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## Environmental Concerns

1 message

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**Brian Seel**

Wed, Jun 17, 2020 at 10:06 AM

To: comments@baltometro.org

Its 2020, and we are still rolling out millions of dollars for projects that will expand roads, and encourage driving, but are allocating just a few million for bike projects, and a bit more for generally unconnected transit projects that will do very little to move the needle on getting people to use alternatives to driving.

This document is a plan for how we will move forward over the next few years, and it is basically doubling down on the 1950's car and highway mentality. While climate change is not as steep of a curve as COVID, its still a looming crisis, and many of these projects will be around and in use 50 years from now. How can we still keep doing the same thing we have in the past?

Seriously, are we still going around and widening the beltway? Even a tenth of that \$281 million could be revolutionary for bike or transit projects.

Please, do better.

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## Re: Bmore Involved: City charter amendment

1 message

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**Bob R.**

Fri, Jun 19, 2020 at 3:26 PM

To: "Monica B. Haines Benkhedda" <comments@baltometro.org>

also to be more involved we ask that you sign and forward to others the BTEC petition for a city charter amendment to begin the process of regaining control of the Baltimore MTA into local hands.

I am sure I can answer or find the answers to any questions.  
this does not have a fiscal note but rather moves control of the funds from state to a local regional transit authority as in most other cities

<https://www.md-petition.com/invite/BTEC.php>

thank you  
Bob

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## Comments on TIP plan

1 message

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**David Drasin**

Wed, Jun 24, 2020 at 2:17 PM

To: comments@baltometro.org

I went over the Howard County issues, which were only high-way related.

I noticed a pattern in the items, and wonder if there is a statement of principle on this as a general policy---all highway widenings much include bike/pedestrian lanes.

I do think at this stage we should be asking if highway widening is the right direction for resources, since speeding and car injuries/pedestrian-bike deaths is a serious national issue, and some road widening is being reversed.

Thank you,

David Drasin  
Columbia

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## BRTB Comment Form message from the website

1 message

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**Peter Smith**

Wed, Jul 8, 2020 at 8:41 PM

To: comments@baltometro.org

### **This message is submitted through BRTB Comment form:**

**Name of Business/Organization/Agency:**

**First Name:** Peter

**Last Name:** Smith

**City:** Baltimore

**Zip/Postal Code:** 21201

**Message:** Re: 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program

I disagree with the share of funds dedicated to expanding highway capacity. Increasing highway capacity and the use of personal automobiles is not a desirable objective for our region. I prefer a larger share of funds go towards transit maintenance and increasing transit capacity. I ask that the Board consider reducing by a substantial amount the funds dedicated to expanding highway capacity, and shifting those funds to transit maintenance and expanding transit capacity.

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## Thoughts on the FY 2021-2024 TIP by Jaime Sigaran

1 message

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**Jaime Sigaran**

Thu, Jul 16, 2020 at 4:32 PM

To: comments@baltometro.org

Hi,

My name is Jaime Sigaran and I live in thr Bolton Hill neighborhood of Baltimore City.

I'm afraid your TIP plan does very little, if any, to improve rail infrastructure in the Baltimore region. Today, the existing rail system in Baltimore is crumbling, inefficient, and severely lacking due to underinvestment by MTA, the administration, and the city.

This plan has the potential to reinvigorate rail by creating jobs for the entire region. But we can't do this if we only look to increase highway funding at the expense of public transit. We need to invest in light and heavy rail to grow our regional economy and improve the lives of our communities across Harford, Howard, Carroll, Baltimore, Anne Arundel, and Queen Anne. We have to think about low income families and people of color who don't have access to jobs, education, and opportunity in this region.

This plan fails to account for residents without a car and we need to do better that moves us away from congesting our roads with more highways and buses. We have to take a serious look at how expanding highways and the lack of regional rail goes against building a more inclusive, equitable, and diverse society.

It saddens me that for generations we have elected and supported leaders that turn their back on public transit. We must focus on railways to strengthen our core countries. We should be developing rail lines from Towson to downtown and South Baltimore. We should creating rail lines that connect Columbia to Dundulk and Sparrows Point. We should connecting rail lines from Bel Air to White Marsh to Owings Mills. And we should be uniting rail lines from Westminster to Owings Mill and Downtown.

I urge you to revise your plan so we can start incorporating newer, faster, and more efficient rail lines, heavy and light, so we can provide an array of transit options that enhance mobility and give people access to jobs, and education opportunities. Smart cities need smart leaders to realize our rail potential.

