



Transportation Outlook 2035 Amendment - Draft Preferred Alternative

Public Review and Comment Period, December 2008 - January 2009

AVL

Comment	Who Submitted	Response
Most disappointed that the \$225 million does not include any funds for AVL, something that could dramatically improve on-time performance and rider information, both of which are points of frustration for existing riders and which discourage potential transit riders.	Patrick McMahon Regional Greater Baltimore Group of the Sierra Club	The funds under discussion are dedicated to capital expansion only. In discussions with MTA, the BRTB was informed that the hardware for AVL is in place on most MTA transit vehicles. This information is currently used to improve on-time performance, however, information to the public such as transit vehicle arrival times are dependent upon operating dollars, which are not included in MTA's budget at this time.

DEDICATED BUS LANES

Comment	Who Submitted	Response
I feel dedicated bus lanes will further congestion.... Taking away one lane of an already congested highway would generate more congestion and more pollution. If you were to consider "HOV" lanes to include buses and hybrid vehicles and car pools at peak rush hours, that would be acceptable.	Paul Cox Balt Co	The BRTB is also concerned about ensuring that any dedicated bus lanes would not contribute to additional congestion. As such, the BRTB has indicated on page 15 of the proposed amendment that dedicated bus lanes "will be pursued on congested roadways with existing shoulders that are served by transit." Prior to implementation (2020 - 2035), the region will study implementation of dedicated bus lanes. This will include an evaluation of current and anticipated congestion delays, as well as existing and planned transit service. Additionally, an evaluation of shoulder width, safety and strength will be used to determine if existing shoulders are sufficient to serve transit vehicles. Additional concerns such as HOV lanes and bicycle/pedestrian access can also be studied at that time.
I urge the Board to be careful in selecting locations for dedicated bus lanes, focusing on areas where existing roadway capacity can be dedicated to buses rather than adding roadway capacity and also incorporating appropriate bicycle & pedestrian facilities as the restriping and stop placement occur.	Patrick McMahon Regional Greater Baltimore Group of the Sierra Club	Please see above for concerns regarding dedicated bus lanes.



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DEDICATED BUS LANES

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<p>Dedicated bus lanes on MD 152</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would entail widening a road which is predominantly outside the development envelope as well as the priority funding area. - There are no connecting business or population centers. So, who will be served by widening this highway? <p>Better location is MD 24 because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is the major and most congested route in Harford where a bus lane should be a serious consideration. - It contains major County shopping centers, citizen services such as the hospital, MVA, doctors' offices, restaurants, as well as high density housing developments. - It leads directly into a major employment center to be located at the U.S. Army base in the Edgewood area. 	<p>Judy Rose</p> <p>Harford Co</p>	<p>Thank you for your recommendation to consider MD 24 for dedicated bus lanes. The locations listed in the draft amendment to Transportation Outlook 2035 were only included as example locations that are currently or expecting to experience congestion.</p> <p>Your recommendation regarding MD 24 (as well as MD 22 as also mentioned in your letter) has merit and as such, Harford County will consider these locations, along with MD 152 in the future as planning progresses.</p> <p>A note of clarification regarding widening of MD 152 - the BRTB has indicated on page 15 of the proposed amendment that dedicated bus lanes "will be pursued on congested roadways with existing shoulders that are served by transit." No widenings are planned for MD 152 in this amendment or the full Transportation Outlook 2035, passed in November 2007.</p>

GREEN LINE

Comment	Who Submitted	Response
<p>The GBC is glad to see the inclusion of the Green Line in the document. This is a vital transit artery ... and deserves inclusion in this document in order to ensure at least the beginning phase of funding within the time frame contemplated by Outlook 2035.</p>	<p>Robert Hellauer</p> <p>Greater Baltimore Committee</p> <p>Regional</p>	<p>The BRTB appreciates your positive feedback regarding the Green Line Project Preliminary Engineering phase that was included in the Preferred Alternative of the Transportation Outlook 2035 Amendment. Your feedback is important as we continue to address the needs of the public through the transportation planning process for the Baltimore Region.</p>
<p>The \$125 million for Green Line engineering provides an opportunity for the region to determine the appropriate service area and alignment for that project, while also ensuring that it is clearly on the list of regional priorities.</p>	<p>Saul Wilson</p> <p>Balt City</p>	<p>Please see above.</p>

