

MBT

Manila Busway Transit

Connecting every Juan, wherever in Metro Manila.

7

BRT CORRIDORS

139

TOTAL KM

118

TOTAL STOPS

46

FEEDER ROUTES

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For research and advocacy only

— BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE

This proposal is not written to point fingers.

It is not here to publicly shame any government agency, humiliate any official, or assign blame for the state of Metro Manila's public transportation. That is not the purpose — and it has never been the purpose since this began in 2019.

What this is, plainly, is a call for discussion. A call for timeliness in the executive rulings and orders that concern public transportation. A call to take seriously what every Filipino commuter already lives — the daily reality of a city that moves millions of people on systems that have not fundamentally changed since the 1980s.

There are no political colors here. No drama. No agenda beyond this: **we can do better, and we should start now.**

Metro Manila's commuters are not a statistic. They are students getting to school, workers supporting families, entrepreneurs building things, teachers crossing the city to educate the next generation. They deserve a system that respects their time and their dignity.

“Filipino love for this city — and for the 14 million people moving through it every single day — is the only agenda behind every page of this proposal.”

This document is for research and advocacy purposes only. It is not affiliated with any government agency, transport authority, or political group. All routes and corridors are proposals subject to revision based on commuter demand, road conditions, and further technical study.

This network belongs to Metro Manila — and Metro Manila will always have the final say.

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THE 7 MAIN CORRIDORS

- L1 EDSA**
Navotas → SM MOA
- L2 Quezon Ave.**
Novaliches → Met. Theater
- L3 C5**
Libis → East Service Terminal
- L4 Osmeña**
P. Quirino → SM Muntinlupa
- L5 Roxas Blvd.**
Navotas → PITX
- L6 Aurora Blvd.**
Cubao → Sumulong Hwy
- L7 Ortigas Ave.**
Gilmore → Taytay Rotonda



— THE PROBLEM

Metro Manila's roads were built for cars. Its people aren't.

Car travel accounts for just **30% of person-km** traveled in Metro Manila — but it takes up **72% of road traffic**.^[5] A single bus moves 80–150 people in the space of 2–3 cars. The math works against the majority of road users every single day.

The bus system today was structured by LTFRB rules written in 1987. Routes exist because an operator found them profitable — not because a planner found them necessary. There is no network. There is no map. There is no single authority accountable for the whole.

Metro Manila ranked **worst in global traffic in 2023**, per the TomTom Traffic Index — beating 386 cities across 55 countries.^[4]

₱3.5B

LOST DAILY TO TRAFFIC CONGESTION — JICA 2017^[1]

Buses stuck in the same gridlock

Without dedicated lanes or signal priority, city buses share lanes with private vehicles. They stop anywhere, follow no fixed schedule, and offer no reliability advantage over driving.

No network — only disconnected routes

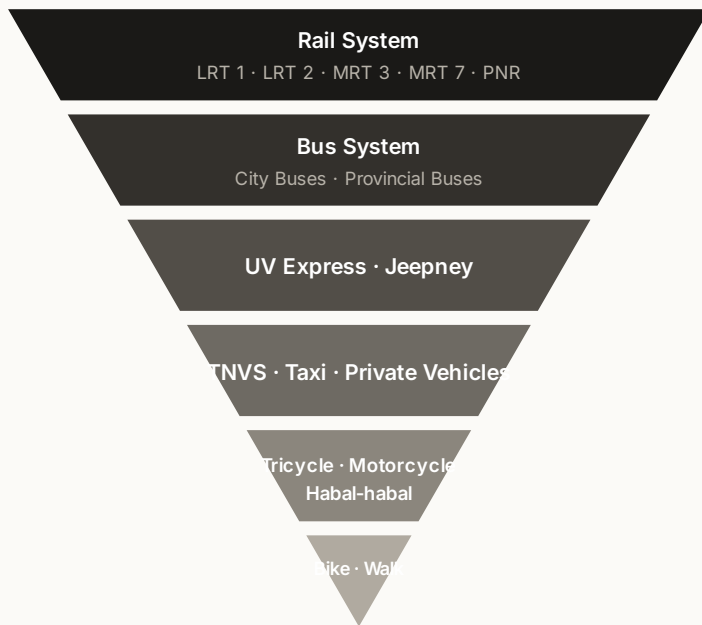
Commuters stitch together transfers with no guarantee of connection. There is no unified map, no single card, no system logic. Every ride is a gamble against time and chance.

