



Collection of the author

Figure 10.13 The structure of the present MRT lines.

Singapore’s Land Transport Authority was created in 1995 and is now the owner and developer of the system. The operation and maintenance of the system is licensed to Singapore MRT Ltd., SBS Transit Ltd. and SLRT Pte. Ltd. under the Rapid Transit Systems Act. The goal of the organizations is to provide a service that can compete effectively with the private automobile as the transportation mode of choice. What differentiates Singapore’s MRT system from many others is that its development has been linked to precinct/new town development every step of the way. The key agency in expediting the concept plan has been the republic’s Housing Development Board (HDB), a statutory body established in 1960–1. It has had the responsibility for designing and building the new towns. The sheer mass of housing produced since independence led the way in deciding what elements of the transportation and industrialization programme

should be implemented. The HDB has played the major role in determining what land should be made available for transportation routes, where MRT stations should be located, where expressways should be built and how the entire network of infrastructure – water, sewers, power and telecommunications – should be developed.

As time has gone by, more and more attention has been paid to the comfort level of users of the system. Special attention has been paid to the design of subways and stations. The goal has been to make the stations column-free and have sufficient gates to handle rush hour pedestrian traffic with ease. Ticket vending is automated. Extensive pedestrian networks giving as easy an access as possible to the stations have been built. Raffles Place and Orchard Stations have extensive pedestrian networks connecting the station to surrounding buildings. In addition, local bus routes and (in the case of Chua Chu