



Transit Choices Meeting Summary

September 26, 2019
8:00 AM – 9:30 AM

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

Attendees:

Holly Arnold (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Irene Bantigue (**Impact Hub Baltimore**), Colin Beckman (**Penn Station MARC Riders Group**), Father Michael Bishop (**Public Transit Rider**), Robin Budish (**Transit Choices**), Colin Campbell (**Baltimore Sun**), Art Cohen (**b'more mobile**), Ben Cohen (**Last Mile Solutions**), Kimiya Darrell (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Dani DiPietro (**Office of Delegate Brooke Lierman**), Peter DiPrinzio (**Seawall**), William Dorfman (**Downtown Partnership of Baltimore, Inc.**), Peter Duvall (**Strong City Baltimore**), Anna Ellis (**Get Maryland Moving**), Chris Firehock (**Center for Mobility Equity**), George Frazier (**Baltimore Bike Out**), Taffy Gwitira (**Get Maryland moving**), Molly Hayeslip (**Baltimore Collegetown**), Greg Hinchcliffe (**Bicycle Advocate**), Jim Leanos (**Corporate Property Solutions**), Jeenly Louis (**Transit Advocate**), Lindsey Mendelson (**Sierra Club Maryland Chapter**), Patrick McMahon (**Maryland Transit Administration**), Joe Nathanson (**Urban Information Associates**), Jimmy Rouse (**Transit Choices**), Tommy Rouse (**Transit Advocate**), Sandy Sparks (**Baltimore Transit Campaign**), Danielle Sweeney (**Central Maryland Transportation Alliance**), Raven Thompson (**Baltimore Development Corporation**), Mikah Zaslou, (**Baltimore City DOT**)

Guest Moderator: Taffy Gwitira | **Get Maryland Moving** welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the attendees for coming. Taffy then introduced the first guest speaker:

Holly Arnold, Deputy Administrator and Chief Planning, Programming, and Engineering Officer - Maryland Transit Administration

Presentation: **“Regional Transit Plan Update: Improving mobility across the region”**

Presentation highlights:

- **Connecting Our Future – A Regional Transportation Plan for Central Maryland**
 - RTP Background & Approach
 - RTP Goals
 - Transit in the Region Today
 - Identifying Transit Needs & Corridors of Opportunity
 - Public Outreach Approach
 - Looking Ahead
- **Purpose & Approach**
 - MDOT MTA is developing this 25-year plan to meet the transit needs of the Core Service Area, guided by Maryland Chapter 352 (2018).
 - PURPOSE: Develop a new Regional Transit Plan (RTP) for Central Maryland that will define public transportation goals over the next 25 years.
 - VISION: Address traditional transit (buses and trains) as well as explore new mobility options and technology.

- **RTP GOALS (Draft Goals)**
 - Improve connectivity and integration of existing and future transit services
Connecting Our Future should...
 - a. Reduce or eliminate gaps in current transit services
 - b. Prioritize connection to economic opportunities and services
 - c. Prioritize existing and emerging transit-supportive corridors and nodes for new or enhanced services
 - d. Increase regional collaboration
 - Optimize existing transit services
Connecting Our Future should...
 - a. Advance equitable access to jobs, schools, and services
 - b. Promote travel choice, affordability, reduce delay, and reduce emissions
 - c. Improve service quality, customer experience, and safety on existing services
 - d. Ensure the region meaningfully integrates new transit innovations and technology
 - Enhance fiscal sustainability
Connecting Our Future should...
 - a. Identify transit needs
 - b. Identify funding and financing opportunities and innovations to deliver this Plan
 - c. Improve cost efficiency of transit services
 - d. Maintain assets at defined condition targets
- **IDENTIFYING TRANSIT NEEDS & CORRIDORS OF OPPORTUNITY - The Central Maryland Region is Growing**
 - Our region is forecast to grow by nearly 300,000 people and 440,000 jobs by 2045
 - The decisions we make today about how and where this growth occurs will impact who has access to transit and what type of service is appropriate
- **Identifying Transit Needs: Methodology - What analysis goes into transit planning?**
 - Market Analysis:
 - Where is there demand for transit service?
 - How much demand is there?
 - What time of day is the demand?
 - Where do people want to go?
 - Service & Travel Flow Analysis:
 - Where and when do people have access to transit service?
 - What quality of service is provided (span, frequency)?
 - Where are the linkages?
 - How does it perform (ridership, reliability)?
 - What is the cost of service?
 - Stakeholder Outreach & Existing Plans:
 - Where do people want to go?
 - What issues or gaps have the public and stakeholders identified?
 - What service qualities are important?
 - How and where should investment take place?
 - Where have regional plans identified as priorities?
- **Market Analysis | Transit Propensity**
 - Transit propensity analysis is a national best practice to assess transit needs
 - Transit propensity assesses probability that individual locations or sub-areas have demand for transit
- **Based on:**
 - Transit-Oriented Populations Origins
 - Activity Destinations
 - Commuter Population Origins
 - Employment Destinations
- **Combined to identify:**
 - All Day Service Needs
 - Peak Service Needs
- **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT APPROACH - Public Involvement Methods**
 - MAKE IT EASY - Meet people where they are
 - MAKE IT INTERACTIVE - Create experiences where people can connect directly with RTP staff
 - MAKE IT COMPREHENSIVE - Use both high-tech and low-tech resources to share all relevant information

