

February 15, 2022

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support for Senate Bill 0516 - Equitable and Inclusive Transit-Oriented Development Enhancement Act

Dear Chair Guzzone and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Greater Washington Partnership (the Partnership), I am writing to express our support for Senate Bill 0516, which would enhance Maryland's existing Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) incentives helping to catalyze and create more equitable and inclusive communities.

The Partnership is a civic alliance of leading employers in the Capital Region of Baltimore, Washington, and Richmond, who together employ more than 300,000 residents and are committed to making this region one of the best places to live, work, and build a business. In 2018, the Partnership released the [Blueprint for Regional Mobility](#), an action-oriented strategy to transform the Capital Region's transportation system into an asset that ensures our global competitiveness. In 2021, we released a study looking at [TOD opportunities in Prince George's and Anne Arundel counties](#), after a year of stakeholder interviews and data analysis. Additionally, we supported the region's creation of the [Capital Region Rail Vision](#), a 25-year strategy to transform the regional rail network to better connect our diverse communities to jobs, opportunity and inclusive growth. SB 0516 addresses key recommendations included in both the Blueprint, our TOD study, and the Rail Vision.

The State of Maryland has invested significantly in its commuter rail and transit networks, but too many station areas lack the transit-supportive infrastructure, land use, and development that can provide the best return on investment for the state and its residents. In 2008, the Maryland legislature enabled an official TOD state-designation process whereby projects within official TOD sites could receive state support. However, the 2008 statute did not include tangible benefits or incentives to encourage more TOD around the state's transit investments.

Developing around a transit station is often more expensive due to a combination of higher land costs, legacy developments and environmental hazards, and the need for supportive infrastructure to complement the transit station including sidewalk networks, station parking, etc. This bill will support TOD development by creating small, competitive grants and loans to support TOD planning and construction, coupled with an expanded incentive to encourage more jobs and affordable housing to be located near transit, bringing more of TOD's benefits to Maryland residents and communities.

I hope this bill receives a favorable report because it will help expand access to opportunities for Maryland residents by encouraging more accessible, connected, and inclusive communities to grow near the state's transit investments.

Sincerely,

John Hillegass
Manager, Regional Mobility & Infrastructure