



POSITION STATEMENT

Written Testimony to the Budget and Taxation Committee

SB.190/HB.80 – Land Use - Transit-Oriented Development - Alterations

Sponsors:

Chair, Budget and Taxation Committee

January 29, 2025

Position: Support

Dear Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

On behalf of the Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC), I write to you in support of SB.190, Land Use – Transit Oriented Development – Alternations.

As the leading voice for the private sector in the Baltimore region, GBC is actively engaged in collective efforts to grow a dynamic and inclusive regional economy. As documented in All In | 2035, our 10-year economic opportunity plan, we believe that encouraging development of robust centers of regional economic activity centered around high-quality public transit is vital to that growth.

The Baltimore Region developed around a compact urban core, with a radial network of roadways emanating from the City’s grid in concise and efficient pattern. These roads were once served by trolley lines that connected workers and businesses with frequent, reliable service. Yet over the course of many decades, scattered employment and development patterns have made it more difficult to effectively create and maintain a robust and effective transit system. Meanwhile, our light rail and commuter rail systems were largely designed to support automobile access to stations, reducing opportunities for mixed-use development and ultimately curtailing ridership.

This bill seeks to remedy these issues, and if passed has the potential to yield significant economic benefits for the Baltimore Region and beyond:

1. **Increased property values:** Research shows that transit-oriented development (TOD) typically leads to property value growth around transit hubs due to the convenience and accessibility they provide. This rise in property values can increase tax revenues for local governments, which can be reinvested into infrastructure, public services, and amenities.
2. **Fiscal savings:** By concentrating development around transit stations, TOD maximizes land use in areas where infrastructure and services are already in place, reducing the need for extensive new infrastructure investments. This helps lower development costs for both the public and private sectors and can also reduce the strain on road systems, which can be expensive to maintain. Reductions in driving also have long-term sustainability benefits, which can mitigate costs related to pollution, climate-related disasters, and health impacts.
3. **Reduced transportation costs:** TOD encourages people to rely less on private vehicles, which lowers household transportation expenses. This can lead to more disposable income for residents, stimulating local businesses and promoting local economic activity, among other benefits.
4. **Job creation:** TOD projects stimulate job creation through the construction of infrastructure, housing, and commercial space, and from ongoing operations (e.g., public transportation, retail businesses, and other services near transit hubs). This has a multiplier effect, supporting additional employment opportunities in the surrounding area.

GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

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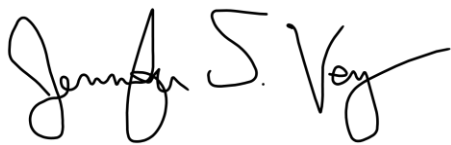
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5. **Increased business activity:** TOD typically combines residential, commercial, and recreational spaces in close proximity to one another, creating dense economic ecosystems of businesses and consumers. Such concentration encourages spontaneous interactions that can benefit local businesses.
6. **Attracts workers and investment:** Areas that are well-connected to transit systems are often seen as more desirable places in which to live and work, attracting both talent and private investment. This in turn can foster the development of new firms, housing, and retail establishments, all of which contribute to economic growth.

In sum, SB.190 will support Baltimore and Maryland's economy by lowering transportation costs, boosting property values, increasing local revenue, and supporting sustainable growth.

We hope you will issue a favorable report on this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer S. Vey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jennifer" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Vey".

Jennifer S. Vey
Executive Vice President & Chief Strategy Officer