MARC

Comment	Who Submitted	Response
The GBC still advocates for MARC related extensions northward into Delaware connecting to Wilmington, and southward into Northern Virginia in order to accommodate the expected influx of BRAC related employment to Aberdeen Proving Ground and Fort Meade which will assuredly arrive in the state over the next few years.	Robert Hellauer Regional Greater Baltimore Committee	While the BRTB recognizes that MARC connections into Delaware and Virginia are important, this is out of the jurisdiction of the BRTB. However, planning and funding for new MARC service outside of this region are currently under consideration by MDOT and MTA.
Every MAJOR transit system in the northeast is EXPANDING; from Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington DC. Baltimore metro is the ONLY system that is actually REDUCING SERVICE during a time of INCREASED PATRONAGE. This illogical, unpractical, and downright embarrassing situation needs to be rectified. While there may not be enough funding to build new metro or light rail tracks/stations, funding needs to be channeled into the regional rail system IMMEDIATELY! From Perryville to DC, the Northeast Corridor needs to be beefed up substantially. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trains need to run daily and on weekends. - Feeder buses need to be logically set up with the stations. 	Shameek Robinson Harford Co	Unfortunately, due to the recent economic cutbacks, the MTA, as well as many other transit systems in the country, have faced service reductions. The BRTB is hopeful that this is only a temporary setback. While immediate funding may not be available, the BRTB has outlined a number of transit projects, including MARC expansion and the Red Line, in Transportation Outlook 2035. In addition, this amendment to TO2035 includes \$125 million towards the development of a new Green Line.
Allow non-folding bicycles on MARC trains	Jessie Watrous Unknown	The MD Transit Administration (MTA) has pursued this option, however, due to Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) safety regulations, MTA's bicycle policy allows for the transportation of folding bicycles only on MARC commuter trains. With the overwhelming demand for seats, the MTA is unable at this time to set aside an area where non-folding bikes could be secured, as required by FRA. In the future, the MTA hopes to have sufficient capacity to allow for a designated storage areas for bikes.

MARC STATION IMPROVEMENTS

Comment	Who Submitted	Response
The GBC is also pleased to see the inclusion of MARC station improvements and would like to see the document amplify where exactly the plan anticipates improvements.	Robert Hellauer Regional Greater Baltimore Committee	Because this amendment covers the years 2020-2035, the specific locations have not yet been identified. It is likely that these locations will, however, be identified in the next long range transportation plan - scheduled to be completed by December 2011.



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OTHER / GENERAL COMMENT

Comment	Who Submitted	Response
<p>People seem to feel that driving is more of an effective way of getting to where they need to go with the current baltimore public train system. I feel that with an improved train system, Baltimore can take that step to try and help their citizens get to where they need to be on time. This is what Baltimore lacks right now, as the current system is unreliable and many people from Maryland agree with my opinion. I hope you take this into account and make your citizens happier.</p> <p>Look to other cities, such as New York City, who offer reliable, efficient, on-time transit services when planning for the Baltimore transit system. It may be more expensive in the short term, but better in the long-term.</p>	<p>Anonymous Balt Co</p>	<p>The BRTB understands your concerns. This amendment designated all funds towards transit initiatives.</p>
<p>I hope that the Board will look for ways to adjust the schedule for projects within TO2035 so that these projects can be moved up so that they may take advantage of an anticipated increase in Federal funding available for transit projects.</p>	<p>Patrick McMahon Regional Greater Baltimore Group of the Sierra Club</p>	<p>The timing for all transportation projects will be reconsidered during the development of the next long-range transportation plan, scheduled to be completed by December 2011. The BRTB will also take into consideration priorities identified in the reauthorization of federal transportation funding (2009-2010). Additional considerations such as Climate Change legislation will also be evaluated as the BRTB develops its transportation plans.</p>
<p>Suggest that, along with the \$ for these initiatives, the BRTB lobby O'Malley and the legislature to divert ICC money to mass transit/bike lanes.</p>	<p>Jay Nelson Balt Co</p>	<p>Transit and Bicycle/Pedestrian Planning continue to be a high priority for the region as expressed by Goal #3 of the Transportation Outlook 2035: 'Increase Accessibility and Mobility'. However, the ICC is not within the jurisdiction of this region.</p>
<p>MTA/MARC needs to stop thinking of itself as 'commuter' rail and start thinking of itself as 'regional' transportation - especially into and out of Baltimore (both ways NORTH and SOUTH)... Stop thinking of Baltimore as a suburb or way stop of DC and think of Baltimore as the destination that it should be...Otherwise we will remain just a waystop or a 'suburb' on I-95 and the Northeast Corridor.</p>	<p>Shameek Robinson Harford Co</p>	<p>At this time, MARC is running only weekday commuter service due to limitations of their contract with the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) and CSX Transportation.</p> <p>However, MTA's bus, light rail, Metro, and MARC collectively serve as regional transportation serving Baltimore and the surrounding areas.</p>



