



Transit Choices Meeting Summary

December 12, 2018
8:00 AM – 9:30 AM

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

Attendees:

Holly Arnold (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Father Michael Bishop (**Public Transit Rider**), Kirsten Brinlee (**Baltimore Collegetown**), Robin Budish (**Transit Choices**), Katie Byram (**SEED Maryland**), Susan Carlin (**Wexford Science & Technology, LLC**), Zach Chissell (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Art Cohen (**b'more mobile**), Ben Cohen (**Last Mile Solutions**), Joseph Consoli (**iRealty Research**), Michael Crowley (Transit Advocate), Matthew DeSantis (**Baltimore City DOT**), William Dorfman (**Downtown Partnership of Baltimore, Inc.**), Chris Firehock (**Center for Mobility Equity**), James Gillece (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Kenneth Good (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Ann Gordon (**Bus Workgroup 14**), Josh Greenfeld (**Maryland Builders**), Ben Groff (**Tidmore Group**), Don Halligan (**Baltimore Metropolitan Council**), Avery Harmon (**Rails to Trails**), Tom Hewitt (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Miss Joi (**Transit Rider**), Samuel Jordan (**Baltimore Transit Equity Coalition**), Corey Jennings (**Transit Advocate**), Jeff LaNoue (**Baltimore City Department of Planning**), Lowell Larsson (**Transit Advocate**), Jim Leanos (**Corporate Property Solutions**), Emily Lewis (**Floura Teeter**), Jackie MacMillan (**Bus Workgroup 14**), Megan Maffeo (**Floura Teeter**), Kristen McGuire (**France Merrick Foundation**), Lindsey Mendelson (**Sierra Club**), Joe Nathanson (**Urban Information Associates**), Eric Norton (**Central Maryland Transportation Alliance**), Charles Penny (**Baltimore City DOT**), Klaus Philipsen (**ArchPlan, Inc.**), Kevin Quinn (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Jimmy Rouse (**Transit Choices**), Sandy Sparks (**Baltimore Transit Campaign**), Kristin Speaker (**Charles Street Development Corporation**), Danielle Sweeney (**Writer, Transit Advocate**), Yolanda Takesian (**Kittelson & Associates, Inc.**), Raven Thompson (**Baltimore Development Corporation**), Josh Tulkin (**Sierra Club**), Meg Young (**Baltimore City DOT**), Mikah Zaslow, (**Baltimore City DOT**)

Guest Moderator: Josh Tulkin, Director of the Maryland Chapter Sierra Club welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the attendees for coming. Josh then introduced the first guest speaker:

Kevin B. Quinn, Jr., MDOT MTA Administrator
Presentation: “**Project Updates and Looking Forward**”

Overview:

Administrator Quinn discussed recent and ongoing initiatives at the MTA, in addition to focus areas in the year ahead.

Presentation highlights: **What We've Been Doing**

- **Real-Time Bus Information**
 - Partnership with Transit App
 - ❖ Provides real-time transit information, simple trip planning, and step-by-step navigation
 - GPS units installed on entire bus fleet
 - Significant improvements in trip planning and overall customer experience
 - Over 98,000 downloads since launching on 6/18/18
- **Internal**
 - New performance management and scheduling tools in Swiftly
 - ❖ Improved management of vehicles in service
 - ❖ Operations Control Center and Field Supervision
 - ❖ Vehicle location for maintenance crews
 - ❖ Operator oversight
 - Data improvements for Police investigations and Transit Information Contact Center
 - Using real-time data for February 2019 Service Change (first time in MTA history)
 - Changing culture of operations
- **CharmPass Mobile Ticketing**
 - Over 28,000 app downloads
 - Over \$630k in revenue in 11 weeks
 - Used over 82,000 times since launch on 9/27
 - 90-minute free transfer window
- **Updates**
 - Dedicated Bus Lane Enforcement
 - Transit Signal Priority
 - ❖ TSP equipment installed on entire bus fleet and nearly 50 intersections
 - Traffic signal system upgrade included:
 - ❖ Replacement of traffic signal controllers
 - ❖ Installation of TSP equipment at the intersection to communicate with the bus equipment
 - ❖ Software systems for remote monitoring
 - ❖ Cellular telecommunications equipment was also installed allowing communications between the intersections and Traffic Management Center (TMC)
 - Phase II will include Liberty Heights Ave (CityLink Lime) and Belair Rd (CityLink Brown)
- **Bus Ridership**
 - October 2018 ridership exceeded October 2016
 - July and August 2018 ridership higher than previous year
 - Transit ridership falling in 31 out of top 35 major US cities
- **Using Real-Time Data to Build Better Schedules**
- **What We Can Control: Early Departures**
- **Analyzing Bus Complaints**
 - YTD total bus complaints down 14% compared to 2017 (through November)
 - ❖ No Show complaints down 28%
 - ❖ Early complaints down 7%
 - ❖ Discourteous operator down 10%
 - ❖ Overcrowded down 18%
 - ❖ Reckless driving down 21%
 - ❖ Failure to board down 9%
 - ❖ ADA non-compliance down 40%
- **Winter 2019 Service Change**
- **The Year Ahead**
 - More real-time!
 - Downtown bus shelters
 - North Avenue Rising

- Microtransit Pilot
 - ❖ LocalLink 75
 - ❖ Technical assistance from the Shared Use Mobility Center
- New service alerts system
- Sustainability Plan
- Regional Transit Plan

Additional Comments:

- Administrator Quinn is committed to institutionalizing a data driven culture at the MTA.
- For the first time in MTA history, they have real time data from thousands of actual runs to build the bus schedule. As a result of this information, bus schedules are being analyzed to determine potential changes.
- The MTA is starting to see positive trends in bus ridership. They are rebuilding the foundation upon which the system runs. Having GPS on the buses helps to better manage the fleet.
- The MTA is focusing on data that they can control for positive outcomes such as early bus departures.
- Motorists who park in bus only lanes will receive a \$250 fine.
- A new service alert system has been implemented to improve customer communication.
- The MTA goal is to have real time on all of their transit modalities by 2019.
- Information regarding the Regional Transit Plan will be available on the MTA website in January 2019.

