



Committee: Environment and Transportation Committee

Testimony on: HB80 - "TOD Reform Act of 2025"

Position: Support

Hearing Date: January 30th, 2025

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC) supports HB 80, which would make the building and funding of transit-oriented development (TOD) easier, and reduce barriers to strong TOD.

Our state faces several crises, including transportation funding, housing, and climate change. Over the past several decades, we have developed almost exclusively single-family detached housing and car-focused transportation systems. The coupling together of the most expensive and least efficient type of housing with the most expensive and least efficient type of transportation system has led Maryland into these crises. Recent data for the Eastern Shore from the firm Urban3, contracted by ESLC, shows that walkable, mixed-use, and denser communities are far more valuable and have a significantly higher return on investment for our local and state governments than low-dense suburban communities.

Now is the time to invest in a better future where communities have options for more affordable housing and more affordable transit. Transit-oriented development in Maryland is an opportunity to create thousands of new housing units, generate new state and local tax revenues that have a much higher return on investment, and advance the State's climate change goals.

HB 80 makes it easier to build sustainable, transit-oriented communities that support state goals of investing in our existing infrastructure and driving long-term economic value. The bill addresses TOD implementation and funding issues through necessary zoning reform, clarification on state procurement law, and facilitates special taxing districts to support the funding and financing of corridor-level TOD initiatives.

ESLC urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 80.

Respectfully,

Owen Bailey

Owen Bailey
Director of Land Use and Policy

