

Takoma Park - SB 97 FAV - Purple Line Marketing Ac

Uploaded by: Ludlow, Suzanne

Position: FAV



CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

**SB 97
Support**

January 27, 2021

Finance Committee

SB 97: Purple Line Marketing Act

City Contact: Suzanne Ludlow, City Manager

SuzanneL@takomaparkmd.gov, 301-891-7229

The City of Takoma Park supports the provisions of the Purple Line Marketing Act.

While the City of Takoma Park believes the Purple Line will be heavily used immediately upon beginning operations, there are several reasons that a public information and marketing plan is needed for safety and to reduce confusion:

- The Washington D.C. close-in Maryland suburbs do not have any light rail lines at present and so information on how to use the system and what to watch out for along the active transit lines will be critical for pedestrian, transit and vehicular safety.
- One of the main reasons for the construction of the Purple Line is to bolster businesses along the route. A major marketing campaign will help promote these businesses which have been negatively impacted by construction for several years as well as by the pandemic.
- In addressing climate change, people who are less familiar with using public transit are encouraged to move away from travel by car. A marketing effort touting how wonderful riding the Purple Line will be will help reach these new transit riders.

We are looking forward to the Purple Line and the benefits it will bring our community. To ensure that the beginning is – and is perceived to be – successful, the Purple Line Marketing Act is needed. **The City of Takoma Park urges favorable consideration of SB 97.**

SB97 - Purple Line Marketing Act - FIN - Rosapepe

Uploaded by: Tulkin, Josh

Position: FAV



7338 Baltimore Ave
Suite 102
College Park, MD 20740

Committee: Finance

Testimony on: SB 97 “Purple Line Marketing Act”

Position: Support

Hearing Date: January 27, 2021

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club supports SB 97. It would require the Maryland Transit Administration, in partnership with local governments and transit systems, to develop and implement a marketing plan for the Purple Line now under construction that will connect communities from Bethesda in Montgomery County to New Carrollton in Prince George’s County.

The bill also would require the Governor to include in the annual state budget an appropriation of \$500,000 from the Transportation Trust Fund for each of the fiscal years 2022 and 2023 to fund the development of the marketing plan.

The plan would highlight the Purple Line’s many features such as its interconnections with other local and interstate mass transit systems including Amtrak, Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) Train service, Metrorail, Metrobus, and agencies that provide local bus services. The marketing plan also would identify pedestrian and bicycle access to Purple Line stations, and include a public safety education program to prevent collisions, injuries and fatalities on or around railroad tracks, rail grade crossings and light rail tracks.

Having a marketing plan to generate interest in the 16-mile light rail Purple Line before the start of operations and to promote use of the transit line after the start of operations makes a lot of sense because it would increase ridership and awareness of the many benefits of the Purple Line.

The more that ridership can be increased by the marketing plan, the greater the foot traffic that will be generated to support local businesses near the stations, the more transit-oriented development will be encouraged which is integral to smart growth, and more people will be able to get to jobs some distance away from their homes that they are unable to access now.

Another major benefit of developing and implementing a marketing plan is that it would encourage more people to use transit and leave their car at home, which would lessen the amount of air pollution emitted from vehicle tailpipes. The transportation sector is Maryland’s number one generator of greenhouse gas as well as other health-damaging toxic emissions, so the more people use transit and not their cars, the better it is for our health and the environment. Increasing ridership on the Purple Line also would lessen traffic on many roads which should decrease traffic congestion.

In summary, developing and implementing a Purple Line marketing plan would generate interest in the light-rail line and increase ridership once the transit system is in operation. Developing such a plan would be a worthwhile investment, and we urge the committee to issue a favorable report on this bill.

Brian Ditzler
Transportation Chair
Brian.Ditzler@MDSierra.org

Josh Tulkin
Chapter Director
Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org

Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America’s oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 75,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.

SB0097 - MTA - Purple Line Marketing Program - FIN

Uploaded by: Westervelt, Patricia

Position: INFO

January 27, 2021

The Honorable Delores Kelley
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

RE: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 97 – Purple Line Marketing Act

Dear Chair Kelley and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 97 but offers the following information for the Committee’s consideration.

Senate Bill 97 requires the MDOT Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA), alongside Purple Line Transit Partners (PLTP), Amtrak, the Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA), local governments, development agencies, and other stakeholders, to develop and implement a marketing plan that will “1) generate interest in the Purple Line before the start of operations and 2) promote the use of the Purple Line after the start of operations with the goal of maximizing ridership.” The bill prescribes several steps in the marketing plan, including the use of marketing media, identification of interconnectivity to other modes of transportation in the area as well as bicycle and pedestrian access, and provision of information to the public on the Purple Line and the various systems to which it is connected. Furthermore, the bill allocates \$500,000 in funding in fiscal years 2022 and 2023 for the development and implementation of the marketing plan. Finally, the bill requires MDOT MTA to report on the progress of the marketing plan in October of 2021.

The Purple Line is a 16-mile light rail line that will extend from Bethesda in Montgomery County to New Carrollton in Prince George's County. It will provide a direct connection to the Metrorail Red, Green, and Orange Lines at Bethesda, Silver Spring, College Park, and New Carrollton. The Purple Line will also connect to MARC, Amtrak, and local bus services.

With the recent Purple Line settlement agreement, PLTP will issue a solicitation for a new design-build contractor to complete the Purple Line project. This solicitation process is expected to take approximately nine months. A new, revised in-service date for the Purple Line cannot be established until the new design-build contractor is selected and a construction schedule is confirmed. Without an in-service date, appropriating funds as early as FY 2022 would be extremely premature. Additionally, it is too soon to know whether the \$1 million over two years allocated in the bill would be too much or too little for an adequate marketing plan of the Purple Line.

The Honorable Delores Kelley
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Preparing and implementing an action plan too far in advance presents challenges to its effectiveness for a variety of reasons. These challenges include the risk that the plan could fail to take advantage of future events that might have a substantial impact on the success of the marketing of the Purple Line. In addition, promoting the many advantages of utilizing the Purple Line well in advance of its opening risks missing the opportunity to fully take advantage of the news cycle. In other words, marketing the advantages of utilizing the Purple Line too early can make it sound like “old news” once it has finally opened for revenue service.

As with any major project such as the Purple Line, MDOT MTA will develop a marketing and communications plan that works in concert with local partners, businesses, and other stakeholders and that builds on synergies between MDOT MTA and MDOT’s other Transportation Business Units. Timing is critical to ensure that partner and audience interest in the message does not peak prematurely.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests that the Committee consider this information while deliberating Senate Bill 97.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Myers
Director of Government Affairs
Maryland Transit Administration
410-767-0820

Pilar Helm
Director of Government Affairs
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1090