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Public Comment

We want to know what you think!

2008-2012 Transportation Improvement Program

Subject: 2008-2012 TIP

Comments: Yesterday, May 27, I sent it as a PDF attachment below some pre-formatted comments. Today I discovered a small error on the second line of my comments: what should have read 2007-2011 TIP was written as 2007-2011 "DIP." Attached below is a corrected version. Please substitute this for the May 27 copy. Thank you.

- Art Cohen
b'more mobile

Pre-formatted comments: [2008-2012 TIP comments - corrected.pdf](#), 47K document.

Name: Art Cohen
Agency/Organization: b'more mobile
Submitting for: Organization
Location: Baltimore, MD.
Date: May 28, 2007

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May 28, 2007-corrected version

Public Comment on the 2008-2012 TIP

Public comment on the BRTB's 2008-2012 TIP is a daunting task. First, the TIP documents are extremely large (e.g. the 2007-2011 TIP is 402 pages!). Second, for the 2008-2012 TIP we only have access to the project database, and there are no funding figures whatsoever included in that database, at least for the "guest" visitor (the login reserved for the public). Even given such problems, however, it is possible to make the following observations:

1) Of the 155 total projects for the 2008-2012 period, only 27 of them seem to relate to public transit (under the database Project Category headings here listed alphabetically):

"Commuter Rail"	(4 projects)
"Emission Reduction Strategy"	(5 projects)
"Enhancement Program"	(1 project)
"MTA-Transit"	(1 project)
"Miscellaneous"	(3 projects)
"Transit"	(13 projects)

2) Referring to the 2007-2011 TIP, which contains some general funding information, only one quarter of the federal funds (the primary funding source) appear to go to transit, with well over half going to highways (or an even larger proportion? - it's hard to tell within the "local project" designation).

In light of the above observations and difficulties, our comment is as follows:

A) Far too large a proportion (3:1 or 2:1?) of the Baltimore Metro Area's transportation funding is directed at highways and personal automobiles compared to public transit.

From the point of view of transportation policy (that is, in terms of pollution prevention, passenger safety, land use, regional economic development, efficiency of moving people around the area, convenience, avoidance of stress from congestion, etc.), it makes much more sense to plan for greatly increased public transit in and around the Baltimore Metro Area Region.

B) Even though "public review and comment" about the 2008-2012 TIP is highly encouraged, it is not really possible for the public to provide thorough or fully-informed comments

because of the lack of information about proposed funding for the 2008-2012 period. Without such information, it is not possible to know the relative magnitude of any of the projects being proposed.

Sincerely -

Art Cohen

Art Cohen, Convenor
b'more mobile
www.bmoremobile.org

Monica Haines

From: James S Leanos, SIOR
Sent: Monday, May 28, 2007 9:16 PM
Subject: Comments related to the 2008-2012 TIP
Attachments: 2008-12 TIP Letter_Logo.doc

Monica and Fellow Members of the CAC,

Herewith is my letter containing comments related to the 2008-12 TIP. The focus is the broad aspects of the TIP and the process which produced it.

Your comments are welcome.

Monica, a hard copy will follow by mail to you and the elected representatives of the BRTB Board.

Jim

James S. Leanos, SIOR
CORPORATE PROPERTY SOLUTIONS, L.L.C.
Baltimore, MD



May 28, 2007

Ms. Monica Haines
Public Involvement Coordinator
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
2700 Lighthouse Point East
Suite 310
Baltimore, MD 21224-4774

Re: *Comments on the 2008-2012 TIP*

I am writing as a Baltimore County resident and member of the BRTB Citizen's Advisory Committee in my capacity as representative of the Greater Baltimore Board of Realtors. I offer the following comments, which I believe deserve urgent attention from the elected representatives serving on the BRTB:

1. The TIP contains only a limited segment of projects related to our region, to the extent it only appears to identify projects are eligible for federal funds. Therefore, this does not provide a full picture of the allocation of federal, state and local funds related to transportation projects.
2. While one-quarter of the federal funds appear to be allocated to non-POV transportation modes, e.g., public transit, the percentage allocation of all funds to transit, bike and pedestrian modes is likely far smaller, both within Baltimore County, and within all of the region's jurisdictions.
3. The TIP does not seem to have any effective guiding principles or vision which could provide a metric against which the region's projects could be ranked, taking into account Greenhouse Gas Emissions, unstable, expensive and limited energy resources, and related economic development and land use reforms (e.g., a compact region, mixed-use communities, transit-oriented development, carbon emissions, etc.).
4. Transit, in particular, seems to have very little priority for funding—witness the small federal share and the smaller state and local shares.
5. It is not evident, either at the BRTB level, or at any open meetings at the county/city level, including meetings of the Baltimore County Council, that the public has had a role in the prioritization of spending, except via the traditional processes in which too many road projects are proposed by local public works or transportation departments in relation to too few funds from all sources.

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Ms. Monica Haines

May 28, 2007

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6. While Baltimore County has generally excellent roads, with sufficient funds to maintain its road base, the county has placed very little priority on pedestrian-friendly and bike friendly roads and transit within the county, largely because it has not dedicated funds to these areas.
7. Taken together, in Baltimore County, and apparently throughout the Baltimore region, the TIP seems to use the same formulas that were used before it became apparent that the nation's energy resources are limited, that greenhouse gas emissions from transportation are the major contributor to the aggregate production of carbon dioxide, and that transit, bike and pedestrian improvements are a necessary component of a regional strategy to reduce dependence on the automobile.

A concluding observation is that as blue-collar jobs have moved further from the region's blue collar population, the inadequacy of public transportation has assured increased automobile dependency among the portion of the population that is least capable of absorbing the great cost increases associated with the automobile. The result is less access to the job market and increased poverty in the affected neighborhoods.

Furthermore, our region's large aging population and its large youthful and limited-income populations have available public transit resources only in very limited areas of the region, and in many cases the service provided is too time-limited or geography-limited to be considered as a viable alternative. The result is these groups live in considerably greater isolation and more limited mobility than exists in many similar regions in the United States. Without a change in funding priorities and scale (much of which likely must come from local government sources in light of limited federal and state resources for the foreseeable future) this condition will only deteriorate further.

Because a broad-based, reliable, and speedy public transportation system takes time to develop, especially in the face of unstable and expensive energy resources, the Baltimore region risks substantially greater economic dislocation should "peak oil's" effects suddenly manifest themselves than would occur if we raised the level of local government transportation investment while rebalancing our spending to reduce dependence on the automobile.

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May 28, 2007
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As compared with other mid-Atlantic regions, not to mention leading US regions, the Baltimore region is far behind the others in establishing and maintaining a comprehensive transit network to serve the entire region. This places our economic well-being at greater risk than is faced in our competing regions (particularly among our least-privileged population), and provides an increasingly powerful disincentive for firms, concerned about the availability of a sufficient reliable workforce, to locate to or remain in the Baltimore region.

As members of the Citizen's Advisory Committee, we are dedicated to addressing the issues identified in this letter, and we trust the BRTB will work with us and provide sufficient staff and financial resources to develop solutions to the problems identified in this letter so that our future TIPs can provide a more realistic and less risky scenario than the 2008-2012 TIP provides.

Sincerely,

/S/ J. S. Leanos

James S. Leanos

Cc: Members of the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board
Members of the BRTB Citizens Advisory Committee
Secretary John Porcari
Mr. Joseph T. "Jody" Landers