



Transit Choices Meeting Summary

May 23, 2019
8:00 AM – 9:30 AM

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

Attendees:

Holly Arnold (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Veronica Battisti (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Father Michael Bishop (**Public Transit Rider**), Kirsten Brinlee (**Baltimore Collegetown**), Laura Bristow (**Action In Maturity**), Robin Budish (**Transit Choices**), Colin Campbell (**Baltimore Sun**), Sue Carlin (**City Center Residents Association Board**), Art Cohen (**b'more mobile**), Ben Cohen (**Last Mile Solutions**), Kyle Davis (**Maryland Transit Administration**), William Dorfman (**Downtown Partnership of Baltimore, Inc.**), Chris Firehock (**Center for Mobility Equity**), James Gillece (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Steve Gladstone (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Kenneth Good (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Maurice Good (**Maryland New Directions**), Tony Green (**University of Maryland**), Ben Groff (**Tidmore Group**), Art Guzzetti (**American Public Transportation Association**), Taffy Gwitira (**Impact Hub Baltimore**), Sibtay Haider (**WSP**), Beth Harber (**Abell Foundation**), Molly Hayeslip (**Baltimore Collegetown**), Mike Helta (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Tom Hewitt (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Jackie MacMillan (**Bus Workgroup 14**), Brittany Marshall (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Patrick McMahon (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Robert Milner (**University of Maryland**), Zohreh Moghaddam (**Maryland Department of Transportation**), Frank Murphy (**Baltimore City DOT**), Joe Nathanson (**Urban Information Associates**), Kevin B. Quinn, Jr. (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Michael Romeo (**Transdev**), Jimmy Rouse (**Transit Choices**), Tommy Rouse (**Transit Advocate**), Sandy Sparks (**Baltimore Transit Campaign**), Kristin Speaker (**Charles Street Development Corporation**), Susan Sperry (**Transit Advocate**), Mikah Zaslou, (**Baltimore City DOT**)

Guest Moderator: Ben Groff, Partner | **Tidmore** welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the attendees for coming. Ben then introduced the first guest speaker:

Kevin B. Quinn, Jr., Administrator, MDOT MTA
Presentation: "**Project and Performance Updates**"

Presentation highlights:

- **North Avenue Rising**
 - Project moving from design to construction
 - Planning underway for community outreach this summer
- **CharmPass Mobile Ticketing**
 - Over 97,000 app downloads
 - Over \$4.3 million in revenue in 8 months
 - Used over 565,000 times since launch on 9/2

- **Dedicated Bus Lanes**
 - Released report in February
 - MTA Police continues active enforcement efforts
 - 7 additional miles of bus lanes with North Avenue Rising
- **Dedicated Bus Lane Enforcement**
 - Targeted enforcement efforts through bus speed measurement.
- **Real-Time Bus Information**
 - Partnership with Transit app
 - Most popular routes for Transit app are CityLink Blue, CityLink Pink, and CityLink Orange
 - Used real-time data for February 2019 Service Change (first time in MDOT MTA history)
- **Improving Real-Time Communication**
 - Schedule based arrivals are now greyed out in the Transit App
 - Allows riders to know when their ride is tracking in real-time
- **Providing Accurate Real-Time Information**
 - Accurate GPS Trackers
 - Bus Assignment
- **Winter 2019 Service Change – Recap**
 - Focused on reliability improvements
 - Used real-time data for first time in agency’s history
 - Trip additions
- **2019 Summer Service Change**
 - Every route analyzed and will be modified in some way
 - Using data from current pick (February-March)
- **Bus Stop Design Guide**
 - Provides guidance for the planning, placement, and design of BaltimoreLink bus stops
 - Bus stop hierarchy and placement
 - Bus stop location
 - Amenities and accessibility
 - Release anticipated this summer
- **Real-Time on Commuter Bus – Launching 5/23**
 - Involved coordination with 6 contractors
 - Will work across the State of Maryland
 - 5th largest commuter bus system in the country
 - Customized GTFS feed
 - Live feed undergoing testing and QA/QC
- **Real-Time Updates**
 - MARC – Testing phase – Anticipated launch in July
 - Light Rail – Testing phase – Anticipated launch in July
 - Metro – Anticipated launch in fall
- **New Website**
 - Greatly improved mobile interface
 - Built to better address rider needs
 - Stronger focus on system information - Routes and schedules at forefront of desktop and mobile-friendly design
 - Updated Trip Planner
- **Service Alert System**
 - Improved operational efficiency and quicker communication to riders
 - One click updates to Twitter, email, text messages, and website
 - Populates a GTFS-RT feed used by Transit app, displaying alerts to riders
 - The most effective digital communication system the agency has ever had
- **New Performance Improvement Page**

- Searchable OTP by route by day
- Early, on-time, late
- Data going back to April 1, 2018
- Customizable durations
- Graph and tabular format

Additional Comments:

- The North Avenue Rising project is moving from design to construction. This exciting project will move transportation forward in Baltimore City.
- The MTA is ushering in a new era of transparency and openness. A [New Performance Improvement Page](#) on the MTA website will allow searchable OTP (On-Time Performance) by route and by day.
- It was reported that some parking garages located in downtown Baltimore have been stopping buses on certain routes to let cars out of the garages. The end result is a delay in bus service. The MTA will work to resolve this issue.
- A "Road Diet", also called a lane reduction is a technique in transportation planning whereby the number of travel lanes and/or effective width of the road is reduced in order to achieve systemic improvement.
- The MTA Mobility program is going from three providers to two providers. Administrator Quinn recently met with the leadership of both companies to discuss ramping up operations to improve on-time performance.
- The MTA will consider having printed materials in various languages available at their Open House public meetings to accommodate diverse audiences.
- Every two weeks the MTA holds an internal "Bus Meeting" to troubleshoot problem routes.

Second Guest Speaker:

Arthur L. Guzzetti, Vice President - Policy, American Public Transportation Association

Presentation: "Landscape of Funding for Public Transportation: A Federal / State / Local partnership."

Presentation highlights:

- **Industry Revenue Sources (2016)**
- **Public Transportation and Passenger Rail**
- **Highway Trust Fund Shortfall**
- **Keys to Rebuilding America**
 - Becoming Democrats' Priority #2 - *Priority #3 Never Gets Done*
 - Bipartisanship - *President Trump's Support is Critical*
 - What are the "Pay-Fors"? - *Increase the Gas Tax or Other Revenue*
 - Acting in 2019
- **APTA'S MOBILITY INNOVATION HUB**
 - Autonomous Vehicles
 - First/Last Mile Solutions
 - Mobility Action Plans
 - Microtransit
 - Mobility As A Service
 - Transit/TNC Partnerships & Agreements
- **State and Local Ballot Initiatives**
 - Nov. 8, 2016: 34 of 48 local and statewide ballot initiatives (69%) passed (approx. \$170 billion)

- 2016 Overall: 77 total transit measures appeared on ballots, the highest number on record, with 71% success rate.
- 2017: Voters approved 15 of 17 measures, an 88% success rate.
- Since 2000, the average success rate of transit measures is 71%.
- **Categories of State Legislative Initiatives:**
 - Electric and hybrid vehicle fees
 - Public-private partnerships
 - State gas taxes
 - Road tolls
 - Bonding and debt
 - Pilot projects
 - Vehicle automation
 - Mileage-based user fees
- **Public Transportation:**
 - Backbone of a multi-modal lifestyle

Additional Comments:

- Art Guzzetti acknowledged that Baltimore is very lucky to have Kevin Quinn as the MTA Administrator.
- The transportation funding landscape is such that we now have more funds for transportation projects than ever before.
- The keys to rebuilding America require that infrastructure projects must be a top priority.
- We must remain vigilant to keep public transit moving and all equipment in good working condition.

Other Business:

- Jimmy Rouse, on behalf of Transit Choices acknowledged and thanked both guest speakers for their relevant and informative presentations. He also thanked the meeting attendees for their continued interest and participation. The Transit Choices meetings provide an important forum for the exchange of ideas and information regarding public transit in Baltimore.
- The Transit Choices online committees are up and running! If you are interested in joining a committee, please contact robin@transitchoices.org
 - **The next round of BaltimoreLink improvements**
 - **Charm City Circulator & the Water Taxi**
 - **Regulations for Dockless Scooters & Bikes**
 - **Future Mobility**
 - **North Avenue Rising Phase II: Economic & Transit Development**
 - **Regional Transportation Plan**
 - **Funding & Governance**
- The North Avenue Rising online committee has organized a Stakeholders meeting on June 5, 2019. The purpose of the meeting is to create a vision for economic and transit development along the corridor, and work for its implementation. Mr. Rouse stated that he and others, have always had a dream of putting a modern streetcar along the corridor to connect east & west Baltimore.
- Transit Choices has received funding to support a BaltimoreLink Bus Rider Survey project. The survey project follows a December 2018 Transit Choices meeting at which MTA Administrator Kevin Quinn shared a presentation on data being collected by the MTA. This survey will complement the MTA's efforts, but will particularly focus on gathering feedback specifically from Baltimore City bus riders. Once the survey is complete, Transit Choices will provide recommendations to the MTA based on the data collected. Annapolis-based OpinionWorks will conduct the survey.
- Upcoming Transit Choices meeting presentations will include:

- **Complete Streets** – Baltimore City Department of Transportation
- **Amtrak Penn Station Redevelopment** – Beatty Development
- **Future Mobility** – Klaus Philipsen
- Transit Choices met with Michael McDaniel (President & CEO) of the Baltimore Water Taxi to discuss the decrease in ridership and come up with recommendations to make the system sustainable.