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OTHER / GENERAL COMMENT

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The approved TO 2035 plan stands relatively unchanged, clearly with no intention to modify it to reflect the public's wishes as to the direction that transportation needs to go – to transit.	Judy Rose	Harford Co	<p>This amendment does not affect currently funded projects in Transportation Outlook 2035, which was adopted in November 2007. However, the BRTB has designated 100% of the funds in this amendment towards transit initiatives.</p> <p>In addition, the mix of transportation projects will be reconsidered during the development of the next long-range transportation plan, scheduled to be completed by December 2011, and will take into consideration priorities identified in the reauthorization of federal transportation funding (2009-2010). There will be numerous opportunities for public participation and comments throughout the next long-range planning process.</p>
<p>MD 22: There are no high density population centers sufficient to warrant widening of MD 22 from I-95 up to MD 543. Would be better served by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adding transit stops (and bike racks) at school campus lots - Placing a priority on the portion of MD 22 from I-95 into the Aberdeen area of the U.S. Army base where the BRAC employment is expected. 	Judy Rose	Harford Co	MD 22 is not a part of this amendment, however MD 2 in Anne Arundel County was listed as an example of a potential location for dedicated bus lanes.

PARK-AND-RIDE SPACES

Comment	Who Submitted		Response
<p>Harford Park and Ride Lots: One cannot imagine, other than relocating the MARC station to MD 715, what other park and ride spaces would be required and at such a cost. There are many other underutilized MTA lots already along most major routes, but they are not advertised.</p> <p>Instead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Add bus stops and commuter parking areas at existing lots at malls, schools and high density areas around the County. - Advertise these new bus stops and lots - Focus on making the MARC station and transit lot improvements from Aberdeen to the main Aberdeen Proving Ground entrance on MD 715. 	Judy Rose	Harford Co	<p>Only Park-and-Ride facilities that are served by transit are funded with this amendment. Specific locations will be determined in the future based on need and requests submitted by the jurisdictions. Your recommendation regarding the MARC station at MD 715 will be considered at that time.</p> <p>Construction costs are currently about \$8,000 to \$20,000 per space (Source: MD State Highway Administration). The lower range of the estimate is based on spaces added to an existing facility that has land available for expansion, and is within close proximity to construction materials, personnel and equipment. The higher estimate may occur for a new site, in a remote location with higher mobilization costs of transporting supplies, materials, personnel, and equipment to that site. The BRTB used an average of \$10,000 per space for planning purposes. Specific details and cost estimates will occur as the project nears its implementation date during a separate public planning process.</p>



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PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

Comment	Who Submitted	Response
I want to compliment the BRTB and BMC for responding to the broad public desire for a shift in funding from roadways to transit and other sustainable transportation modes. Unlike most other planning efforts undertaken by the BRTB the public was given relatively broad ability to craft a plan from scratch rather than commenting on plans that were already fully developed.	Patrick McMahon Regional Greater Baltimore Group of the Sierra Club	The BRTB appreciates your positive feedback regarding the public participation process for the Transportation Outlook 2035 Amendment. Your feedback is important to us and will be considered as we continue to address the needs of the public through the transportation planning process for the Baltimore region.
The opportunity for public input (like mine here) is very welcome.	Eric Schott Balt City	Please see above.
The process by which this Draft Preferred Alternative amendment was developed is itself impressive. By carefully following the Citizens Advisory Committee's advice to designate all new available funds to transit expansion, by consulting the public before proposing projects, by soliciting public submissions, by considering alternative scenarios, and by holding public meetings and BRTB voting sessions on the amendment, public confidence in the BRTB's planning process has been dramatically bolstered and its output has gained respect, if not enthusiastic support.	Saul Wilson Balt City	Please see above.



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TO2035 PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