2032

EARLIEST METRO MANILA SUBWAY PARTIAL OPS
— DOTR 2025^[2]

— FIGURE 1.1 — THE HIERARCHY OF MOVEMENT

Metro Manila's roads are allocated upside-down.



Widest = highest people-carrying capacity per unit of road

The pyramid shows the modes that carry the most people at the top — rail, then buses. At the narrowest tip: the pedestrian.

Today, Metro Manila allocates its roads in reverse. Private vehicles occupy the vast majority of road width. Rail and bus, the top two tiers, are squeezed into what remains.

MBT does not propose eliminating private vehicles. It proposes **correcting the allocation** — giving the highest-capacity modes the road priority they need to actually function at capacity.

One BRT lane moves more people than four car lanes.

72%

OF ROAD TRAFFIC IS
PRIVATE VEHICLES^[5]

30%

OF PERSON-KM
TRAVELED BY CAR^[5]

— WHY THE CURRENT SYSTEM FAILS

Routes are built for operators. Not for commuters.

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board was established in **1987** — when Metro Manila still had large undeveloped areas. Its model made sense then: operators propose routes, government approves or denies.

That logic no longer holds. Today, all 636 km² of Metro Manila is fully built-out — and actively expanding. The Manila Bay reclamation projects, the construction of the New Manila International Airport (NMIA) in Bulacan, and new expressway corridors within and adjacent to the metro will bring additional trip demand into an already saturated road network. MBT does not compete with these investments. It complements them — providing the internal distribution network that makes large-scale infrastructure useful to the daily commuter.

Yet the LTFRB framework hasn't changed. Routes still exist because an operator found them profitable — not because a planner found them necessary.

There is no network map. No unified card. No single authority accountable for the whole.

Who maintains the stations?

GRAY AREA

MMDA led the EDSA Carousel improvements — but has no mandate or budget to maintain an expanded network. Neither does each LGU. No one has formally answered this.

Who is accountable for driver conduct?

GRAY AREA

Bus drivers carry dozens of lives per trip but fall under the same LTO framework as private license holders. The elevated duty of care has no regulatory structure.

Why don't operators reinvest?

GRAY AREA

Operators collect fares but bear no obligation to improve the infrastructure they use. Rail revenues cycle back into the system. Bus revenues do not.

MBT closes all three gaps.

One governing body. One network. One authority accountable to the commuter — not to franchise holders.

— A DEEPER READING — EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 202

Genesis: where the framework actually comes from.

In reading the Bible, the first book to cover is Genesis. In today's time and date, the word *genesis* has come to mean the origin, the first, the beginning of something. If we are to discuss the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, it is necessary to understand how it really started.

It may be irrelevant to trace the transportation system all the way back to the First Philippine Republic. So let's settle with the most "original" reason for where we are now — the post-Martial Law era.

Executive Order No. 202, June 19, 1987.^[8] This has been the bread and butter of the organization. The most crucial part of the board's mandate reads:

Sec. 5 (a). ...to prescribe and regulate routes of service, economically viable capacities and zones or areas of operation of public land transportation services...^[8]

Notice the exact wording: *economically viable*. Let those words sink in first before we continue.

Given that the mandated role of the board circles around a route being "economically viable" — this alone is the problem per se. When we talk about the economic viability of a route, it pertains to the supply and demand of that proposed route, which sounds fair, right? But the problem for Metro Manila is that we are talking about moving **14 million people in this region alone**.^[9]

At that scale, asking whether a route is "economically viable" is an understatement. It's like asking for a pepperoni pizza while inside a Pancit Malabon house — it completely doesn't make sense. If we are still under the discretion of judging whether a route is economically viable in a region of 14 million, then the framework itself is the problem. Nothing will go right under those circumstances.

In fairness to the LTFRB

Outside Metro Manila — outside a 14-million region — the conversation is different. In regions where population is not yet the dominant factor, questions of supply and demand rightly take precedence. It may even be the most reasonable tool available. That is likely the very argument the first writers of the order had in mind: Metro Manila's population then was around 5.9 to 7.9 million — far lower than today.^[9]

Should we scrap the LTFRB? No — there is exactly no reason for that. Should we update it? Yes.

FIGURE 1.3 — PHILIPPINE POPULATION BY REGION

Where “economic viability” stops making sense.