- **Contact Information**

Holly Arnold, Deputy Administrator and Chief Planning, Programming, and Engineering Officer

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Additional Comments:

- MDOT MTA is leading the development of a new Regional Transit Plan for Central Maryland.
- Providing a 25-year vision of mobility, this plan will define public transportation goals for Central Maryland including Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County, Baltimore City, Harford County, and Howard County.
- MDOT MTA is collaborating with a broad range of partners including a newly-formed Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan commission, local governments, other transit providers, and the public to develop this plan.
- The sharing economy provides new alternatives including sharing services for bikes, cars, scooters, and rides.
- The plan will focus on seven topics to provide a better understanding of what transit resources exist while also exploring opportunities to improve mobility:
 - 1. State of Good Repair** - Identify the level of reinvestment needed to maintain the existing transit services in Central Maryland.
 - 2. Funding** - Develop funding and financing strategies to support regional mobility services, based on best practices and regional analyses.
 - 3. New Mobility** - Embrace changes in transport, technology, and mobility that are altering how we move about. Assess the new mobility options available in the Baltimore region, including bikeshare, scootershare, carshare, rideshare, and microtransit, and identify opportunities and challenges associated with leveraging these services to meet regional mobility needs.
 - 4. Customer Experience** - Improve the experience of using transit—from planning a trip to reaching a destination—through new technologies, improved amenities, and better customer service.
 - 5. Service Quality and Integration** - Evaluate existing transit services and determine potential improvements to make it easier to travel in the Central Maryland region.
 - 6. Access** - Work with local partners to ensure the areas served by transit are safe, comfortable, and convenient for people who use the region's transit options to live, work, and prosper.
 - 7. Corridors of Opportunity** - Identify existing and potential corridors that could benefit from additional transit investment.
- The Regional Transit Plan will focus on dedicated right of ways. Each corridor should have some structure for a separate right of way for the public transport.

Second Guest Speaker:

Peter DiPrinzio, F&B Development and Operations - Seawall

Presentation: **“Transform Lexington Market”**

Presentation highlights: Project Overview

- **Baltimore's Lexington Market**
 - Longest continuously operating market in the country; 230 years of operation and has served Baltimore for nine generations
 - Located in the heart of Baltimore
 - History of diverse vendors and customers; wealth-building for communities
 - Food that represents the culture of Baltimore
- **Previous Revitalization Efforts**
 - Lots of great ideas and community input gathered over the last several years

- Plan faced economic and community engagement challenges
- Ultimately didn't win community support
- **Timeline**
 - 2019 - Community Engagement Begins
 - 2020 - Construction Begins, Community Engagement Continues
 - 2021 - Transformed , Lexington Market Opens with Community Celebration
- **Community Engagement Process**
 - CORE VALUES
 - Open & Transparent
 - Diverse & Inclusive
 - Equitable
 - Sustainable
- **Transform Lexington Market Goals**
 - Lexington Market is **diverse, inclusive and equitable** in terms of its vendors, customers, and partners
 - **Improved safety and environment** for residents, customers, businesses, and institutions in the areas surrounding Lexington Market
 - Lexington Market is **well-designed, operationally well-run, financially sustainable, and programmatically responsive** to community needs
 - **Baltimore falls in love with Lexington Market again**
- **Community Conversation**
 - Vendor
 - What types of food or cuisines would you like to see in the market?
 - How do we support existing vendors while creating opportunity for new vendors to participate in Lexington Market?
 - How can we ensure vendor diversity on multiple levels? (race, price points, products, etc.)
 - Safety & Environment
 - What does safety in and around Lexington Market mean and look like to you?
 - What do you consider the most important strategies for creating a safe and enjoyable atmosphere at Lexington Market?
 - What types of businesses should surround and complement the market?
 - Community Programming
 - What are the amazing events and activities that you remember taking place at Lexington Market and want to bring back?
 - What community events, programming, and outreach activities would you like to go to at Lexington Market?
- **Contact Information**

