



Transit Choices Meeting Summary

March 31, 2017
8:00 AM – 9:30 AM

Impact Hub Baltimore
10 E. North Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Attendees:

Roxana Beyranvand, **Baltimore Collegetown Network**, Liz Briscoe, **Action In Maturity**, Robin Budish, **Transit Choices**, Luis Cardona, **Downtown Partnership of Baltimore**, Art Cohen, **b'more mobile**, Ben Cohen, **BWI Partnership**, Liz Cornish, **Bikemore**, Councilman Ryan Dorsey, **District 3**, Matthew Fraling, **Coppin State University**, Taffy Gwitira, **Baltimore Impact Hub**, Don Halligan, **Baltimore Metropolitan Council**, Tony Green, **University of Maryland**, Mark Heishman, **Transdev**, Greg Hinchcliffe, **Bicycle Advocate**, Phil LaCombe, **Jacobs**, Jon Laria, **Ballard Spahr LLP**, Jim Leanos, **Corporate Property Solutions**, Jackie MacMillan, **Bus Workgroup 14**, Joe Nathanson, **Urban Information Associates**, Mark Edelson, **Goldman & Goldman, P.A.**, Jimmy Rouse, **Transit Choices**, Kristin Speaker, **Charles Street Development Corporation**, Raven Thompson, **Baltimore Development Corporation**

Guest Moderator: Jackie MacMillan, Member of Bus Workgroup 14 welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the attendees for coming. Jackie then introduced the first guest speaker:

Don Halligan, Senior Transportation Planner - Baltimore Metropolitan Council

Presentation: "**The Pugh Transition Report: Transportation Committee Recommendations**"

Presentation highlights: The Process

1. **Complete Streets**
2. **Finance & Management**
3. **Technology**
4. **Strategic Partnerships**
5. **Transit – REPORT**

The Rules

- **6 page maximum length**
- **A policy, not agency, review;**
- **Actionable**

The Long Haul

- **Worth Fighting For**

Additional Comments:

- Don Halligan has been a transportation planner for 30 years, and worked closely with Jim Smith (former MDOT Secretary) who is now Mayor Pugh's Chief of Strategic Alliances. Mr. Smith asked Don to chair the Mayor's Transportation Committee.
- A Complete Streets policy in place is not enough; the city should enact a detailed ordinance.
- Finance & Management
 - The city should hire an experienced, dynamic DOT Director.
 - A meeting was held with Janette Sadik-Khan, former Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation. Ms. Sadik-Khan suggested things we can do easily, cheaply and quickly within the transit arena.
- Technology
 - There is a lot of promise in technology, such as *Smart Street Lights*. The Transportation Committee supports creativity for transportation technology and pilot projects.
- Strategic Partnerships are key
 - Create a Maryland Transit Committee to provide oversight to the MTA.
 - Work with the private sector to finance and deliver projects.
- Transit
 - Circulator – look for sustainable funding.
 - Encourage the city to look at fare free or reduced fare zones.
- CityDOT Director
 - The city is competing with New York and other cities that have a similar position open and more resources available.

Second Guest Speaker:

Councilman Ryan Dorsey, District 3

Presentation: “**Complete Streets**”

Presentation highlights: **A Complete Streets Law for Baltimore: A Design Solution to a Transportation Crisis**

- **Executive Summary**
 - The design of Baltimore City's streets causes crashes, increased congestion, and deters biking, walking, and transit use. These negative impacts disparately affect communities of color and perpetuate structural racism.
 - Currently, Baltimore City has a complete streets resolution that is non-binding and is thus effectively ignored. A complete streets law for Baltimore City would require transportation projects to design for all modes, users, and activities, rebalancing our transportation system for equitable urban development and growth by reducing congestion and increasing safety.