#	REGION	POPULATION (2024)	
1	Region 4-A · CALABARZON	16,933,234	≥ 10 M
2	National Capital Region	14,001,751	≥ 10 M
3	Region 3 · Central Luzon	12,989,074	≥ 10 M
4	Region 7 · Central Visayas	6,640,875	≥ 5 M
5	Region 5 · Bicol	6,064,426	≥ 5 M
6	BARMM	5,691,583	≥ 5 M
7	Region 11 · Davao	5,389,422	≥ 5 M
8	Region 1 · Ilocos	5,342,453	≥ 5 M
9	Region 10 · Northern Mindanao	5,178,326	≥ 5 M
10	Negros Island Region	4,904,944	
11	Region 6 · Western Visayas	4,861,911	
12	Region 8 · Eastern Visayas	4,625,929	
13	Region 12 · SOCCSKSARGEN	4,462,776	
14	Region 9 · Zamboanga Peninsula	3,943,837	
15	Region 2 · Cagayan Valley	3,777,608	
16	MIMAROPA	3,245,446	
17	Region 13 · Caraga	2,865,196	
18	Cordillera Administrative Region	1,808,985	

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, 2024 Census of Population (POPCEN), declared official July 2025.^[9] Regions ordered by population.

≥ 10 million — planning imperative

NCR, CALABARZON, and Central Luzon should be released from route-by-route viability tests entirely. At this scale the duty is to plan the movement of people — at both the macro and micro level — not to referee franchise applications. NCR's 14 million is a nighttime count; daytime is likely greater, as many who work in the capital reside in these two neighboring regions.

5–10 million — warrants further study

Regions like Cebu and Davao now carry populations comparable to world cities known for the best public transportation. Questions of pure economic viability are already unreliable here — their systems deserve deliberate study and improvement now, before they inherit Metro Manila's problem.

Below 5 million — viability still applies

In regions yet to reach the population that sustains the real economics of transportation, the “economically viable” test may still play the crucial role its 1987 authors intended.

— THE LESSON FROM CEBU — AND THE QUESTION FOR MANILA

Who plans Metro Manila?

To close this conversation about the LTFRB, consider the findings of Engr. Nigel Paul Villarete in *The Cebu BRT Experience*, presented at the 27th Annual TSSP Conference in November 2021.^[10]

Among his observations and recommendations: the government should institutionalize a service-contracting framework — a regime that is clear, well defined, and properly communicated to every actor in the system.^[10] The recommendation exists because some of Cebu BRT's hardest issues concerned exactly who handles the actual system — is it the LGU's duty, or the national government's through DOTr?

That question resonates with this whole conversation. As much as we want to move forward with mass road public transportation — buses, jeepneys, even UV Express — all of these modalities sit under the LTFRB, and so all of them return to the board's same bread and butter: judging the “economic viability” of a route.

An alternate solution

Waive the economic-viability duty in regions with overwhelming populations. In its place: a mandate to plan — the micro and macro movement of people, as one network, under one accountable authority. Figure 1.3 shows exactly where that line should be drawn.

Major cities in the region — Singapore, Hong Kong, Tokyo — have their public transportation planned, properly and deliberately. Whether by macro or micro planning, it is always *planned*. The question for Metro Manila is disarmingly simple: **who plans who?** Who plans Metro Manila's traffic? Who plans Metro Manila's public transportation?

Because if the answer is no one, then my good friend Benjamin Franklin might be right again — “if we fail to plan, then we are planning to fail.”^[11]

REVELATION

Revelation is the final book of the New Testament — the return, the fulfillment, even the creation of a new Heaven and Earth. Not to sound very religious, but it is time for us to start writing our own book of Revelation in public transportation.

Not because the book of Genesis is outdated — but because certain things and necessary writings must be done to stay true to the real purpose of the message.

May the country be blessed with a prophet like John in writing the rightful book of Revelation for our public transportation.

PROOF OF CONCEPT — EDSA CAROUSEL

The EDSA Carousel is Line 1. It already works.

The EDSA Busway, launched in June 2020, is live proof of MBT's core argument. When buses are given a dedicated median lane, separated from mixed traffic, with proper boarding stations — **they work**. Travel times drop. Ridership climbs.^[7]

MBT's Yellow Line (L1) closely mirrors the existing Carousel with two key differences: the termini shift to **Navotas Terminal** in the north and **SM Mall of Asia** in the south — both more logical anchors — and the alignment extends through Malabon and Navotas to where the corridor actually begins, with a refined stop list that eliminates redundant loading points.

