

Pascal scores subway plan

Says governor 'trying to ride off on a white horse'

By **JOEL McCORD**
Staff Writer

Gov. Marvin Mandel is "trying to ride off into the sunset on a white horse by not raising taxes" in his last term of office, County Executive Robert A. Pascal charged yesterday.

"But the local governments will have to pick up the bill," he complained.

Pascal, who spent most of his news conference yesterday explaining his opposition to local subsidies of the proposed Baltimore rapid transit line, said the governor "has to take the responsibility" for the costs of mass transportation.

"The county only has certain resources," he said. "And I would rather spend the money on schools and senior citizen centers and parks. If we get more flexibility in our tax sources, then we might talk about picking up some transit deficits."

The county now depends largely on the property tax for revenue, the executive argued.

Pascal told Mandel in a breakfast meeting Tuesday that he would not support a plan to have Anne Arundel and Baltimore Counties and Baltimore pay part of the state

Mass Transit Administration's deficits.

He said yesterday he believes the plan will commit the county to paying an ever-increasing bill.

The plan, part of a deal to get the governor's support for immediate construction of the Baltimore rapid transit system, would require the three jurisdictions to pay a major share of the MTA's deficits beginning in the next fiscal year. For the next five years, the jurisdictions would subsidize MTA bus operations under the plan. After that, they would also be obligated to cover losses in subway and light rail operations.

The MTA bus deficit, which has been growing rapidly,

reached \$9 million for the last fiscal year, despite a \$4 million federal operating subsidy.

MTA officials are predicting a similar deficit this year even though federal money is still available and a fare increase is scheduled in March.

The MTA is projecting deficits of \$9.5 million, \$11.6 million and \$15.3 million during the next three fiscal years.

Pascal said the county's share of those deficits would have been \$295,000 in 1978, \$635,000 in 1979 and \$973,000 in 1980.

"Those are the figures the state gave us," he said. "But I wouldn't be surprised if they are twice that much. We would be digging a hole that we'd never see the bottom of."

Although he said he has not "closed the door entirely" on the rapid transit line, Pascal used most of the conference to outline his arguments against the system.

He said few people would ride the lines because of their "inflexibility" and that the deficits would not "have a ceiling."

"People don't even want to ride in car pools now. What makes you think they are going to ride a rail system?" he asked.

"We have to determine our priorities by how many people will benefit by a program."

According to MTA estimates, approximately 27,000 Anne Arundel county residents ride buses into Baltimore daily, and

10,000 persons use buses to come into the county.

Pascal said he would "take another look" at the plan "at a later date, if we have the money and want to get in."

Mandel, at his press conference earlier in the day, said construction of the subway system would begin without any promise of help from Anne Arundel County and predicted that the county will eventually want to get back into the mass transit system.

The subway system is no longer planned to serve Anne Arundel County residents directly. A proposed 12-mile southern leg of the line that would have run through Linthicum and Glen Burnie to Marley was dropped.

Fire cancels some programs, but...

Key School 'moving ahead'

By **PETER RUEHL**
Staff Writer

The Key School, its art, music and drama building destroyed in a Dec. 29 fire, has begun patching those programs together again, although the activities, which the school considers essential, have been curtailed significantly.

School officials have moved

said previously that the school anticipated some difficulty replacing them because of their special features and the backlog of orders for them.

The greatest obstacle for the music department at this point is space. Badger said that classes in dancing and rhythm exercises, mostly for kindergarten through seventh graders, have been eliminated.

from the public school.

The long-range problem still exists. Badger said that even if work were to begin tomorrow on the rebuilding project, it would not be complete by next September. The contractors' estimates were to be given to insurance adjusters today, and insurance companies are expected to offer a settlement within a few weeks.

September, in an attempt to find additional classroom space. Badger mentioned pre-engineered buildings as a possibility.

Fire Department investigation officials still have not decided whether the fire was accidental or the work of an arsonist. Clyde Willis, a department investigator, said the fire started in a furnace room which was also a storage