Peter DiPrinzio, F&B Development and Operations
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Additional Comments:

- The \$40 million overhaul of Lexington Market will include a new building with a large pedestrian plaza.
- The city agency Baltimore Public Markets Corp. will maintain ownership of the market and operate it after Seawall builds and leases the space.
- Lexington Market will remain open to the public during the construction and renovation of the project which should take approximately 18 months.
- Every quarter, Seawall representatives hold community meetings for feedback and input on the project.

- Safety and the environment are key issues that are being addressed through engagement with partners.
- Lexington Market will be incredibly well served by public transit such as light rail, buses and bike lanes. The Seawall project team is working with the MTA on defining and finalizing bus routes.
- Seawall is developing the criteria to ensure that the vendor selection process is fair and equitable. A top priority is to increase the diversity of the market vendors. Once the project is complete, there will be a great selection of fresh and prepared food offerings.
- Public engagement is key to determining how Lexington Market can be revitalized and reimagined as a new Market for the city of Baltimore.

Other Business:

Jimmy Rouse, on behalf of Transit Choices acknowledged and thanked both guest speakers for their interesting 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 BaltimoreLink Bus Rider Survey project conducted by OpinionWorks based in Annapolis, Maryland has concluded. The 25 question survey was designed to gather feedback from Baltimore City bus riders about their experience with the BaltimoreLink Bus system. Overall, there were 800 respondents to the survey. Mr. Rouse and Robin Budish had the pleasure to meet with MTA Administrator, Kevin Quinn and his senior staff to present the data. Many of the findings reflected in the survey corroborated the data MTA has collected through their own surveys; however, there were some findings that provided useful information to improve the overall bus rider experience. Once Administrator Quinn and his team have had the opportunity to digest the information that was presented, we will discuss recommendations for improvement based on the data collected.
- Following the very successful Stakeholders meeting held on June 27, 2019, the Transit Choices North Avenue Rising standing committee will be organizing a second meeting to discuss how to leverage North Avenue Rising's transportation investment for equitable development along the Corridor. A Transit Oriented Development plan for North Avenue can provide the investment tools needed to realize long held visions for a vibrant and thriving corridor. Councilmen Leon Pinkett and Robert Stokes will be leading the charge.
- Mr. Rouse and Robin Budish plan to meet with new BCDOT director, Steven Sharkey to discuss his vision for public transportation in Baltimore. They will also use the opportunity to introduce the Transit Choices coalition and share its mission.
- Transit Choices was awarded a local coalition grant in the amount of \$10,000 from the American Public Transportation Association. The project for which the organization received funding is a public education campaign around MDOT MTA's Transit Priority Initiative. The project will help MDOT MTA build community support and political will to work with the City of Baltimore and other local jurisdictions to improve bus service, traffic safety, and bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure through transit prioritizing treatments.
- The Charm City Circulator (CCC) has entered into a three year contract with RMA Worldwide. Baltimore City Department of Transportation will be launching a rebranding of the CCC in celebration of its 10th anniversary.
- A Transportation Advocates Convening held on September 24, 2019, brought together Maryland groups and coalitions working on issues related to transportation and climate change, such as public transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, housing, stopping highway expansion, and the Transportation & Climate Initiative.
- The Transit Choices Charm City Circulator and Water Taxi Committee will become two separate committees effective this date. Kathy Epstein will serve as the new chair of the Water Taxi committee. For more information please contact: kathyepstein@gmail.com

- Transit Choices has formed a new Streetcar standing committee to discuss the possible integration of streetcars as part of a multi-modal public transportation system. Sandy Sparks will serve as chair of the committee. For more information please contact: srsparks@verizon.net

Thank you.