

Baltimore's Transit Future - September Update

Greetings,

With the onset of fall, we are becoming more hopeful that 2023 will be the year we start to see truly transformative investments and reforms to build [Baltimore's Transit Future](#). This update includes key news and updates from September related to the priorities of the Baltimore's Transit Future campaign and how you can support our shared goals.

This past month, healthcare leaders around the region shared why [better transit is critical to regional health equity solutions](#) while elected leaders, including [Mayor Scott](#) and [County Executive Olszewski](#), shared why the time is now to make real changes to bring real benefits for the region's residents and businesses. Learn more below.

Better Transit is a Health Equity Solution

On September 1, three of the region's key healthcare leaders [joined the call to action](#) around Baltimore's Transit Future. **Brian D. Pieninck** (CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield), **Ken Samet** (MedStar Health), and **Kevin Sowers** (Johns Hopkins Medicine) wrote in the Baltimore Banner that:

"As leaders of some of Greater Baltimore's largest health care institutions, we know that barriers to transportation lead to missed or delayed doctor appointments, fewer prescription refills and overall poor health outcomes. These factors contribute to an increased economic burden on the health care system and community health."

Read the [full op-ed here](#).

Compilation Video



Check out our [new video](#) featuring Mayor Scott, County Executive Olszewski, Alicia Wilson, Bill McCarthy, Al Hutchinson, and Marty Schwartz about why transit is essential to the economic health and vitality of this region.

What's New with the Campaign's Strategic Priorities?

Priority 2: Frequent Reliable Bus Service to all Regional Job Centers

- With the addition of light rail real-time tracking, MDOT MTA has implemented real-time arrival information to all fixed-route transit services ([Press Release](#), 8.30.22). This will help riders better plan their trips, but nothing works better for reliability for transit riders than more frequent service.

Priority 3: Support Regional Coordination, Decision Making, and Funding

- The Baltimore Metropolitan Council hosted the first workgroup on Regional Transit Governance and Funding on September 2. The group discussed five models for reform and the pros and cons of each approach, with an aim of narrowing down the reform options to a regionally preferred alternative in January. You can view the [presentation here](#). The next meeting is [Friday, October 7 from 9-11am](#).
- GBC hosted their [2022 Transportation Summit](#) on September 28 to bring local, regional, and national experts together to discuss the region's current transit system and opportunities for improvement, explore how quality transit impacts social equity and inclusive economic growth, and take a deeper dive into recent transit successes in Indianapolis and the business community's role in those successes.

Priority 4: Implement a 10-Year Rapid Transit Expansion Program

- MDOT MTA and local jurisdictions announced the seven preliminary alternatives for a new rapid [North-South](#) Transit Corridor ([Press Release](#), 9.8.22). MDOT MTA now has two transit expansion projects in preliminary study, which is a huge deal for the region! However, the studies are still in early stages. As a region, we need to figure out how we can accelerate the process to get to a preferred alternative and start building the region's first transit expansion in 25-years. Comments on this first phase of the North-South study are due November 7.

Priority 5: Prioritize Regional Rail Investment

- For the second half of September, [MARC suspended some train service on the Camden Line](#) between Baltimore and D.C. for two weeks to relieve CSX freight traffic congestion. Thousands of residents have been impacted this month by inadequate regional rail service.

Priority 6: Equitable Development at Transit and Rail Stations

- Maryland announced its intention to [turn over the State Center Complex to Baltimore City](#). The redevelopment of State Center could be a huge opportunity for inclusive and equitable development at a key transit hub for the region, but the state will need to be an active partner with the city to deliver a high-quality project for the region.

****We haven't forgotten about the [campaign's](#) first strategy, "Address MTA Repair Backlog & Operator Shortage." However, there were no critical updates this month.*

How to Champion Baltimore's Transit Future This Month

1. Check to see if your organization's logo is listed on our [campaign website](#). If not, please encourage your comms department to get in touch.
2. Attend the second [Baltimore Regional Transit Governance and Funding Workgroup](#) meeting on [Friday, October 7 from 9-11](#) at BMC's office. Meetings are open to members of the public and you can attend virtually.
3. Share the [campaign strategy document](#), this email update, and/or the [compilation video](#) with your constituents and your elected representatives.
4. Submit comments on the seven preliminary alternatives for the [North-South Transit Corridor Study](#) by November 7.
5. Invite the GBC & the Partnership to present and share the goals of the campaign to your team or constituents.

Transit News

- ["Opinion: Better transit is critical to health equity solutions for Baltimore region"](#) | Baltimore Banner, 9.1
- ["Baltimore transit equity group fails to persuade judge to reverse city elections board decision on ballot petition"](#) | Baltimore Sun, 9.8
- ["Baltimore area transit advocates get first look at potential north-south alignments"](#) | Maryland Matters, 9.9
- ["Maryland transportation officials ask for public comment on potential transit routes from Towson to Baltimore"](#) | Baltimore Sun, 9.14
- ["MARC suspends some train service between Baltimore and D.C. for two weeks"](#) | WMAR, 9.19

Thank you for your continued support and help to champion Baltimore's Transit Future. We are stronger by working together. Let's accelerate progress to create a more inclusive and economically thriving Greater Baltimore region.