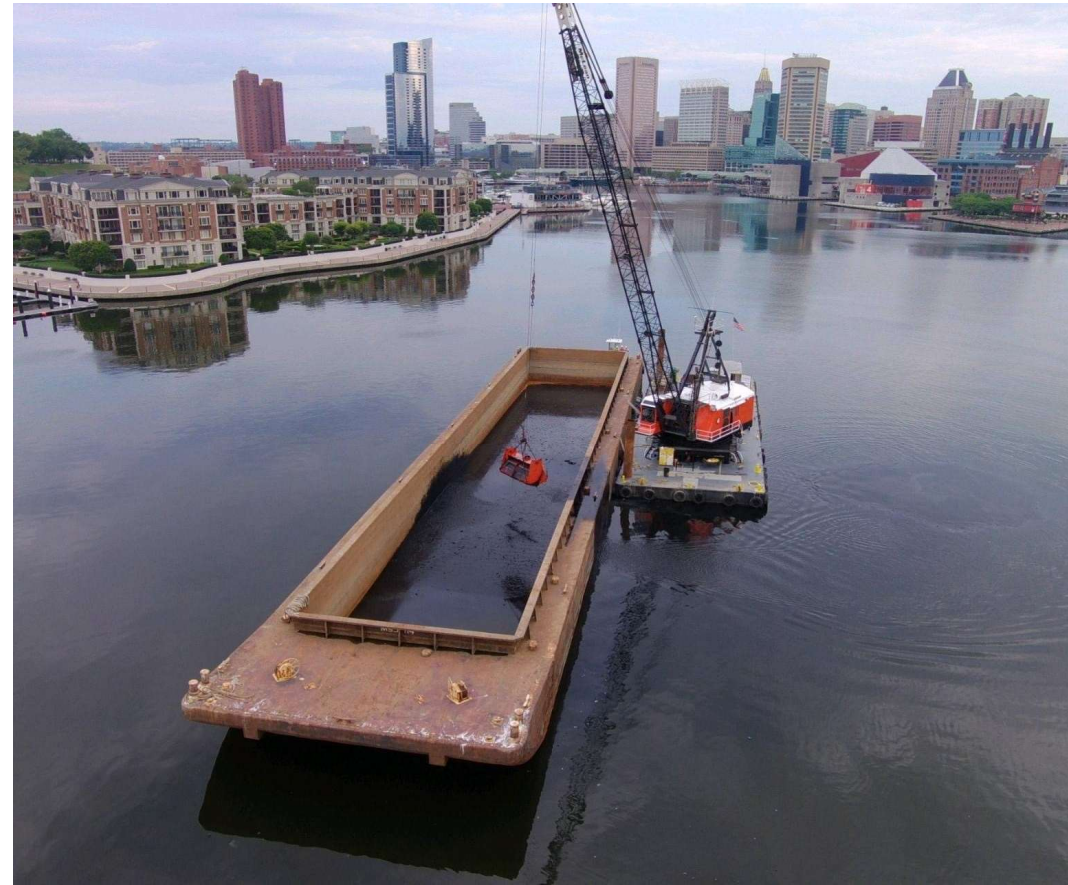
Middle Branch



Infrastructure Assessment

Under a 2023 Baseline Services Memorandum of Understanding with Waterfront Partnership, Baltimore City DOT has broad responsibility for waterfront infrastructure maintenance, including:

- Brick, sidewalk and promenade repairs on and adjacent to city property
- Maintenance of lighting, electrical service, carpentry, painting, and dredging
- Maintenance of Baltimore City Municipal Piers and public docking locations including utilities
- Provision of life rings, cleats, ladders & bollards
- Inner Harbor Finger Piers are over 50 years old and are the only Baltimore City Municipal Piers with shore power and potable water supply.
- Baltimore City does not charge a fee for use of public boat ramps. The cost to use a public boat ramp in the Chesapeake region varies depending on location, type of facility (county, town, or state park), and whether you're paying a daily fee or buying an annual permit.





Wharfage Agreements

A recommendation from the **2015** Water Transit Strategic Plan was to centralize the negotiation and management of wharfage agreements in one department at Baltimore City.

When reviewing existing agreements, the Harbormaster observed that this has not been implemented and continues to create issues with consistency, standardization, and duplication of efforts, with agreement authority spread over several departments.

Wharfage agreement management should be consolidated under the BCDOT Transportation Services Division and assigned to the Harbormaster, with support from the city's Department of Real Estate and the Baltimore Development Corporation.