Given COVID-19, now is the time to rethink and reshape who rail can revolutionize our regional economy. Baltimore deserves better and this plan needs more rail infrastructure, support, and innovation.

Please develop a more robust plan that unites us around rail.

Thank kindly,

- J.



*Delivery by Electronic Mail*

July 16, 2020

AMERICAN CIVIL  
LIBERTIES UNION  
FOUNDATION OF  
MARYLAND

MAIN OFFICE  
& MAILING ADDRESS  
3600 CLIPPER MILL ROAD  
SUITE 350  
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T/410-889-8555  
or 240-274-5295  
F/410-366-7838

FIELD OFFICE  
6930 CARROLL AVENUE  
SUITE 610  
TAKOMA PARK, MD 20912  
T/240-274-5295

WWW.ACLU-MD.ORG

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS  
JOHN HENDERSON  
PRESIDENT

DANA VICKERS SHELLEY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ANDREW FREEMAN  
GENERAL COUNSEL

The Baltimore Regional Transportation Board  
1500 Whetstone Way, Suite 300  
Baltimore, MD 21230  
c/o comments@baltometro.org

Re: Comments of ACLU of Maryland on Baltimore Region's Draft 2021-2024  
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Dear Members of the BRTB:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Baltimore Region's Draft Transportation Improvement Program for 2021-2024 (the TIP). The ACLU of Maryland is a statewide organization with over 41,000 members that advocates for civil rights and civil liberties, particularly for communities that have experienced systemic oppression and rights violations. We view transportation as more than just infrastructure. It is a vehicle through which Marylanders are granted or denied equitable access to the necessities for health and well-being, such as living wage paying jobs, quality schools, safe housing in a choice of neighborhoods, parks and open space, and other publicly funded amenities.

As a result, we read the draft Regional Transit Plan through the lens of racial equity. Our comments on the Draft TIP are as follows:

1. **The Draft TIP does not appear to be tied to the furtherance of other existing plans** with goals, strategies and timelines in ways that are discernable or transparent, including other plans that the Baltimore Metropolitan Council and/or MDOT have drafted. For example, it appears to be completely untethered from the new Regional Transit Plan (RTP), the Regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (2015) and the Regional Housing Plan (2014). In fact, the undue emphasis on roads and highways over transit, many of them local roads outside the Priority Funding Areas, undermines the RTP and Regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing.

2. **The TIP was clearly not developed utilizing a racial equity lens.** It makes, at best, a half-hearted attempt to address Environment Justice analysis and Title VI. There is no reference at all to the MTA Title VI analysis and findings recently completed by MDOT. The data contained in the Title VI analysis shows that MDOT is operating a racially segmented transit system. The MTA bus system, Metro subway and Light Rail serve the Baltimore Region's Black population. MARC and Commuter Bus serve a majority white ridership that more closely mirrors the population of the region and state. When we include the BRTB/MDOT road and highway projects this racial segmentation becomes even more clear, with many road projects located outside of the Priority Funding areas. The population of the areas outside the PFAs is more than 90% white in a region that is almost 30% Black.
3. **The TIP ignores evidence from the Regional Analysis of Impediments and Regional Housing Plan** of the role that transportation policy historically played in our region (and across the country) in causing the racial segregation, exclusion and disparities that are now cemented into our landscape. It similarly ignores the evidence from the June 2020 MTA Title VI analysis that points to the maintenance of a segregated transportation system in which MTA bus, Metro and Light Rail overwhelmingly serve a Black ridership, are underfunded, and with few exceptions are largely confined to the areas within the Beltway where almost the entirety of the region's Black population resides. This confines a substantial portion of the predominantly Black transit dependent population to living in areas that area that are already disproportionately Black and limits their ability to live and work in areas outside the Beltway and the Metro subway corridor. Thus, the story is not just one of benign neglect of the transit modes disproportionately used by Black and Brown residents to the benefit of modes used by whites, it points to the way in which the TIP's spending priorities reinforce segregation and racial disparities in both the transit system, and in the region's residential neighborhoods and job access. As recipients of federal funds (including funding from DOT, HUD and the Department of Education) the BRTB. and the jurisdictions and agencies that comprise it, have a legal duty to affirmatively further fair housing. This Draft TIP fails to meet that obligation, and in fact, maintains the racial disparities and segregation that Title VIII and Title VI were designed to undo.
4. **The Draft TIP is not a coherent plan, and is especially lacking in any clear explanation of how the TIP furthers regional priorities.** Instead, it is a list of discrete projects, largely organized by jurisdiction, and the independent priorities of each jurisdiction. It is not apparent how its emphasis on improvements to relatively minor local roads will further any regional strategy.

