

# BALTIMORE'S TRANSIT FUTURE

January 24, 2023

To: The Honorable Guy Guzzone  
Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Re: ***Support for Senate Bill 0151  
Equitable and Inclusive Transit-Oriented Development Enhancement Act***

Dear Chair Guzzone and Committee Members,

On behalf of the organizations listed below, we are writing to express our support for Senate Bill 0151, which would enhance Maryland's existing Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) designation to help catalyze and create more equitable and inclusive communities along the state's existing transit and rail infrastructure.

The State of Maryland has long recognized TOD as a preferred approach to development because of its many significant benefits, including increased transit ridership, reduced congestion, increased safety and convenience, adjacent economic development opportunities, environmental conservation, and better access to jobs, housing, and services. However, the state government has not adequately encouraged or facilitated equitable and smart development around its transit stations. Public incentives, and often direct support, are typically needed for such projects due to the complexities of TOD, including higher land costs, environmental conditions, and especially the need for critical supporting infrastructure, such as sidewalks and vehicle parking.

Despite a [long history of TOD as a central element of Maryland's smart growth strategy](#), too many station areas lack the adjacent economic development -- commercial and residential -- that would boost the return on our transit investments while also improving access to jobs and opportunities for Marylanders. Without public encouragement, incentives, and support, it remains easier for developers to build on "greenfield" sites that promote sprawl and contradict Maryland's smart growth and development law and policy.

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 sufficient tangible benefits or incentives to encourage more TOD around the state's transit investments. This bill strengthens the benefits of TOD designation by creating a state-run competitive grant and loan program for projects within TOD designated sites to support TOD planning and construction,

The undersigned organizations hope SB 151 receives a favorable report to help accelerate the development of TOD and bring its benefits to more Maryland residents and communities.

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Sincerely,

Associated Catholic Charities  
Ballard Spahr  
Baltimore MARC Riders  
Baltimore Collegetown Network  
The BWI Business Partnership  
CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield  
Central Maryland Transportation Alliance  
Greater Baltimore Committee  
Greater Washington Partnership

Howard County Chamber of Commerce  
JBG Smith  
Johns Hopkins University and Medicine  
MedStar Health  
PNC Bank  
Transit Choices  
University of Baltimore  
VHB

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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 65 business, civic, and non-profit organizations, including many of the largest employers in the State, have joined the campaign encouraging regional focus on six 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.

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.