BRT is not experimental in Manila. It is already operating. The question is why only one of seven corridors has been built.

“The question is not whether BRT works in Manila. The EDSA Carousel answered that in June 2020.”

16.7

KM DEDICATED
MEDIAN LANE,
MONUMENTO TO
PITX^[7]

33

BUS STATIONS
ALONG THE EDSA
BUSWAY AT
LAUNCH^[7]

370K+

ESTIMATED DAILY
PASSENGERS
SERVED^[7]

28

PROPOSED MBT
STOPS FOR THE
YELLOW LINE —
REFINED
ALIGNMENT, V4.2

34.87

 km — full L1 alignment

More than double the Carousel's dedicated segment — because the Yellow Line runs the corridor end to end: Navotas Terminal, through Malabon, down the full length of EDSA, to SM Mall of Asia.

THE 7 MAIN LINES

Seven corridors. One network.

Each BRT main line occupies one dedicated median lane — physically separated from mixed traffic, operating 24 hours, 7 days a week. No other buses, jeepneys, UV Express, or P2P services share these lanes.

L1	EDSA Line Yellow	Navotas Terminal → SM MOA 28 stops · 34.87 km	EDSA — extended to where it actually starts. The Yellow Line passes through Malabon and Navotas before EDSA. Navotas Terminal is the shared terminus with L5 Green — the critical junction for commuters arriving from Cavite, Batangas, and Laguna via PITX.
L2	Quezon Ave. Line Red	LTO Novaliches → Met. Theater 21 stops · 24.51 km	From UP to España — no transfer needed. Commonwealth and Quezon Avenue connect northern QC communities through UP Campus and down to España, Manila. Students and workers get a direct, uninterrupted ride. Complements MRT 7 and connects into LRT 1.
L3	C5 Line Orange	Libis → East Service Terminal 12 stops · 15.51 km	EDSA's alter ego on the east side. C5 connects Libis, Pasig, BGC, and Taguig — three of the fastest-growing business districts in the country — yet has no dedicated transit. The Orange Line gives the east side what EDSA gives the west.
L4	Osmeña Line Brown	P. Quirino → SM Muntinlupa 12 stops · 24.11 km	Maximizing SLEX — south to the heart of Manila. Osmeña Highway connects Manila City southward to Muntinlupa. For commuters from the south, this line moves them into the heart of Manila without multiple transfers. It anchors the south.
L5	Roxas Blvd. Line Green	Navotas Terminal → PITX 18 stops · 17.33 km	Cavite to northern Manila — along the bay. From PITX (gateway for Cavite, Batangas, Laguna) northward along Manila Bay to Navotas — an entirely separate north-south corridor from EDSA. For bayside communities, the primary link to the network.
L6	Aurora Blvd. Line Blue	Cubao → Sumulong Hwy 12 stops · 10.40 km	East to Cubao — connecting Marikina, Antipolo, and Rizal. Connects Marikina, Antipolo, and Rizal province into LRT 2 and MRT 3 at Araneta Center. Effectively makes Rizal part of the Metro Manila transit network.
L7	Ortigas Ave. Line Violet	Gilmore → Taytay Rotonda 18 stops · 12.39 km	Rizal to Pasig to Gilmore — the east's second path in. Runs from Taytay Rotonda through Pasig City to Gilmore, QC. Intersects L3 Orange at C5/Ortigas and connects into L1 Yellow at Gilmore — one of the key cross-connectors in the network.

Interchange stations shared between lines are counted once in the network total of 118 stops.

THE CASE FOR BRT

If building a subway takes a generation, we need a solution that works in this one.

Bus Rapid Transit is not a compromise — it is a deliberate choice. The major components of a railway are a station, a dedicated track, and a high-capacity vehicle. BRT mirrors this exactly: median platforms, exclusive bus lanes, articulated buses. Cities like Bogotá (TransMilenio), Curitiba (RIT), Jakarta (TransJakarta), and Bangkok have proven it delivers rail-level capacity on roads that already exist. Manila already proved it on EDSA.

MBT PHASE 1 — ROUGH ESTIMATE

METRO MANILA SUBWAY · 33 KM

₱17–36B

VS

₱355B+

Faster to deploy

BRT uses existing roads with lane reconfiguration, median platforms, and dedicated signals — a fraction of the timeline and cost of underground rail. Months, not decades.

Rail-comparable capacity

Articulated buses carry 140–150 passengers. A BRT corridor can move 20,000+ passengers per hour per direction — comparable to light rail at a fraction of the cost.