Key Priorities and Recommendations



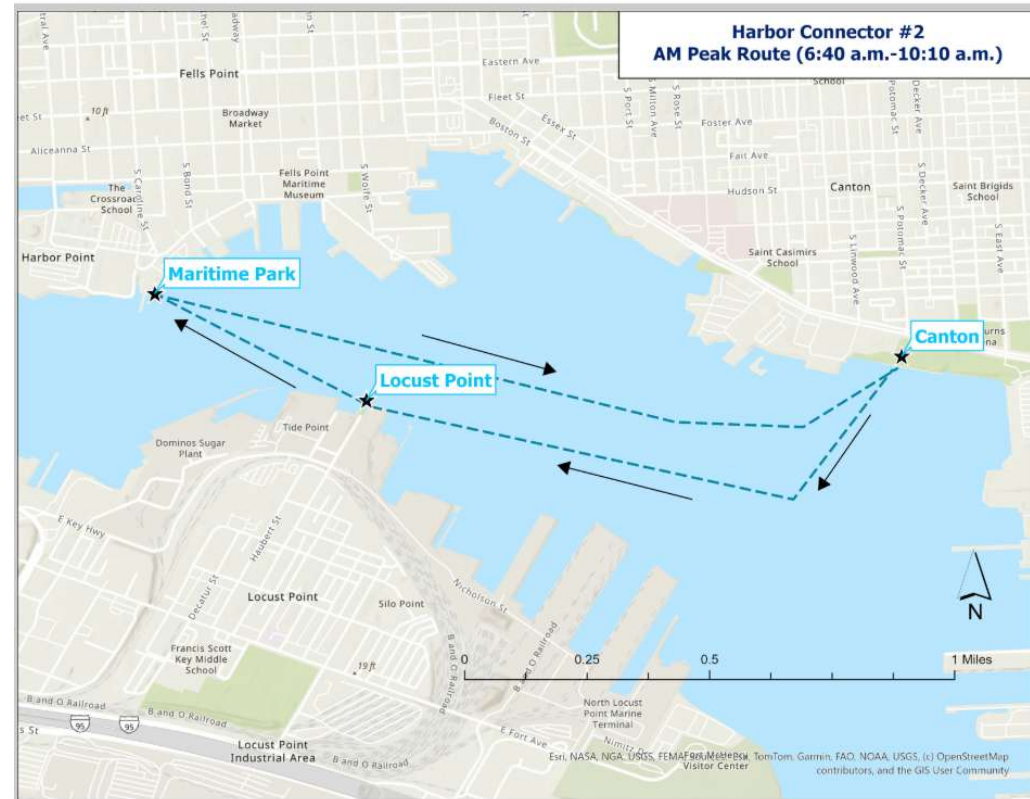
Key Recommendations – Water Transit

1. **Convert HC2 into a “peak-only” service that operates between Canton, Locust Point and Maritime Park in the mornings from roughly 6:40a to 10a and in the afternoons from 4p-8p. (Implemented – March 2)**
2. **Recommendation 2: Complete ferry landing improvements that were initially planned to be executed through the FY22 discretionary grant.**

- **Update: Ferry construction RFP was advertised on May 7. Pre-proposal meeting was held May 28, and proposals are due July 15.**

- **Ferry landings draft bid documents are under review, anticipated advertisement in late 2026.**

3. **Launch weekend Harbor Connector service**



4. **Consider new Harbor Connector routes, including expansions to Riverside, Point Park, Baltimore Peninsula and Westport.**



Key Recommendations: Harbormaster/Infrastructure

1. Amend Article 10 of City Code to clarify waterway rulemaking authority under BCDOT.
2. Review wharfage agreements for consistency of terms and pricing. Centralize agreement management under Baltimore City Department of Transportation (BCDOT) Harbormaster.
3. Document promenade ownership status and create repair and replacement schedule for sections approaching the end of infrastructure lifecycle.
4. Collaborate with the Department of Real Estate, Baltimore Development Corporation and Waterfront Partnership on a “Inner Harbor Infrastructure Maintenance Working Group” to prioritize and complete waterfront infrastructure State of Good Repair (SOGR) projects.
5. Work to link wharfage agreement and transient docking revenues to a dedicated fund for maintenance of maritime infrastructure in support of commuting options and tourism.
6. Investigate revenue potential of creating moorings and/or anchorage areas at Pier Six, Canton Waterfront Park, Fort McHenry and Baltimore Peninsula.
7. Add gated access to improve safety of the Finger Piers pending their removal (2027) and possible replacement as part of the Harborplace redevelopment.
8. Include maintenance dredging in the City’s budget every 3 to 4 years, and work with the USACE to extend the length of the Federally-maintained channel past the Jones Falls.



Questions?

To view the draft Water Transit Strategic Plan, including new Harbor Connector route proposals and plan recommendations, scan the QR code or visit www.streetsofbaltimore.com/watertransit

