

TOWN OF BLADENSBURG

Office of the Town Administrator
4229 Edmonston Road, Bladensburg, MD 20710

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Town Council
FROM: Interim Town Administrator
DATE: July 13, 2026
RE: Decision Point Memo – Port Towns Bus Program

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to update the Mayor and Town Council on discussions between Town staff and the Town of Colmar Manor regarding the future of the Port Towns Bus program, and to present a decision point regarding a potential transfer of program operations to the Town of Bladensburg.

BACKGROUND

Staff held a productive meeting with representatives from Colmar Manor regarding the operation of the Port Towns Bus. The proposal under consideration would transfer all program operations from Colmar Manor to Bladensburg, in recognition of the fact that Bladensburg residents make up over 90% of program ridership.

CURRENT PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE

The Port Towns Bus is currently operated under a partnership between Colmar Manor and Bladensburg, structured as follows:

- Colmar Manor administers the program and owns the bus.
- Colmar Manor employs both part-time bus drivers on its payroll.
- Bladensburg stores the bus and reimburses Colmar Manor based on Bladensburg ridership, plus a 10% administrative fee paid to Colmar Manor.

KEY POINTS

1. The Port Towns Bus currently serves both Colmar Manor and Bladensburg residents, with well over 90% of monthly ridership coming from Bladensburg.
2. The bus itself is nearing the end of its useful life. A decision regarding replacement of the vehicle, and the long-term structure of the program, will need to be made within the next 12 to 18 months.

DECISION POINT / REQUEST

Colmar Manor has requested that the Town of Bladensburg assume full administration of the Port Towns Bus program. This would include:

- Taking over administration of the program from Colmar Manor;
- Hiring or absorbing the two part-time bus drivers currently employed by Colmar Manor; and
- Identifying an equitable method of transitioning ownership of the bus to Bladensburg.

One potential approach discussed would establish an agreed-upon value for the bus, with that value drawn down over time through continued service to Colmar Manor residents, in lieu of cash payment, until the value of the vehicle is fully offset.

Staff is bringing this matter forward now so that the Council has the opportunity to weigh in on the general direction of a potential transfer prior to detailed negotiations with Colmar Manor.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Council move forward with this proposal. Taking over administration of the Port Towns Bus program will give the Town greater control over the program and its day-to-day operations, and will provide the time needed to adequately assess what the program should look like going forward and how the Town would like to see it operate. Staff will bring forward a full briefing memo with detailed terms, including financial impact, staffing considerations, and a recommended transition timeline, for formal Council consideration.