Designed to connect, not compete

MBT eliminates duplicate stops where LRT and MRT operate. One beep card. One network. When the subway arrives, MBT becomes its feeder system.

“The question is not whether BRT works in Manila. The EDSA Carousel answered that in June 2020. The question is when the other six corridors follow.”

THE NETWORK — ROUTE DIRECTORY

139 kilometers. 118 stops. One system logic.

The seven main lines are the backbone — but MBT is designed as a three-tier system. **Main lines** run the dedicated median corridors. **Feeder routes** — 46 of them — branch from main-line stations into districts and barangay centers. **Tertiary lines** fill the gaps on streets where no articulated bus can go.

Route codes are read digit by digit, and the code always tells you where a route belongs: **17** is “one-seven” — a feeder of L1. **100** is “one-zero-zero” — an L1 tertiary. A commuter who knows one number knows the whole network.

L1 • EDSA Line

28 stops · 34.87 km

Navotas Terminal → SM Mall of Asia. Now operating in part as the EDSA Carousel. Interchanges with every other line except L4 — the spine of the network. Serves VGC via Balintawak for the northern gateway.

L2 • Quezon Ave. Line

21 stops · 24.51 km

LTO Novaliches → Metropolitan Theater. Commonwealth–Quezon Ave.–España in one seat. Crosses L1 at EDSA–Quezon Ave.; meets the Yellow and Green lines at the Manila core near Central Terminal.

L3 • C5 Line

12 stops · 15.51 km

Libis Terminal → East Service Terminal. The eastern bypass — Libis, Pasig, BGC, Taguig. Crosses L7 Violet at C5/Ortigas and L6 Blue near Libis, tying the east side into one grid.

L4 • Osmeña Line

12 stops · 24.11 km

P. Quirino Ave. → SM Center Muntinlupa. The SLEX corridor, run as surface BRT. Receives the southern gateway at SM Center Muntinlupa and delivers the south into the heart of Manila.

L5 • Roxas Blvd. Line

18 stops · 17.33 km

Navotas Terminal → PITX. The bay route — a genuine second north–south corridor. Shares its northern terminus with L1 and its southern terminus with the southwestern gateway at PITX.

L6 • Aurora Blvd. Line

12 stops · 10.40 km

Cubao → Sumulong Highway. Marikina, Antipolo, and Rizal into Araneta Center — LRT 2 and MRT 3 in one transfer. Receives the northeastern gateway at Sumulong Highway Terminal.

L7 • Ortigas Ave. Line

18 stops · 12.39 km

Gilmore → Taytay Rotonda Monumento. The east's second path in — Rizal through Pasig to Gilmore, crossing L3 at C5/Ortigas and joining L1 at Gilmore. A key cross-connector.

The full map →

Every station, interchange, gateway, and rail connection is drawn on the network transit map — the next spread. Figure not to scale; all stations proposed and subject to revision.

MANILA BUSWAY TRANSIT

PROPOSED BUS NETWORK - METRO MANILA

Transit Map - Version 4.1 | Published - June 2026

MBT MAIN LINES

- | | | |
|---|---------------------|-------------------------------|
|  | L1 EDSA Line | Navotas - MOA |
|  | L2 Quezon Ave Line | Novaliches - Central Terminal |
|  | L3 C5 Line | Libis - SLEX |
|  | L4 Osmeña Line | P. Quirino - SM Muntinlupa |
|  | L5 Roxas Blvd Line | Navotas - PITX |
|  | L6 Aurora Blvd Line | Cubao - Sumulong Hwy |
|  | L7 Ortigas Ave Line | Gilmore - Taytay Rotonda |

