

November 20, 2023

Paul J. Wiedefeld  
Secretary of Transportation  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
7201 Corporate Center Drive  
Hanover, MD 21076

**Re: Draft FY2024 - FY 2029 Consolidated Transportation Plan**

Dear Secretary Wiedefeld,

On behalf of the Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) and the Greater Washington Partnership (the Partnership), co-leads of the Baltimore's Transit Future coalition, thank you for your team's work preparing the draft FY2024 - FY 2029 Consolidated Transportation Plan (CTP).

Last year, GBC and the Partnership, alongside elected officials and more than seventy business, non-profit and advocacy partner organizations, called on the incoming Moore-Miller administration to launch an immediate course correction to transform the region's transit system and support MTA's efforts to spur inclusive economic growth. After the Governor's first 100 days, we applauded the Moore-Miller administration and Maryland General Assembly leadership for taking [decisive action to advance the transit system for Greater Baltimore](#) in the 2023 General Assembly session.

As the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) works to amend the draft CTP and create a final capital budget, we encourage you to keep in mind the Baltimore Transit Future coalition's six strategic priorities:

1. Address the transit system's repair backlog and operator shortage.
2. Establish frequent, reliable transit service to regional job centers.
3. Support regional coordination, decision making, and funding.
4. Implement a 10-year rapid transit expansion program.
5. Prioritize regional rail investment.
6. Catalyze equitable development at transit and rail stations.

Specifically, GBC and the Partnership encourage you to:

1. Adequately fund the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and local transit operators to reduce the transit system's state of good repair backlog, as outlined in MTA's [Capital Needs Inventory](#). Last year, MDOT increased MTA capital funding by more than \$89 million, an important first step which must be maintained, as outlined in MTA's [Capital Needs Inventory](#), to close the repair backlog over ten years.
2. Ensure the MTA Red Line project can move forward with all haste and stay on target for the Governor's goal to have shovels in the ground by the end of 2026.
3. Maintain planning funds for a 10-year rapid transit expansion program, including a North-South rapid transit line.

4. Provide sufficient state matching funds for major regional rail investments to capitalize on historic federal funding opportunities and advance the Frederick Douglass Tunnel, which will require approximately \$450 million in state contributions.

This year's draft CTP process has also opened doors for conversations about how to best improve Maryland's transportation network in a comprehensive and equitable manner. On this topic, we note:

5. The unbalanced nature of the current draft - including a \$2B funding gap - challenges general understanding of the Administration's funding priorities. As the deficit in the draft CTP needs to be resolved, we encourage using the existing Chapter 30 scoring methods to prioritize projects for funding. We look forward to informing the work of the Maryland Transportation Revenue and Infrastructure Needs (TRAIN) Commission as it identifies long-term, sustainable revenue streams that can ensure adequate funding for the state's transportation needs.
6. Within the CTP, \$6.6 billion is allocated to SHA minor projects, with limited details about the purpose or benefits of said projects. The final draft should include more details to justify such projects or consider "flexing" a larger share of the federal allocation to transformative transit and/or pedestrian projects, such as the Red Line.

Thank you for your leadership and the opportunity to comment on the draft CTP. We look forward to working alongside you and your team to ensure that the future of the Baltimore region's transportation is more equitable, accessible, and economically competitive.

Sincerely,

Mark Anthony Thomas, CEO, Greater Baltimore Committee  
Kathy E. Hollinger, CEO, Greater Washington Partnership

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### **About the Baltimore's Transit Future Campaign**

The [Greater Baltimore Committee](#) and [Greater Washington Partnership](#) launched the Baltimore's Transit Future campaign to call attention to the urgent business imperative and need for the Greater Baltimore region to create a world-class public transit system that helps create shared economic prosperity and catalyzes inclusive growth. Since June 2022, more than 70 business, civic, and non-profit organizations, including many of the largest employers in the State, have joined the campaign encouraging regional focus on the Coalition's [six strategic priorities](#).

The time for action is now. The residents and businesses of Maryland's largest city and surrounding suburbs deserve a world-class transit system. These six strategic priorities will set the course for a more equitable transportation system, making the Baltimore region a more attractive place to live, work, play, and build a business.