

## **Empowerment Zones and Transportation: The Baltimore Example**

Because transportation exists to connect scattered locations, maps and geographical analyses are key to understanding what transportation does for and to us. For this reason, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) has invested a significant share of its resources in the development of geographic information systems (GIS) and geographic data.

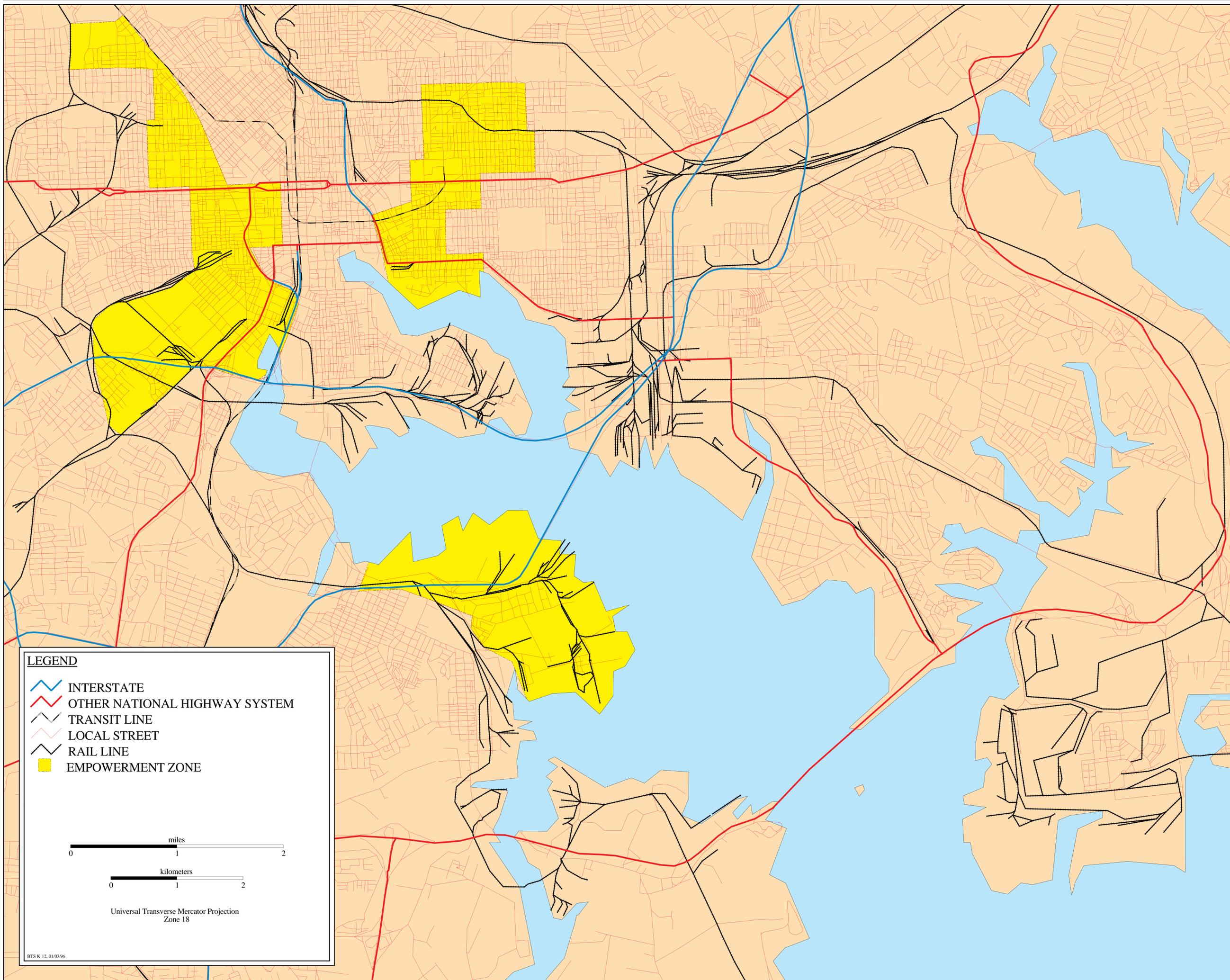
GIS has been used by the Bureau for a wide range of purposes, from editing data for the Commodity Flow Survey and the American Travel Survey to generating maps in times of emergency for the Department's Crisis Management Center. A typical application occurred in 1996 when the Office of the Secretary of Transportation wanted to know the relationships between Empowerment Zones--areas supported by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for economic development--and major transportation facilities. BTS prepared a series of maps showing the location of Empowerment Zones and transportation facilities for selected port cities. The following map of Baltimore was one example.

The map demonstrates both the utility and challenge of geographic data and GIS technology. Proximity of the Empowerment Zones to major highways, railroads, rail transit, and ports is clearly indicated. GIS software can easily calculate the population characteristics served by transportation in any part of this map using data from the Census Transportation Planning Package published by BTS. The map also shows anomalies in the transportation data, such as the ending of a rail line in the Empowerment Zone near the upper left corner of the map. That point is actually where Amtrak's Northeast Corridor enters a tunnel, disappearing from view and consequently from the geographic data upon which the map was based. Finding and correcting these anomalies represents much of the BTS work in GIS.

The map was produced by Steve Lewis of the BTS staff in 1996.

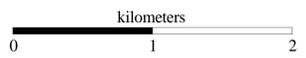
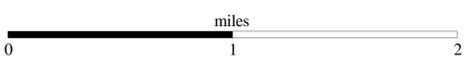


# EMPOWERMENT ZONE FOR BALTIMORE, MARYLAND



## LEGEND

-  INTERSTATE
-  OTHER NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM
-  TRANSIT LINE
-  LOCAL STREET
-  RAIL LINE
-  EMPOWERMENT ZONE



Universal Transverse Mercator Projection  
Zone 18