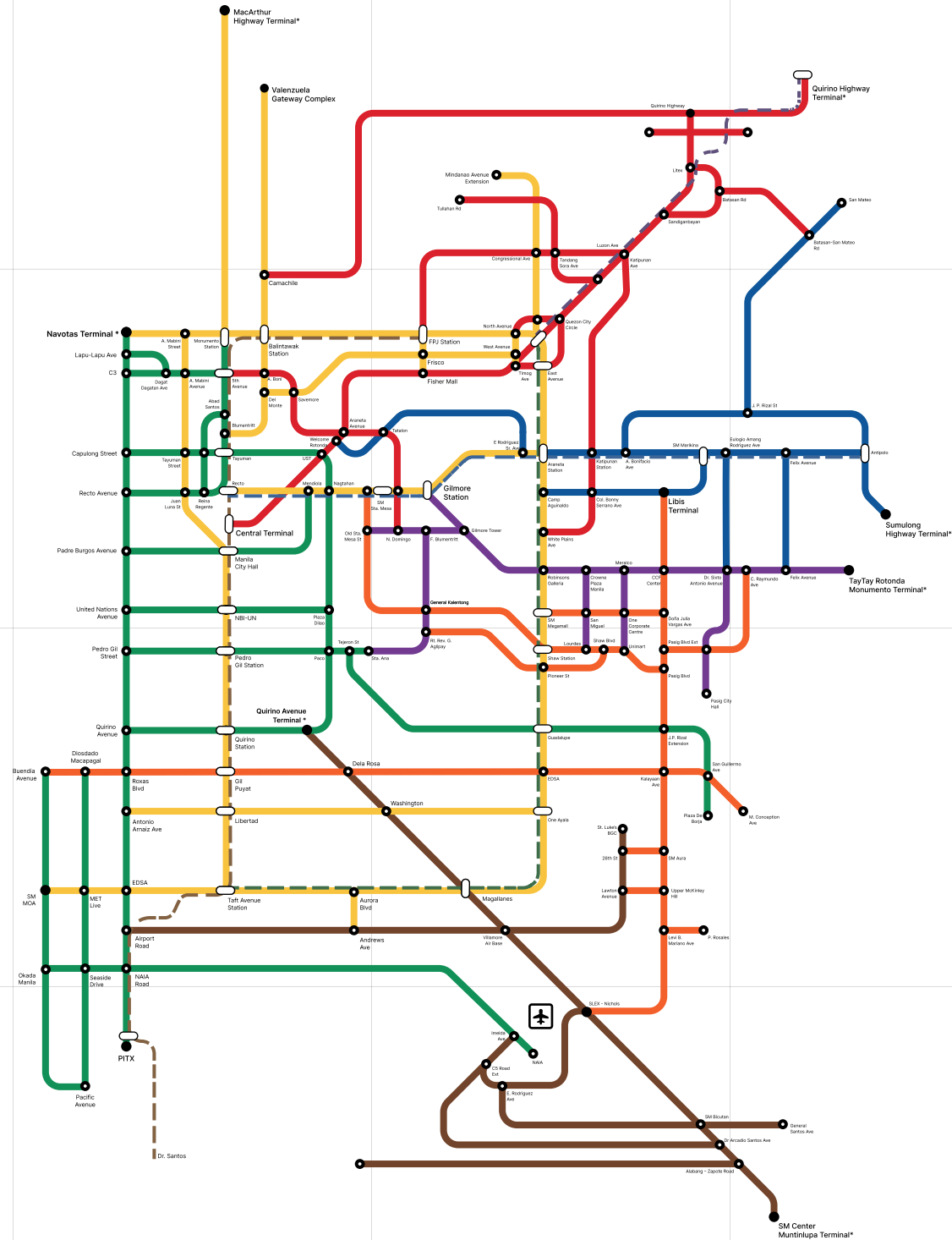
EXISTING RAIL LINES

- | | |
|---|-------|
|  | LRT-1 |
|  | LRT-2 |
|  | MRT-3 |
|  | MRT-7 |

STATION SYMBOLS

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
|  | Terminal stations |
|  | Regular stations |
|  | Interchange |

* Proposed terminal — infrastructure not yet built



— ON THE JEEPNEY PHASEOUT — MBT SAYS NO

“The jeepney is not a transit problem. It is a cultural institution that has been put in the wrong place.”

The traditional jeepney does not belong on EDSA, C5, or Roxas Boulevard. It was never designed for highways — mixing it with buses and trucks at speed is where the safety and congestion issues come from.

Remove it from those roads — not by banning it, but by giving those roads to BRT — and the jeepney finds its natural home: the barangay streets, the narrow collectors, the last-mile corridors where no articulated bus can go.

THE CULTURAL ARGUMENT

Celebrate it. Don't erase it. The jeepney is one of the most recognizable symbols of Filipino identity. The hand-painted murals, the chrome horses, the names of saints along the side — a living folk art tradition born from repurposed WWII vehicles.

The so-called e-jeepney is a different vehicle entirely — closer to a mini-bus. What the traditional jeepney needs is proper enforcement, safety standards, and route rationalization. Not replacement.

