

## PROJECT FACT SHEET

*Transit Public Participation Improvement Strategy*

The Transit Public Participation Improvement Strategy seeks to enhance public participation in transit planning in the Baltimore metropolitan area. A successful project will assess public perceptions of regional transit and system planning, and develop a process to increase participation in future regional planning efforts. In particular, the results of this project will be used to inform the upcoming visioning process that the BRTB will conduct as part of the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) development.

**Goals:** There are three primary goals for the Transit Public Participation Improvement Strategy:

- Understand barriers and incentives affecting use of public transit (i.e., why people do/don't ride transit at a broad level).
- Understand barriers and incentives that impact public participation in transit planning, including the impact of overall perceptions of transit on participation.
- Develop strategies to fully engage a broad cross-section of the public in the transit planning process.

Project outcomes will focus on understanding opportunities to improve future communications, planning, and other actions in support of transit in the Baltimore region.

**Tasks:** The project will consist of four key tasks:

**Task 1: Identify Best Practices** – The project team will review transit planning outreach efforts regionally and nationally; and provide information on the type of data collected, the process being used to collect data, and the way in which the data are used.

**Task 2: Research Local Perceptions** – A broad range of constituents from across the Baltimore region will provide understanding of barriers and incentives impacting public participation, and feedback on strategies for engaging the public in transit planning. Focus groups will be held to solicit this feedback.

**Task 3: Prepare Information Materials** – The project team will use focus group results to develop an inventory of educational and marketing materials that can be reproduced and used. Materials will provide information on the role of transit in the transportation system and educate the public on how they can contribute to planning efforts.

**Task 4: Recommendations** - The project team will provide recommendations on conducting future outreach activities that will be based on focus group findings and lessons learned from the best practices research, and will include a message plan to guide implementation of the education and marketing materials.

**Timeframe:** The project is scheduled for completion in summer of 2010.

**Outcome:** The project will result in an actionable strategy, with associated techniques, themes, materials, and order of magnitude costs, to improve future public outreach for transit planning activities. The strategy will be designed with the intention of shifting attitudes in favor of transit over time, potentially attracting new riders.