

July 22, 2022

Holly Arnold  
Administrator  
MDOT Maryland Transit Administration (MTA)  
6 St. Paul St.  
Baltimore, MD 21202-1614

Dear Administrator Arnold,

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) and the Greater Washington Partnership (the Partnership), together with private sector, non-profit, and civic organizations, are aligned behind Baltimore's Transit Future – an organized campaign to transform the Baltimore region's transit system to provide a more connected, inclusive and economically competitive region. A key priority for Baltimore's Transit Future is to develop a 10-year rapid transit program and expand the region's rapid transit system for the first time since 1997.

**Our submitted comments are reflective of the core pillars of the Baltimore's Transit Future campaign.**

The MDOT MTA East-West Corridor Study and proposed alternatives are an important first step to move the region closer to a modern transit system. Regardless of which specific alternatives are chosen for further study, we encourage MDOT leadership to proceed with all haste to ensure this project can compete for Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) discretionary grants as soon as possible.

A high-quality, rapid East-West Transit Corridor will improve the economic vitality of the Baltimore region's businesses, create jobs, and bolster career and educational opportunities for our region's residents. The primary consideration in selecting routes for further study should be which routes have the greatest potential to expand access to opportunities for residents, with a key focus on disadvantaged and underserved communities. In Baltimore City, that must include a focus on the needs of Baltimore City Public School students, who rely on MTA service to commute to school, internships, and other opportunities. As recently highlighted in the Fund for Educational Excellence's report "NOT IN SERVICE: Why Public Transit Must Aim to Serve Students," reliable transportation is out of reach for too many students, which has a severe impact on our region's quality of life and future success.

We support Central Maryland Transportation Alliance's analysis and comments to ensure the East-West project is **Fast, Frequent, Reliable, Connected, and Walkable**. In addition, we want to call attention to:

- **Quality of Service:** When evaluating proposed service parameters, the frequency and reliability of the proposed transit corridor's service should be paramount to ensure residents and workers can get to jobs, an education, and opportunities reliably and on-time.
- **Proximity to Riders:** Alignment(s) selected for further study should maximize the number of riders, particularly transit dependent riders, that are within walking distance of the corridor to maximize ridership and utility for the region's residents and businesses.

- **Multimodal Connectivity:** Each station of the East-West Corridor should be safely accessible by individuals that walk, roll, bike, or scooter. We encourage MDOT MTA to measure connectivity for individuals that will access the station outside of a vehicle or bus.

Improved East-West rapid transit connections in Greater Baltimore have been a priority for more than a half century, but an East-West corridor is just one of several expansions that should comprise a 10-year rapid transit program called for in our Baltimore's Transit Future campaign. We appreciate the forthcoming North-South Transit-Corridor Study, and request that MDOT MTA compare both corridors' range of cost estimates against current revenue projections to help the region establish a clearer set of priorities and understanding of tradeoffs that would be required in establishing a 10-year capital program, which would include both of these projects.

Transit is essential to the health and vitality of the Greater Baltimore region and our economy. A modern transit system will allow residents to access more opportunities, the business community to expand access to talent, and the entire region to grow more inclusively and thrive in the coming decades.

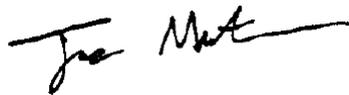
The undersigned thank Governor Hogan and the MDOT MTA for the opportunity to comment on the proposed East-West Transit Corridor Alternatives and selection process. We strongly encourage the MDOT MTA to move with all haste to advance the East-West Transit Corridor Study to position the project to apply for discretionary IIJA grants in the coming year.

Sincerely,

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