What MBT opposes

OPPOSED

A blanket phaseout that eliminates traditional jeepneys with no acknowledgment of the cultural and economic loss it represents.

What MBT proposes

SUPPORTED

Route rationalization — jeepneys off highways and major arterials (which BRT now serves), retained as Tier 3 lines on narrow streets where buses cannot operate.

On e-jeepneys

REGULATE, DON'T REPLACE

The e-jeepney is not a jeepney — it is a mini-bus in a different body. What traditional jeepneys need is proper safety enforcement and appropriate routing, not forced replacement.

Metro Manila's roads are as creative as its people. There are streets in Cubao, Tondo, and Sampaloc where no articulated bus will ever fit. The jeepney was made for those streets. Let it work there — celebrated and properly routed — while BRT handles everything it was never suited for.

PROVINCIAL INTEGRATION

Provincial buses stop at the gate. MBT takes it from there.

If MBT's internal network is strong enough, provincial buses no longer need to fight Manila traffic to drop passengers at Cubao or Pasay. They stop at a gateway terminal. MBT handles the rest. Six gateways intercept buses at the Metro Manila boundary — covering every major provincial approach road.

N — NORTHERN GATEWAY

EXISTING

Valenzuela Gateway Complex

VGC · Paso de Blas, Valenzuela City

Built in 2018 as the terminal for buses from Central and Northern Luzon — Bulacan, Bataan, Pampanga, Pangasinan, Baguio, Ilocos, and Cagayan Valley. Adjacent to the NLEX at Paso de Blas.^[6]

L1 EDSA Line via Balintawak · Line 12 — Balintawak Station · VGC (feeder)

SW — SOUTHWESTERN GATEWAY

EXISTING

Parañaque Integrated Terminal Exchange

PITX · Dr. A. Santos Ave., Parañaque City

Purpose-built intermodal exchange — receiving provincial buses from Cavite, Batangas, and Laguna and redistributing passengers into the metro network.

L5 Roxas Blvd. Line — northbound to Navotas

NW — NORTHWESTERN GATEWAY

PROPOSED

MacArthur Highway Terminal

MacArthur Hwy · Metro Manila northern boundary

Intercept terminal for buses via MacArthur Highway — the old trunk road from Bulacan, Pampanga, and Tarlac. Stops buses at the city boundary before they penetrate Metro Manila traffic.

L11 MacArthur Highway Line — L1 Yellow feeder

NE — NORTHEASTERN GATEWAY

PROPOSED

Sumulong Highway Terminal

Sumulong Hwy · Antipolo / Marikina boundary

Intercept terminal for buses from Antipolo, upland Rizal, and the Sierra Madre corridor. Stops the flow at the Metro Manila edge before buses descend into Marikina and Pasig traffic.

L6 Aurora Blvd. Line

S — SOUTHERN GATEWAY

PROPOSED

SM Center Muntinlupa Terminal

Pan-Philippine Hwy · Muntinlupa City

Gateway at the southern edge of Metro Manila, intercepting buses from Laguna, Quezon, Bicol, and the rest of the archipelago via the Pan-Philippine Highway. Space is constrained, but the route logic demands the stop.

L4 Osmeña Line — main line

SE — SOUTHEASTERN GATEWAY

PROPOSED

Taytay Rotonda Monumento Terminal

Manila East Rd · Taytay, Rizal

Gateway at the well-known Taytay rotonda, intercepting buses from Taytay, Angono, Binangonan, Cardona, and eastern and coastal Rizal before they enter Pasig and the metro core.

L7 Ortigas Ave. Line

Proposed terminals — location and infrastructure subject to planning.

— FROM THE AUTHOR — CARLO CORCUERA

These are my thoughts. Not the proposal's — mine.

ON URBAN PLANNING

We have been acting like it is the first time. We are not.

Metro Manila is not the first city to face this problem. Cities around the world have already solved it, or are in the process of solving it. What frustrates me is that we keep acting as if there is no roadmap to follow. There is. We are late, but as the saying goes — it is better late than never.

We are actually in the right position to make good decisions. The data exists. The case studies exist. Other cities have already made the mistakes so we do not have to.

ON THE CAR QUESTION

I do not use public transportation. And that is exactly the problem.

I will be upfront: I have been working from home ever since. I do not ride public transit daily. But I want to be honest about why — because I think it is the same reason millions of Filipinos opt for private vehicles instead.

The system was not built for them. Car-centric policy did not just fill the roads with cars — it made public transportation so unreliable that choosing it feels like a sacrifice, not a commute.