- **What is Complete Streets?**

Complete streets is a transportation philosophy that calls for designing and building streets that are optimal for all road users regardless of age, ability, income, race, ethnicity, or chosen mode of travel. Complete streets policies generally produce streets that have the following features:

- **Traffic calming and lower maximum speeds**
- **Pedestrian improvements**
- **Bike lanes and paths**
- **Bus lanes and improved bus infrastructure (including bus shelters)**
- **Landscaping and other aesthetic/place-making improvements**
- **Improved connections between modes (i.e. good pedestrian infrastructure connected to transit facilities)**
- **Consideration of local land use (i.e. industrial, urban core, Main Street, mixed-use, residential, etc.)**

- **A complete streets law** would improve safety, reduce congestion, and improve conditions for those who already walk, bike, and take transit, and by doing so, increase use of those transportation modes. There is pent up demand to shift to non-automobile modes if only street design would allow for it. Shifting some automobile traffic to walking, biking, or transit has multifold health, economic, and transportation benefits.
- **A complete streets approach** to street design is a cornerstone policy for equitable transportation and development in an urban place, and other policies, such as transit improvement or zoning reform, cannot be as successful without a strong complete streets law.
- **Promoting Racial Equity/Environmental Justice**, by prioritizing needs of suburban commuters by car over those of city commuters by transit, bikes, or walking, existing policy poses a barrier to employment and costs the city lost tax income.

Additional Comments:

- Complete Streets is about quality of life and creating a safer environment.
- Policy should not be driven by racism, there needs to be racial equity.
- Baltimore City has to be its own champion, let's put good policy in place.
- 30% of households in the city lack access to a car.
- How do we design a Baltimore City without the focus on cars to ensure livability for people?
- Equity is the core component driving force in the proposed legislation:
 - Design is the geometry of the road.
 - Implementation - anytime we resurface a road we should review the design process.
 - Reporting – at the end of year DOT reports on what has been done.
- Councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke (District 14) is the co-sponsor of the proposed legislation.
- “Smart Growth America” was one of the models used for the proposed legislation.
- Councilman Dorsey is working with Bikemore on a “Complete Streets” policy.

Discussion Summary: Meeting attendees were given the opportunity at the conclusion of both presentations, to share their feedback and to provide suggestions, ideas and concerns with the guest speakers.

Other Business:

- Jimmy Rouse, a Founding Member of Transit Choices
 - On February 21, 2017, Jimmy had a very productive meeting with Jim Smith, Mayor Pugh's Chief of Strategic Alliances to discuss the new “Transit Vision” brochure created by Transit Choices. The Mayor's Transportation Committee produced a report in which it established key priorities and initiatives, many of which came from the Transit Vision brochure. Given that Baltimore City needs and deserves quality public transit, one priority for the Mayor is to focus on sections of the city that are underserved by transit, and work on better connections to jobs, schools and healthcare.
 - On March 23, 2017, Kevin Quinn (Director, Office of Planning and Programming with the MTA) made a fourth presentation to the BaltimoreLink subcommittee. Jimmy reported that the MTA could not be more responsive, and that they are trying to do the best job possible. He also made mention that the MTA is communicating better with the bus drivers. After the rollout of BaltimoreLink on June 18, 2017, the subcommittee will gather feedback to go back to MDOT and the Governor to let them know what additional resources are needed to ensure that BaltimoreLink is a success.
 - At a recent Charles Street Development Corporation meeting, Jimmy had the opportunity to ask Mayor Pugh about her transit priorities. The Mayor responded:

- ❖ Focus on sections of the city that are underserved by transit, and work on better connections to jobs, schools and healthcare.
 - ❖ Last mile initiatives.
 - ❖ Infrastructure - finding creative ways to fund projects.
 - ❖ Circulator funding.
 - On March 22, 2017, Jimmy met with Dr. Maria Thompson (President) Coppin State University. Dr. Thompson expressed support for a streetcar or Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along North Avenue.
 - On March 28, 2017, a meeting was held with Christopher Bedford (Director) Baltimore Museum of Art) who is new to Baltimore. Mr. Bedford complimented the Transit Choices new brochure and recognizes the importance of creating great public transit in Baltimore.
- Greg Hinchcliffe announced “Bike Maryland: Action Alert – House Bill 11 – Coal Rolling” and encouraged those interested to take action.

Robin Budish, Director Transit Choices acknowledged and thanked the following:

- All attendees for their and time and participation
- Impact Hub Baltimore for providing meeting space