5. **The funding priorities of the TIP are fundamentally incompatible with what the Regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, RPSD, Regional Housing Plan --- and even MTAs own Regional Transit Plan --- are trying to accomplish.** The pie chart on page 90 of the TIP, showing the funding breakdown by category of transportation project, is illustrative. At \$1.3 billion, the largest portion (30.68%) of the region's transportation spending for the next four years goes to expanding highway capacity, a use that disproportionately benefits the region's white population. Expanding transit capacity, which would begin to remedy past disparities and open up new areas for the Region's Black population to live and work, is barely funded at 0.05% (\$2 million).
6. **The TIP requires more than a minimal tweaking here and there to address racial equity.** In these comments, we are not going to dissect each funded project to show how funding can be redirected. However, there is one clear step that the BRTB can take to free up a not insubstantial amount of funding and to show that it is taking racial equity and its Title VI and VIII obligations seriously.
7. **The BRTB and the TIP should deny funding to Carroll County until it allows interjurisdictional transit.** As the BRTB is already aware, as a matter of longstanding, official policy enacted by the Carroll County Board of Commissioners, there is no interjurisdictional transit service between from Carroll County and the rest of the region --- From any logical transportation planning perspective, there would be a bus connection to the terminus of the Metro subway in nearby Owings Mills. Yet, with each TIF, Carroll County seeks federal and MDOT funding for its local roads. Each year that County seeks federal and MDOT funding for its LOTS local bus service. But Carroll County declines and vetoes any interjurisdictional transit service --- a policy that is intentionally exclusionary on its face. While the policy certainly inconveniences some of the 90+% residents of Carroll County who need or want to use transit to access jobs or medical care in Baltimore or other parts of the region, it has a more insidious impact on the disproportionately Black transit dependent population of the region who are foreclosed from living or working in Carroll County. Consistent with Title VI and Title VIII, the BRTB can no longer knowingly continue to let Carroll County pick and choose, seeking purely local transportation projects that would primarily benefit its almost entirely white population, while erecting a barrier that has the intent and effect of excluding access by much of the region's Black population. The BRTB and MDOT must defund Carroll County until it demonstrates that its policy has changed and interjurisdictional MTA service is established.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our comments. We would be happy to discuss them further and to answer your questions.

Sincerely,

/s/

Barbara A. Samuels

/s/

Rosemary Qessem

cc: Michael Kelly, Executive Director  
Baltimore Metropolitan Council

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## My Comment on the Transportation Improvement Program and the Associated Air Quality Conformity Determination

1 message

**Kyle St. Denny**

Thu, Jul 16, 2020 at 9:52 PM

To: comments@baltometro.org

Cars are for morons.

-Kyle St. Denny

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## BRTB Comment Form message from the website

**Louis**

Fri, Jul 17, 2020 at 7:27 AM

To: comments@baltometro.org

### This message is submitted through BRTB Comment form:

**Name of Business/Organization/Agency:**

**First Name:** Louis

**Last Name:** Franceschi

**City:** Baltimore

**Zip/Postal Code:** 21224

**Message:** Stop spending money on the highways that only benefit commuters and make it loud and unbearable for actual Baltimore residents.

If you care so much about crappy highways, make the county pay a tax for having a job in the city so they can repair their own destruction.

Invest in places like Boston street should be a sanctuary and beautiful place to live, but instead have been destroyed by terrible public policy in regards to highway placement.

Fund the bus system. Expand the subway from Hopkins to southeast. Add crosswalks, parking, and bike lines and stop lights and give people incentives to not barrel down neighborhoods at 60 mph to treat residential areas like a unpleasant dumpster while they run away from the city with their work money they never reinvest.

Seriously, do anything but build highways that do nothing for Baltimore. Or at least stop calling this a public transit meeting because it's disgusting.



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## More bicycle paths

1 message

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**Mary Rayme**

Fri, Jul 17, 2020 at 7:15 AM

To: comments@baltometro.org

Good morning--

I am writing to say that I think Maryland should have a statewide bike path plan that connects the whole state.

Think about it-- less pollution, less noise, and more fit citizenry. Bicycling is a win-win and a staple of transportation in many European countries.

Maryland has mediocre public transportation. Why not boost the bicycle population of Maryland?

Just a thought. I am tired of Zwifing in my basement and waiting for a safer road bike world.

Thanks!

