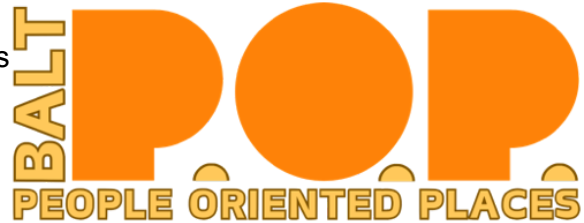


Bill: HB0894

Bill Title: Transit-Oriented Development - Alterations
(Maryland Transit and Housing Opportunity Act)

Position: **Favorable**



Members of the House Economic Matters Committee,

As a group which views public transit as the preferred mode of transportation to maximize the appeal and productivity of Baltimore and its closest-in suburbs, we would like to express our support for HB0894.

Public transportation can be a powerful tool for mobility, allowing residents to travel around the region in an efficient and low-impact manner. However, for transit to be effective, it needs to serve important destinations. While Maryland has an extensive passenger rail network, many of its stations do not serve major ridership generators. The rail in the Baltimore region is a particularly good example of this. Many stations on Baltimore's subway and light rail lines, such as Milford Mill and Warren Road, serve little more than parking lots. As a result, ridership levels are disappointing, and the state's investments in the region's public transit have not lived up to their potential.

Transit-oriented development (TOD) lets us make productive use of our existing infrastructure. By building apartments, offices, and other destinations near transit stops, we can increase the number of riders on our transit systems and make a meaningful dent in our [statewide housing shortage](#). Residents and workers at TODs also use transit at elevated rates. Public transit is a more affordable method of transport than driving, particularly when including all costs of car ownership: a particularly relevant concern in light of the national cost-of-living crisis.

Enabling more people to travel in an environmentally-friendly way would help us achieve the state's environmental goals, since over a third of Maryland's carbon emissions come from transportation. Montgomery County has already experienced significant benefits from TOD in booming areas like Bethesda and Silver Spring, but these benefits could be extended to areas elsewhere in the state with passenger rail service, such as Prince George's County and Anne Arundel County, among many others.

HB0894 would have a significant positive effect on the growth of TOD statewide. By prioritizing TODs in the state's Strategic Infrastructure Revolving Loan Program, and exempting these developments from certain local zoning rules, this bill would address some of the common barriers that prevent TODs from being constructed. By passing HB0894, we can make progress towards Maryland's housing and environmental goals, while simultaneously facilitating convenient, affordable travel via public transport.

We hope the committee finds these points helpful and convincing and we urge its members to **vote for HB0894**. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this legislation.

[BaltPOP - Baltimoreans for People-Oriented Places](#)