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MEMORANDUM

TO: BRTB Members

FROM: Harvey S. Bloom

DATE: May 13, 2008

SUBJECT: Agenda Item #10 – Presentation on the Scoping Process for the Proposed Green Line

ACTION: Informational Item

Attached is a summary from the Maryland Transit Administration on the process envisioned for the Baltimore Green Line Alternatives Analysis. This will be discussed by MTA at the May 27 meeting.

Attachment

Maryland Transit Administration
Baltimore Green Line Alternatives Analysis Study

Project Summary

Background: The 2002 Baltimore Region Transit System Plan identified the Green Line corridor as an extension of existing Metro service through Northeast Baltimore City to White Marsh, with branches both to I-95 and Martin State Airport. As one of the priority projects to be carried forward immediately for planning and development, the plan identified a transit extension from Johns Hopkins Medical Campus to the Morgan State University/Good Samaritan Hospital area. The 2002 system plan did not specify a transit mode for any of the corridors, including the Green Line. Alternatives to be considered in the Green Line AA Study include Heavy Rail Transit (HRT), Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), and Light Rail Transit (LRT).

Project Description: MTA is participating in the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) sponsored New Starts Program. This program will fund up to 50% of the capital cost for a new transit project. Available federal funds are limited and discretionary: projects are selected on a competitive basis, nationwide. The FTA has guidelines to determine funding and fall within four major categories:

- Forecasting a transit project's benefits;
- Land use analysis and compatibility with the proposed transit project;
- Comprehensive environmental analysis and public involvement; and
- Sound financial planning based on reasonable revenue assumptions.

Reporting on these categories is mandatory so that comparisons among candidate projects are as fair and impartial as possible. MTA must demonstrate that its planning work meets FTA's requirements to qualify for up to 50% matching capital funds.

Project Planning for the Green Line entails studies to identify and analyze several potential HRT, BRT, and LRT alternatives for a roughly four-mile service extension from the vicinity of the Johns Hopkins Medical Campus Metro Station to Northeast Baltimore. The project will begin with an Alternatives Analysis Study (AA). The Environmental documentation phase of the project will begin after a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) is determined; however, screening for environmental features will take place during the AA phase. Mode, travel forecasting, land use compatibility, and cost effectiveness will also be explored during the AA phase. Subsequent phases of the project after the selection of the LPA include Preliminary Engineering and Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement (PE/FEIS) related activities. These activities include: conceptual plan preparation; preliminary engineering and mode feasibility analysis; environmental resource identification and impact analysis; assessment of right-of-way issues; ridership potential; capital and annual operating costs; and extensive public involvement.

Project Status: After a dormant period, the Green Line Study restarted with a Preliminary Market Analysis and Cost Effectiveness Study which were conducted in

2007-2008. In addition, meetings were held with stakeholders within the Green Line Corridor during this period. The study will now continue within the Northeast Baltimore City quadrant defined by Johns Hopkins Medical Campus / Morgan State University / Good Samaritan Hospital area. Public Scoping Meetings are scheduled for June, in Baltimore City, at the following locations:

Monday, June 9, 2008: Faith Baptist Church-833 N. Bond Street.

Tuesday June 10, 2008: Heritage High School-2801 Saint Lo Drive.

Wednesday June 11, 2008: St. Matthew's Catholic Church-5401 Loch Raven Blvd.

The next phases of the AA study will examine alternative alignments, environmental features for avoidance, potential locations for future stations and other considerations. The product of the AA study will be able to support land use decisions in the corridor, redevelopment and station area enhancements, phasing of improved and upgraded transit services in the proposed corridor (e.g. QB40 style bus service) and other coordinated activities to place this corridor in good standing for future activities.