Best,

Mary Rayme  
[Baltimore, MD 21239](#)

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## BRTB Comment Form message from the website

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**cato** <

Thu, Jul 16, 2020 at 9:48 PM

To: comments@baltometro.org

### **This message is submitted through BRTB Comment form:**

**Name of Business/Organization/Agency:**

**First Name:** cato

**Last Name:** clemens

**City:** Baltimore

**Zip/Postal Code:** 21217

**Message:** please work with The Boring Company

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**BRTB Comment Form message from the website**

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**Zac**  
To: comments@baltometro.org

Fri, Jul 17, 2020 at 8:01 AM

**This message is submitted through BRTB Comment form:****Name of Business/Organization/Agency:****First Name:** Zac**Last Name:** Metzler**City:** Baltimore**Zip/Postal Code:** 21202

**Message:** If I recall correctly, when the public was polled about transit priorities in the Baltimore region, there was overwhelming support for mass transit & rail expansion and highway safety measures (distinct from highway expansion). However, when I look at your proposals for the next 4 years, almost a third of the money is going towards highway expansion. Did you not look at your own survey of public wants & needs or do you just not care to represent the people who elected you?

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**BRTB Comment Form message from the website**

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**Patrick**  
To: comments@baltometro.org

Fri, Jul 17, 2020 at 9:30 AM

**This message is submitted through BRTB Comment form:****Name of Business/Organization/Agency:****First Name:** Patrick**Last Name:** Reely**City:** Baltimore**Zip/Postal Code:** 21214

**Message:** Please move funding towards public transportation specifically expansion of the rail system.

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**BRTB Comment Form message from the website**

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**Steven**

Fri, Jul 17, 2020 at 9:38 AM

To: comments@baltometro.org

**This message is submitted through BRTB Comment form:****Name of Business/Organization/Agency:****First Name:** Steven**Last Name:** Kolarz**City:** Baltimore**Zip/Postal Code:** 21209

**Message:** More emphasis should be placed on transit expansion and preservation in the plan overall. Exhibit 5 (p.90 of the Draft TIP) is particularly disappointing. With such worthy projects as East Baltimore MARC available, the share for Commuter Rail Capacity should not be 0%. Nor should Transit Capacity be 0.05% when upgrades & expansions to Light Rail, Metro, and the Bus Network could be funded.

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**BRTB Comment Form message from the website**

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**Jonathon**

Fri, Jul 17, 2020 at 11:06 AM

To: comments@baltometro.org

**This message is submitted through BRTB Comment form:****Name of Business/Organization/Agency:****First Name:** Jonathon**Last Name:** Foster**City:** Baltimore**Zip/Postal Code:** 21202

**Message:** I believe what we really need to invest in is transit. Rail transit specifically. Building out roads just induces more demand without much increased capacity. However, rapid, rail transit would help out everyone, not just drivers; and it would assist those of all backgrounds and income levels. Reddit then the red line project and extend the current metro to Nottingham/white marsh. We could even study extending light rail too, to other underserved communities

Baltimore Regional Transportation Board  
1500 Whetstone Way  
Suite 300  
Baltimore, MD 21230

July 17, 2020

RE: Draft 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program

Dear Members of the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the Draft 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Baltimore region. The TIP can be simply described as the list of regional transportation projects using federal funds over the next four years. However, we believe it is important to look at this document not simply as a collection of individual projects, but as a program that reflects our region's transportation priorities.

Unfortunately, this Draft TIP does not prioritize spending in a way that will do anything but worsen the interwoven crises facing our state and our world. The COVID-19 pandemic is an acute crisis that has highlighted how black people and other communities of color have been disproportionately impacted by poor air quality<sup>1</sup>. Meanwhile, the climate crisis continues to mount with the transportation sector as the number one source of greenhouse gas emissions<sup>2</sup>. And the racial and economic disparities underlying it all are, in part, due to decades of transportation and land use decisions designed to exclude and segregate black people<sup>3</sup>.

And yet, over the next four years, the Baltimore region plans to spend a whopping \$1.3 billion on widening highways and a miserly \$2 million on new transit. That's 650 times more on new fossil fuel infrastructure that exacerbates more problems than it purports to solve. It continues a five-year trend of spending more on new highway capacity.

As discussed below, the spending priorities in the Draft TIP are ineffective, inequitable, unhealthy, and environmentally unsustainable. Moreover, the spending levels and mix of projects do not represent the policy positions and ideals that many BRTB members espouse.