Every Filipino I know who has been to Taipei, Singapore, or Hong Kong has taken the train. Not because they had no choice — but because it worked well enough that they never even thought about driving.

ON GOVERNMENT ACTION

From 2019 to now — what are the answers, and do they work?

I ask this genuinely, not as an attack. The NSCR is on its way. The subway ROW issue has been resolved. The North Triangle Common Station — I heard a consortium has been completed. These are real moves and I acknowledge them.

But for the daily commuter in 2026, the question is still the same: does it work yet? MBT is not a replacement for the subway or the railway. It is a complement — something that can be built and running while the bigger infrastructure takes shape over the next decade.

ON CONTINUING

I would have stopped if the numbers were decreasing. They are not.

The number of people affected keeps growing. Every time I visit another city and see a functioning transit system, I am reminded of how achievable this actually is. The answer is not complicated: build more subways, build more trains. And if that future arrives — if Metro Manila one day has a complete rail network — then Manila Busway Transit may no longer be necessary.

I have made peace with that. The goal was never MBT. The goal was always the commuter.

“The proposal is not perfect and will never be perfect — it's just that some things are meant to change, especially for the benefit of the Filipino commuters.”

FROM THE ORIGINAL 2019 PAPER

THE ORIGIN

October 25, 2019.

A 19-year-old from Balintawak, Quezon City sat down and started writing. There was no institution behind it, no grant, no title. There wasn't even a name for what this was yet.

The first paper covered a single corridor — EDSA, from Andres Bonifacio Shrine in Caloocan to the Mall of Asia in Pasay. It was called “Bus Transit System” at first. Then “Metro Busway Transit.” The acronym MBT was born early and never left.

In June 2020, the EDSA Busway launched — a dedicated median lane, proper boarding stations, one operator per route. The Yellow Line concept, written in 2019, was now operating.

The network grew from there. What started as one line became seven main BRT corridors, each with underlying feeder routes reaching into the barangays. By 2025–2026, the full name sharpened: Metro became Manila. Same three letters. More precise home.

Carlo Corcuera

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OCT 2019

The first paper.

Written at home in Balintawak, Quezon City. A Yellow Line concept for EDSA. No institution, no name yet.

2019

A name takes shape.

“Bus Transit System” evolves into “Metro Busway Transit.” The MBT acronym is born.

JUN 2020

The proof arrives.

The EDSA Busway launches — dedicated median lane, proper stations, one operator. The Yellow Line concept, now operating.

2019–2024

The network grows.

One corridor expands into 7 main BRT lines and 46 feeder routes — 73+ routes in all — covering Metro Manila.

2025–2026

Manila Busway Transit.

Metro becomes Manila. Same MBT acronym, sharper identity. Version 4.2 — live at mbt.ph, now with the full network transit map.

No political colors. This proposal has no party affiliation, no government backing, and no corporate sponsor.

No institutional agenda. MBT is not written to point fingers or shame any agency. It is a call for discussion and timely action.

Just the 14 million. Filipino love for this city — and for every commuter moving through it every day — is the only agenda.

Built with AI assistance — Claude (Anthropic) for research synthesis, writing, and design; ChatGPT (OpenAI) for the 2023 research phase. All ideas, route planning, network logic, and every strategic position are the author's own. AI assisted with language and structure — not with the thinking.

— DISCLAIMER — LIVING DOCUMENT

This proposal is a starting point, not a final answer.

All routes, corridors, and line designations are proposals subject to revision. Routes may be added, modified, or removed depending on actual commuter demand, road conditions, right-of-way constraints, and the evolving needs of Metro Manila's residents.

This plan was built from observation, research, and citizen-level analysis — not from engineering surveys or official feasibility studies. Any actual implementation would require rigorous technical study, public consultation, and formal planning processes.

The commuter is at the center of this proposal. If the data says a route should move, it moves. If the people say a corridor is missing, it gets added. This network belongs to Metro Manila — and Metro Manila will always have the final say.

For research and advocacy purposes only. Not for sale. Not for political use.

Version 4.2 · July 2026 · Carlo Corcuera · carlo@mbt.ph · mbt.ph

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Manila Busway Transit · mbt.ph

Connecting every Juan, wherever in Metro Manila.

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Widely attributed to Benjamin Franklin in popular usage; Quote Investigator traces the earliest known instance to Rev. H.K. Williams, 1919. quoteinvestigator.com