

February 16, 2022

Hon. Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair
Budget and Taxation Committee
Maryland State Senate

Position: **Support** with amendments: Senate Bill 0516: Equitable and Inclusive Transit-Oriented Development Enhancement Act

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth, the leading non-profit organization in the D.C. region, including suburban Maryland, advocating for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the DC region to grow and provide opportunities for all.

We wish to express our support, with amendments, for SB 516. This legislation would allow the More Jobs for Marylanders Program to support certain businesses located in transit-oriented developments, establish the Transit-Oriented Development Capital Grant and Revolving Loan Fund, and authorize the Department of Transportation to use the Fund to provide financial assistance related to transit-oriented development.

We commend this bill for recognizing the special challenges and importance of providing financial assistance to small businesses and investments in transit-oriented development. The state and local governments have worked to create transit service and station areas that foster more sustainable transportation options and land use patterns. We support the bill's intention to boost jobs and investments that create thriving, walkable transit station areas. By locating more jobs, services and homes around transit stations, Maryland can reduce its carbon footprint as it grows its economy. We recommend prioritizing walk, bike and transit connections for access to and around transit stations, while minimizing and managing vehicle parking. Market pricing for vehicle parking is an important step in more effective management.

We wish to recommend the following amendments –

- 1) Amend section 7-1204 (A) (1) (II) (II) to add:
PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS, especially walk, bicycle and bus transit facilities,
WITHIN A TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT;

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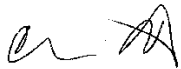
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- 2) Amend section 7-1204 (B)(2)(II) 2 to add:
“ENHANCE ACCESS TO TRANSIT IN AREAS WITH AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND A DIVERSITY OF JOB AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, especially through walk, bicycle and bus transit access,”
- 3) For MDOT designated TOD sites where transit service is infrequent compared to other stations, we recommend that MDOT provide more robust transit service if these sites are to be the beneficiaries of assistance.
- 4) We request that the MDOT designated TOD list be expanded to include station areas where there is robust transit service and development opportunity even if the site does not have an MDOT-controlled parking facility.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Cort
Policy Director