### **Ineffective**

The single largest category of spending in the Draft TIP is for highway capacity projects that are supposed to "fix congestion". In fact, widening highways has a poor track record for relieving

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<sup>1</sup> Christopher W. Tessum, et al, "Inequity in consumption of goods and services adds to racial-ethnic disparities in air pollution exposure," Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences March 2019, 116 <https://www.pnas.org/content/116/13/6001>

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Energy Information Administration <https://www.eia.gov/totalenergy/data/monthly/pdf/mer.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Ashish Valentine, "'The Wrong Complexion For Protection.' How Race Shaped America's Roadways And Cities", NPR, July 5, 2020 <https://www.npr.org/2020/07/05/887386869/how-transportation-racism-shaped-america>

traffic congestion. For decades, study after study has found that expanding road capacity does not relieve congestion for very long because people will drive more and soak up that capacity.

The most recent study to come to this conclusion was released just last year and found that a 1 percent increase in lane-miles induced a 1 percent increase in vehicle-miles traveled (VMT). Moreover, after just five years, the short-term increases in speed are wiped out and congestion returns to pre-project levels<sup>4</sup>.

According to a Transportation Alliance analysis<sup>5</sup> of the Texas Transportation Institute's Urban Mobility Report, between 1982 and 2011, the Baltimore region nearly doubled its amount of freeway lane miles (from 885 lane miles to 1,561 lane miles). During that same time, the region's population grew from 1.7 million to 2.5 million – a 48% increase.

Freeway expansion far outpaced population growth, but it did not relieve traffic congestion. In fact, by every measure congestion got worse. The amount of congested lane miles increased from 31% to 58%. The annual hours of delay per auto commuter quadrupled--from nine hours a year to 41 hours a year. And the annual cost of congestion increased from \$96 million per year to \$1.5 billion per year. According to data from the American Community Survey, the average commute time in Maryland continues to increase each year.

Growth in highway lane miles significantly outpaced population growth and yet, congestion got worse, not better. Why? Because more lane miles, and the accompanying auto-dependent suburban and exurban development that results, just meant people were forced to drive more. And we haven't provided many other transportation choices for residents. In the Baltimore region, we haven't built any new high-quality, rapid transit since the Light Rail opened a generation ago.

## **Inequitable**

Investments in transportation do not impact all populations equally. The proposed 21-24 TIP's lopsided investments in widening highways are aimed at improving mobility for higher income people and those with private automobiles. Additionally, it will further entrench structural inequities that disadvantage some populations over others. For example, as mentioned above, a 2019 study<sup>6</sup> found that in the U.S. air pollution is disproportionately caused by white Americans' consumption of goods and services, but disproportionately inhaled by black and Hispanic Americans.

In addition to public health inequities, this Draft TIP will further entrench economic inequities. In neighborhoods that are historically disinvested and economically distressed, more than a third

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<sup>4</sup> Kent Hymel, "If you build it, they will drive: Measuring induced demand for vehicle travel in urban areas," *Transport Policy* Vol. 76 (April 2019): 57-66

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0967070X18301720>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.marylandmatters.org/2019/09/04/opinion-more-roads-mean-more-congestion/>

<sup>6</sup> Tessum, et al, "Inequity in consumption of goods and services adds to racial-ethnic disparities in air pollution exposure"

of households have no access to a vehicle and these households are cut off from economic opportunity by a transportation system so heavily tilted towards the automobile. According to studies from the University of Minnesota's Accessibility Observatory, a resident of the Baltimore region can get to any job in the region in less than an hour by automobile. 100% of jobs are accessible. However, that resident would only be able to reach about 11% of the region's jobs in less than an hour by transit.

The investments proposed in this TIP will exacerbate the patterns that have left neighborhoods cut off from economic opportunity, suffering high unemployment, entrenched poverty, and disinvestment.

### **Unhealthy**

Dr. Gaurab Basu, from the Center for Health Equity Education & Advocacy at Cambridge Health Alliance and the Department of Global Health & Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School, recently wrote: “[o]ne of the best prescriptions I could write for my patients is a clean, equitable, and sustainable transportation system. Transforming our dirty transportation system has long been an urgent public health issue. Air pollution has always made us sick; it increases the risk of heart attacks, childhood asthma exacerbations, strokes, and premature death. But COVID-19 puts an even greater impetus on us to end the use of internal combustion engines and fossil fuels.”

He went on to cite a recent Union of Concerned Scientists study<sup>7</sup> which found that “communities of color breathe in, on average, 66 percent more PM<sub>2.5</sub> air pollution from vehicles than white residents in the Northeast and mid-Atlantic region.” It also found that Maryland’s median PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration from on-road vehicles exceeds the regional average. A separate Harvard study has found that increased exposure to PM<sub>2.5</sub> puts individuals at greater risk of dying from COVID-19<sup>8</sup>.