Comment	Who Submitted	Response
<p>Realizing that no transportation project can be eligible for federal aid unless it appears in a federally recognized long range transportation plan such as Outlook 2035, the GBC endorses the development of this amendment despite the dour financial projections of MDOT.</p> <p>We at the GBC realize that fiscal concerns are paramount at this time, yet we believe that they are also temporary. Transportation infrastructure and financing formulas for infrastructure are becoming a major subject of policy debate at the national and state levels. The political winds may be indeed changing to see enhanced funding for critical transportation projects, in particular, transit initiatives.</p> <p>The GBC therefore urges consideration of the additional projects mentioned below for inclusion in the amended document.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MARC Penn/Camden/Brunswick line improvements, - A station enhancement in Edgewood, - A multi-modal transportation center in Aberdeen, and - Expediting operational use of the Elkton Train Station in accommodating the Northeast Corridor workforce. 	<p>Robert Hellauer Regional</p> <p>Greater Baltimore Committee</p>	<p>Improvements to the MARC Penn and Camden lines, as well as the Aberdeen MARC station are currently included in Transportation Outlook 2035, passed in November 2007.</p> <p>The Elkton Train Station is not in the jurisdiction of the BRTB. You may contact WILMAPCO with your comments regarding this station.</p> <p>Your comments regarding the Edgewood station enhancement will be considered in the development of the next long-range transportation plan, scheduled for completion in December 2011.</p>
<p>While the projects in the Amendment are not exactly those that the Sierra Club or I as the Transportation Chair would recommend (See below for Sierra Club Scenario #7, \$ in thousands), they are a commitment to a wide variety of transit improvements that would strengthen and expand the system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 - Green Line - \$124,600 2 - Park-&-Ride spaces - \$10,000 3 - Carroll County - \$400 4 - Intermodal Facilities - \$20,000 5 - Intermodal Facilities - \$20,000 6 - MARC stations - \$30,000 7 - AVL (only) - \$0 8 - Dedicated bus lanes - \$5,000 9 - AVL, 511, next vehicle information, kiosks - \$15,000 10 - Security Equipment such as Cameras, Phones, Lighting at Transit Stations - \$5,000 	<p>Patrick McMahon Regional</p> <p>Greater Baltimore Group of the Sierra Club</p>	<p>Thank you for your alternative funding scenario, which is somewhat similar to the Preferred Alternative proposed by the BRTB.</p> <p>The BRTB acknowledges the importance of the priorities you outline in items #9 and 10, however, there is already \$40 million in funding included in Transportation Outlook 2035, passed in November 2007, for Management and Operations (M & O) projects such as real-time surveillance, improvements to signal operations, and real-time transit and traveler information.</p>



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TO2035 PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

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<p>The Harford portion of the BRTB's Preferred Amendment to TO 2035 proposing 'new' transit projects for the anticipated \$225M funding slated for transit for the year 2020, requires highway widening or expansion in almost all cases. Essentially the same, but reworked projects, are being proposed contrary to the stated concerns of the citizens. This, in spite of the BRTB stating this draft amendment constitutes acknowledgement of and addresses the public's concerns derived from the hundreds of comments generated from public reviews of the long range Transportation Outlook 2035.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The focus still appears to be directed to widening, extending, and constructing roadways - contrary to principles of smart growth. - The examples given for widening, particularly on MD 152 and portions of MD 22, will cause a backlash as almost everything proposed thus far promotes more development outside PFAs and the development envelope rather than the more efficient transit. - Support bus transit on ALL major thoroughfares within the County, but utilizing existing park and ride lots, shopping mall lots, school, library, bank, campus lots, etc. All are methods that do not generate a need to widen or construct roads and are less costly to the taxpayers. To use what already exists makes perfect sense and will save dollars for transit. - Need to concentrate on putting the very scarce funding where it is really needed in other areas of the County. 	Judy Rose	Harford Co	<p>All funds associated with the Preferred Alternative for the Transportation Outlook 2035 Amendment are designated for transit or transit-supportive projects. The Preferred Alternative does not propose or require highway widenings or expansion.</p> <p>As stated in other sections of this matrix:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No widenings are planned for MD 152 in this amendment or the full Transportation Outlook 2035, passed in November 2007. - MD 22 is not part of this amendment
<p>The draft plan appears to have been carefully balanced to enhance the regional transit system with limited funds.</p>	Eric Schott	Balt City	<p>The BRTB appreciates your positive feedback regarding the Preferred Alternative for the Transportation Outlook 2035 Amendment. Your feedback is important to us as we continue to address the needs of the public through the transportation planning process for the Baltimore region.</p>
<p>The BRTB's Draft Preferred Alternative for amending Transportation Outlook 2035 is commendable not only for its content, but also for the care that went into its preparation. The proposal spreads funds across a variety of projects, ensuring that the region's funding deprived transit system can grow in a balanced manner.</p> <p>I urge the BRTB to pass this Draft Preferred Alternative in its current form.</p>	Saul Wilson	Balt City	<p>The BRTB appreciates your positive feedback regarding the Preferred Alternative for the Transportation Outlook 2035 Amendment. Your feedback is important to us as we continue to address the needs of the public through the transportation planning process for the Baltimore region.</p>