Second Guest Speaker:

Klaus Philipsen, President - ArchPlan Inc.

Presentation: “**Thoughts for the Regional Transit Plan**”

Overview: Ideas and precedents focused on how to approach and frame the required RTP. Mr. Philipsen shared his suggestions to stimulate the public dialogue.

Presentation highlights: **The Central Maryland Transit Plan**

- **Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan Commission Members**
 - the county executive of Anne Arundel county, or the county executive’s designee;
 - the mayor of Baltimore city, or the mayor’s designee;
 - the county executive of Baltimore county, or the county executive’s designee; and
 - the county executive of Harford county, or the county executive’s designee;
 - the county executive of Howard county, or the county executive’s designee;
 - one representative from a central Maryland business or transportation organization, appointed by the president of the senate;
 - one representative from a central Maryland business or transportation organization, appointed by the speaker of the house; and
 - the following individuals appointed by the governor:
 - ❖ Three representatives one representative from a central Maryland business organizations;
 - ❖ One representative from a citizen advisory committee the citizen advisory council;
 - ❖ One representative from a disabled riders group; and
 - ❖ One representative from the MARC riders advisory council
- **The Central Maryland Transit Plan**
 - The Law
 - A shift in thinking about transit planning
 - What should be in the plan?
 - Precedents

- Issues
- **New Buzzwords**
 - Access
 - Performance
 - Service
 - Experience
 - Interdisciplinary
- **New Plans**
 - Demand centric
 - Human centric
 - Mode neutral
 - Outcome based
 - Equity centric
- **Transit Service**
 - How can transit become more efficient?
 - How to measure success?
 - ❖ Cashless payment
 - ❖ Performance from the customer's view point
- **Land Use**
 - Combatting job sprawl
 - Avoiding trips through density
 - More use where transit is
- **Integrate transit as part of the livable city**
- **Future Trends**
- **Housing and transportation are the key affordability**

Additional Comments:

- The Regional Transit Plan (RTP) needs to be an interactive process to include all transit advocates, and organizations.
- Equity and opportunity would shape the new transit plan with a focus on people, economy, and equity in order to create opportunity:
 1. The plan needs to address how people get from door to door, i.e. the plan has to look not only at transit but at transportation in the broadest sense and include last mile mobility, be it walking, a shuttle, a ride share or even biking or taking a scooter.
 2. The plan needs to also address land use. Not even the best transit can chase all the jobs in the far corners of the region. Instead, good opportunity and good access requires that jobs locate where transit is.
 3. The plan needs to optimize existing assets. It cannot simply rely on additional lines to make up for the shortcomings of the existing systems. Instead, what is already on the ground has to be optimized to perform on a top level. This includes better land use around existing stations.
- Other cities across the country such as Seattle and New Orleans have created successful transit plans and strategic mobility plans.
- The RTP must include an east/west transit line.
- On November 21, 2018 Klaus Philipsen published a blog titled The high stakes for the new Regional Transit Plan. Link: <https://communityarchitectdaily.blogspot.com/2018/11/the-high-stakes-for-new-regional.html>

Other Business:

- Jimmy Rouse, on behalf of Transit Choices acknowledged and thanked all of the guest speakers for their informative and interesting presentations. He also thanked the meeting attendees for their participation and valuable input. The Transit Choices meetings are designed to be an important forum for the exchange of ideas and information regarding public transit.

- Transit Choices has formed electronic (email) committees to examine the following topics relative to public transit. Each committee will have a designated moderator, and be given specific goals/objectives to achieve:
 - The next round of BaltimoreLink improvements
 - Charm City Circulator & the Water Taxi
 - Regulations for Dockless Scooters & Bikes
 - Future Mobility - Preparing for Autonomous Vehicles, Vans...
 - North Avenue Rising
 - Regional Transportation Plan to include Modern Streetcars
 - Funding & Governance
- Greater Washington Partnership (GWP) Regional Report on Transit
 - The GWP report titled “Capital Region Blueprint for Regional Mobility” is a major development in the transportation arena.
 - The organization is very well funded, and committed to articulating a transit vision for the region.
 - The report was written by major corporate CEO’s within the greater Washington area, who share 175,000 employees between them in the greater Washington region.
 - The report cites seven major points of areas for transit improvement:
 1. Modernize Intercity and Commuter Rail
 2. Improve Roadway and Trail Performance
 3. Create High-Performing Public Transit
 4. Grow Employer Mobility Programs
 5. Expand Access to Opportunity
 6. Enable Technology-Driven Future
 7. Reform Governance and Funding
 - The Central Maryland Transportation Alliance (CMTA) wrote a response letter to the GWP in which it mentioned broad approval of the report with the exception of highway expansion, which they do not approve of.
 - The GWP will be invited to make a presentation at a Transit Choices meeting in early 2019.
- The Sierra Club, Maryland Chapter will host the following event:

Sierra Transportation Benefit with Delegate Brooke Lierman & Jim Shea
Saturday, December 15, 2018
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Charm City Meadworks
400 E Biddle Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

All are invited to attend a celebration and Maryland Sierra Club benefit featuring special guests Delegate Brooke Lierman, champion of legislation that increased transit funding last year and Jim Shea, former chair of the Central Maryland Transportation Alliance.