### **Environmentally unsustainable**

Widening highways while shortchanging investment in public transportation does not meet the challenge of climate change. Last year, Marylanders drove more miles per capita than ever before, the result of adding more capacity to the public roadway network than to alternatives like buses, trains and biking. As one transportation policy expert puts it, “ceasing the continuing expansion of the highway and roads network is essential to any effort to reduce the carbon

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<sup>7</sup> Union of Concerned Scientists, “Inequitable Exposure to Air Pollution from Vehicles in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic”, <https://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/attach/2019/06/Inequitable-Exposure-to-Vehicle-Pollution-Northeast-Mid-Atlantic-Region.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Xiao Wu, et al, “Exposure to air pollution and COVID-19 mortality in the United States: A nationwide cross-sectional study” <https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/covid-pm/home>

footprint of transportation which is now the single largest contributor to America's greenhouse gas emissions"<sup>9</sup>

In October 2018 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published a 700-page report on the impacts of global warming and what it would take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. To achieve this, the report states that global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions must decline by about 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 and reach net zero around 2050. This means we have just 10 years to drastically cut emissions if we are to mitigate the rising sea levels, droughts, and storms that result from global warming. Reducing emissions from the transportation sector will be critical to this effort and those reductions will not happen if we continue to widen highways and increase our dependence on cars.

Adding more lanes of highway will have other significant environmental consequences. Additional lane miles add impermeable surface that will increase stormwater runoff into streams, rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay. Additional lane miles and additional capacity for cars will result in increased tailpipe emissions, currently the largest source of air pollution in Maryland. Additional lane miles will encourage auto-dependent residential and business development that will result in conversion of more farmland and natural lands to land covered with asphalt and buildings.

### **Change is possible**

The BRTB has an opportunity to change course away from these outcomes and toward a cleaner, more equitable transportation future. Many members have already expressed a desire to do so.

County Executive Olszewski has stated priorities for "building robust public transportation and infrastructure" and "promoting smarter development."<sup>10</sup>

County Executive Ball wants to "increase accessibility through a truly multi-modal transportation system" and to alleviate traffic and protect our environment "by reducing the number of cars on our roads."<sup>11</sup>

County Executive Pittman recognizes the importance of the Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan and promises to "be at the forefront of transportation planning that focuses on moving people rather than cars."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Yonah Freemark, "Too little, too late? A decade of transit investment in the U.S.," TransportPolitic.com, <https://www.thetransportpolitic.com/2020/01/07/too-little-too-late-a-decade-of-transit-investment-in-the-u-s/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/executive/priorities.html>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Branches/County-Executive/Reliable-and-Accessible-Infrastructure>

<sup>12</sup>

<https://www.capitalgazette.com/opinion/columns/ac-ce-column-steuart-pittman-20200218-ef3dhgfvkde5aapeajcdd3ki-story.html>

Mayor Buckley has said, “The future is not cars. The future is how we’re going to get around on electric scooters and bikes and things like that have less impact on the planet.”<sup>13</sup>

These statements represent a commitment to a cleaner, more balanced transportation future for the region. But unless you put real resources behind these sentiments, it won’t happen.

There’s an old saying that when you’re in a hole that you want to get out of, the first thing you have to do is stop digging. Well, we are in a deep transportation hole. A transit system that breaks down more often than just about every transit system in the country<sup>14</sup>. Rising commute times. Disconnected communities. Chronic poor air quality. We have to stop digging, and the way we propose to do this is to stop relentlessly adding new highway capacity projects to the TIP.

We understand that the vast majority of the highway capacity spending is on two projects already underway (the I-95 Express Toll Lane Extensions and I-695 widening), and that it may be impractical to cancel these projects. However, there are five highway capacity projects that are new to the 21-24 TIP (see Table II-2: New Projects in the 2021-2024 TIP). For some of these projects, the TIP funding only covers early design costs and full construction will cost tens of millions more in upcoming TIPs. Once a project gets into a program like this, it is harder to divert the money to other uses. We shouldn’t be starving the project pipeline for transit while adding project after project to the highway pipeline.

The new highway capacity projects only total about \$45 million. Canceling them would bring the highway capacity budget from 30.68% of the TIP budget to 29.62%. Canceling these projects is not some radical change – it’s a drop in the bucket. It’s simply putting down the shovel so the hole doesn’t get any deeper. But it is the necessary first step.

We respectfully request that you remove the five new highway capacity projects from the 21-24 TIP and redirect those funds toward projects that help to build the region many of you say you want. The funds could go to any number of worthy projects, such as:

- Addressing the \$1.5 billion backlog of deferred maintenance identified in MTA’s Capital Needs Inventory<sup>15</sup>
- Making sidewalks near bus stops and train stations compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act

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<https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/anne-arundel/annapolis/ac-cn-annapolis-bike-ride-20200702-20200702-bu4kshp4avfwjgxxvh6u57uliu-story.html>

14

<https://www.baltimoresun.com/politics/bs-md-pol-buses-break-down-20200307-2xie6jw3bg3bp2y27umbhiuhi-story.html>

15

[https://s3.amazonaws.com/mta-website-staging/mta-website-staging/files/Transit%20Projects/Capital/201907\\_MDOTMTA\\_CNI.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/mta-website-staging/mta-website-staging/files/Transit%20Projects/Capital/201907_MDOTMTA_CNI.pdf)



- Completing bike trails like the Baltimore Greenway Trails Network, the Baltimore Separated Lane Network, the Anne Arundel South Shore Trail, and the North Point Trail

2020 is a pivotal year in the United States. It is becoming more clear than ever that we cannot accept the status quo in so many areas, including health care, criminal justice, the environment, and the economy. Transportation has to be a part of that change, too. The Draft 21-24 TIP proposes to spend over \$4 billion of taxpayer money. It is up to the leaders of this region to decide whether we spend that money in ways that repair the damage caused by decades of racism, pollution, and inequity, or in ways that just keep digging a deeper hole.

Sincerely,

Colin Beckman  
Baltimore Penn Station MARC Riders  
Group

Liz Cornish  
Bikemore

Charlie Goedeke  
HoCo Climate Action

Samuel Jordan  
Baltimore Transit Equity Coalition

Paul Kowzan  
BRTB PAC Member-Baltimore City  
Resident

Brian O'Malley  
Central Maryland Transportation Alliance

Cecilia Plante  
Maryland Legislative Coalition

Emily Ransom  
Clean Water Action

Jimmy Rouse  
Transit Choices

Stewart Schwartz  
Coalition for Smarter Growth

Josh Tulkin  
Maryland Sierra Club

CC: Mike Kelly, BMC  
Todd Lang, BMC  
Regina Aris, BMC  
Zach Kauffman, BMC

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**BRTB Comment Form message from the website**

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**Steven**

To: comments@baltometro.org

Fri, Jul 17, 2020 at 1:03 PM

**This message is submitted through BRTB Comment form:****Name of Business/Organization/Agency:****First Name:** Steven**Last Name:** Johnson**City:** Baltimore**Zip/Postal Code:** 21211

**Message:** The community survey did show overwhelming public support for expanding public transportation and prioritizing deferred road maintenance over highway expansion projects. Hopefully we can get the Hanover St. Bridge repaired soon.

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## Comments Submitted on the draft 2021-2024 TIP

1 message

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**Paul Emmart**

Fri, Jul 17, 2020 at 5:20 PM

To: "Monica B. Haines Benkhedda" <comments@baltometro.org>

Cc: "raris@baltometro.org" <raris@baltometro.org>

Good Afternoon,

I would like to submit comments on the draft 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the associated Air Quality Conformity Determination. I have reviewed the draft and watched the recording of the public meeting. Thank you very much for posting the recording and making the TIP so accessible on the web. The interactive map is impressive.

As a resident of Baltimore City, I encourage you and staff to emphasize bicycle paths and pedestrian walk ways as much as possible. My hope is that the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB), as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Baltimore region, will promote bicycle or pedestrian projects, and add cycle tracks (fully separated from traffic - bicycle lanes) and sidewalks to our roads in order to give us better health, improve our quality of life and offer ways to enjoy being outside, whether for fun or just commuting to work. I especially emphasize the connection between bikes and public transport on buses or on trains (for example MARC). We really need greater access, more marketing to promote the available connections and better future planning of investments to achieve non-polluting transportation methods. I urge you to work to help achieve less vehicular traffic on roads and more access to bicycle, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure all together, everywhere, for all of us at all ages and abilities.

My concern is that the Baltimore region does not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. As I understand it, the MOVES modeling sets a budget and if the state performs within budget, then it has conformed to the air quality standards. But I would prefer if the BMC could over achieve in reaching the budgets. So for example each year, set reductions below the budgets, say by 10% and make those the targets Maryland aims for with respect to mobile source emissions of VOC and NOx, which are precursors of ground-level ozone emissions.

As we have seen since mid-March when the COVID 19 shutdown was ordered, it possible to reduce vehicular traffic and immediately improve air quality. It also triggered many more people to go out to parks and walk. It caused a gigantic demand for bicycles and a demand for places to ride to and enjoy. This change, although brutally hard, did produce surprising benefits which we can build upon. Please take these benefits to health, environment and potential behavior change into account when you set air targets, road budgets and develop transportation plans.

Thank you again for the work you do and the attention you give to our collective bicycle accessibility, safety, and prosperity!

Best regards,

Paul Emmart  
Baltimore, MD 21218

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**Jaime D. Sigarán**

We need to invest more strategically in our communities across Harford County, Baltimore County, Howard County, Carroll County, and Queens Anne County with a focus on regional transit infrastructure including light rail, and heavy rail/subway lines. Expanding highways shouldn't be the answer to a growing metropolis that needs access to jobs, education, and housing. Around the world, thriving smart cities count on public tranist to create resilient communities. Baltimore deserves better.

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**Anonymous**

We strongly support these pedestrian facility improvements to this area of Madison Street. (Madison Street Rehabilitation from North Milton Avenue to Edison Highway project)

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**Email:** atg.mde@...

Wolfe/Washington Street Bike Facility: We support this important north-south bicycle route along. This will provide important connections between Fells Point/Canton and Johns Hopkins Hospital and North Ave.

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**Anonymous**

Greenway Middle Branch Phase 2- This is a really important bicycle trail connection. We strongly support this. We especially prefer the bicycle facility to be an on-road cycle track, as an off-road trail raises some physical safety concerns.

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**Anonymous**

Bush Street Bike Facility - We support the addition of more cycle tracks in South Baltimore, particularly as it is close to our work and gives access for low-income neighborhoods. Please continue to add safe (re: traffic & proximity to crime) cycle tracks between South Baltimore and and downtown Baltimore, in particular, and more generally between residential/suburban areas surrounding Baltimore City and the downtown.

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**Name:** Jim Brown      **Zipcode:** 21211

Bush Street Bike Facility - This much needed retrofit and upgrade to the Gwynns Falls Trail will connect much of West Baltimore to South, Southwest Baltimore, and Downtown, making safer active transportation access to jobs, and recreation, while completing a missing gap in the Baltimore Greenway Trail Network.

Greenway Middle Branch Phase 2 project - This is a critical connection between downtown and the Middle Branch, which will bring enormous benefits to the residential communities of south Baltimore, as well as the ongoing developments and investments in the Middle Branch, Stadium, Solo Gibbs, and Casino areas, closing a much needed local gap in active transportation, while helping to complete the Baltimore Greenway Trail Network and the East Coast Greenway

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**Anonymous**

Rolling Road Bridge No. B-0358 over Branch of Dead Run project - We are in full support of the addition of the 5-foot sidewalks on either side of the bridge. Addition of cycle tracks, separated from the vehicle traffic, would also be greatly appreciated.

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**Anonymous**

Frederick Avenue Slope Stabilization Wall - We support the improvements to the sidewalks in this area and encourage addition of more sidewalks in this neighborhood and in adjacent Catonsville where sidewalks are lacking.

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**Anonymous**

We applaud the bicycle improvements in the MD 140: Painters Mill Road to Owings Mills Boulevard - Phase 2 project, but we ask that the bike compatibility lane ensures that bikes are fully safe and separated from traffic with a barrier such as concrete or pylons. We also ask that if there are not already sidewalks installed there, that they be added.

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**Anonymous**

MD 140: Garrison View Road to Painters Mill Road - Phase 1 project: We applaud the bicycle & pedestrian proposed improvements in this project, but we ask that the bike compatibility lane ensures that bikes are fully safe and separated from traffic with a barrier such as concrete or pylons.

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**Name:** Mary C Cochran **Zipcode:** 21042

US 1: Bridge Replacement over CSX project - 8' shoulders? This is a critical route for bicyclists and pedestrians to get from Elkridge and Relay to the Halethorpe Train Station. For MARC passengers to get to Guinness or the Park. A potential link from MARC to the proposed Patapsco Regional Trail. How to upgrade those 8' shoulders to be safe and marked for bikers and hikes? Jersey Walls? Sharrows?

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**Name:** Daniel Paschall **Zipcode:** 19121

Greenway Middle Branch Phase 2: The Middle Branch Trail / Gwynns Falls Trail is part of the East Coast Greenway from Maine to Florida: <https://www.greenway.org/states/maryland>

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**Name:** Crystal Mcdermott **Zipcode:** 21231

Work on the Hanover Street Over CSX bridge is desperately needed.

Towson Circulator: Transit capacity is an issue in Baltimore City too. Address this in the next TIP.

Wolfe/Washington Street Bike Facility: The bike traffic shows this much needed north/south bike line is overdue. Start planning more of this now please.