



April 22, 2014

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On behalf of the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board, I would like to thank you for your comments on the draft Goals and Strategies for *Maximize2040: A Performance-Based Transportation Plan*.

The BRTB continually strives to improve transportation plans as well as the planning process based on the comments received. As such, all comments were shared with the BRTB members and carefully considered. Responses to your comments are included in the enclosed matrix which summarizes all testimony received during the public comment period.

The BRTB is scheduled to vote on the final version of the goals for *Maximize2040* at their next meeting on **Tuesday, April 29 at 4:30 p.m. at the Baltimore Metropolitan Council**. An agenda for this meeting can be seen at baltometro.org.

If you would like to address the Board during the Public Participation Opportunity (at the start of the meeting at 4:30 p.m.) we encourage you to register in advance by contacting Rebecca Smith at 410-732-0500, ext. 1043 or rsmith@baltometro.org. You may also sign-up in person prior to the start of the meeting.

The BRTB has put together a brief one-page list of rules and procedures for submitting public comments, as well as a *How To Guide for Making Public Comments at BRTB Meetings*. These can be downloaded at www.baltometro.org/BRTB/BRTB-PublicTestimony.pdf and www.baltometro.org/BRTB/BRTBpubliccomments.pdf.

Once again, thank you for your time and effort in reviewing the goals for *Maximize2040*. The BRTB appreciates your input and encourages your continued participation in the regional transportation planning process.

Sincerely,

Anthony S. McClune, Empowered Chair
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board

★ COMMENTS ON GOALS & STRATEGIES -----

The Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB) appreciates the wealth of comments on the proposed goals and strategies for Maximize2040. We have incorporated a majority of the comments listed below into the final proposed goals.

Goal: Improve Safety

Decrease congestion to eliminate driver stress and improve mental awareness on the road.

Andrea Jackson

Safety concerns can be caused when old streets are used for too many purposes – bike, no sidewalks, curved, improperly banked streets, too high volume of cars, etc. Safety has to be taken seriously. If the neighborhoods cannot get out of their driveways and car speeds are so high children cannot walk or play outside, traffic planning has failed. Consideration needs to be for the entire community, not just moving from place to place.

Dr. Shelley Sehnert

With regard to bike/ped safety, please modify the “share the road” philosophy to include dedicated and buffered amenities, like those provided in the Inner harbor.

Anonymous

In the event of the Bay Bridge failing from a terrorist attack, shipping accident or infrastructure failure of functionally obsolete Bay Bridges. A marine system (similar to Washington state ferry as a model) would be a good backup. – sees bureaucratic inertia.

Craig Purcell

Goal: Preserve Existing Infrastructure

The current criteria are not consistent with smart growth. The criteria should be revamped to support this new approach. For example, I live in Howard County along SB 95 north of 100. There is available land for development, however the age of existing homes and density do not meet the current criteria.

Kim Moran

Strategy G should be placed first, not last, since it deals with managing transportation assets by monitoring the conditions and repairing and replacing whenever necessary. This is a necessary prelude to the six other strategies which follow.

Art Cohen

Improve pedestrian crossings, signals and sounds.

Andrea Jackson

Set up asset management programs to make sure improvements and maintenance are done is essential.

Melvin Blickenstaff

In urban areas more emphasis should be placed on pedestrian and bicycle maintenance.

Melvin Blickenstaff

Change name of goal from “Preserve existing infrastructure” to “Improve, upgrade and maintain existing infrastructure.”

Anonymous

Barriers to Preserving Existing Infrastructure

Need adequate funding for regular maintenance and improvements

Melvin Blickenstaff

Goal: Improve Accessibility

Recommend the following changes:

Strategy A is deficient in omitting any specific reference whatsoever to persons who are transit dependent. Explicitly addressing the needs of transit-dependent persons (goals #3, 4, and 7) is necessary in light of emerging federal concepts of transit service equity under Title VI of the US Civil Right Act.

Strategy F refers to the “Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan,”... However, none of the seven strategies addresses the need to plan routes and station locations for population which depends on public transportation. It should address explicitly and in much more detail the needs of transit-dependent members of the public.

Strategy I should also include “24-hour” as one of its parameters of “access.”

Regarding the trend on page 7 “3% decrease in share of population within ¼ mile of bus route or rail station, 2009-2011.” This is a significant acknowledgment that less people who need and depend on transit are able to access it.

Art Cohen

Expand transit to surrounding counties in a timely manner.

Andrea Jackson

Include under-served persons and communities (African-American’s, lower income individuals, etc)

Eric

Fight to ensure that all transportation projects in Baltimore City fulfill COMPLETE STREETS guidelines.

Robbyn Lewis

Develop points of accessibility in neighborhoods and communities that have been systematically and routinely overlooked and disenfranchised for decades. Ensure they are aesthetically pleasing.

David Skinner

Develop a system that provides integrated service across political boundaries. For example, don't make riders change vehicles when crossing county/city lines; Have a unified and equitable fare system.

Anonymous

Barriers to Improving Accessibility

Need sidewalks that are ADA compliant, not blocked with signs. Key as the population ages. Little support for ADA issues for those that construct or repair.

Dr. Shelley Sehnert

Don't plow/pile snow into handicapped parking places, ramps, sidewalks.

Anonymous

Don't cut the curb at one end of the street and not the other end of the block.

Anonymous

Coordination with communities to provide facilities that suit the wishes of the communities.

Melvin Blickenstaff

Opposition that raises concerns of accessibility points being in high crime areas; low-income areas; political and administrative will.

David Skinner

Goal: Increase Mobility

Expand and improve Metro system to reach cultural, academic, health and retail establishments around the region.

Andrea Jackson

Make public transportation affordable, easy to access, reliable - -make public transportation help citizens feel it makes life easier – less stressful by reducing the dependence on personal autos.

Jerry Fuss

Recommend the following changes:

Strategy C includes nothing in the way of providing or planning for additional transit options throughout the metropolitan areas, in order to enhance mobility. Nor is it specific about the criteria it will use to “sustain and balance capacity” among the several modes of transportation.

Strategy D refers to incident response and recovery measures more accurately depicted as preventing a decrease in mobility, rather than increasing mobility.

The trend on page 8 “2% decrease in average weekday local MTA bus ridership, 2010-2013.” In view of the great dependence of many Baltimoreans on local bus lines, this decrease is puzzling and disturbing.

Art Cohen

Stronger penalties for aggressive driving

Develop better methods of reporting delays and incidents to each modal administration and pass this information to the public promptly.

Melvin Blickenstaff

Increase inclusion when promoting the expansion of multimodal transportation in long-term planning.

Lorie McCollum

Develop a more comprehensive Metro rail system like New York City so that automobiles are not such a necessity.

David Skinner

Barriers to Increasing Mobility

There are many neighborhood associations, but reaching out to reps for update on neighborhood projects would be helpful.

Camille Burke

Getting the right technology to help.

Melvin Blickenstaff

Political will.

David Skinner

New system, different than current auto dependent and road building culture.

Craig Purcell

Goal: Conserve and Enhance the Environment

Strategy C should include a reference to encouraging human-powered modes of transportation such as walking and bicycling. This is essential both to smart growth and complete streets – two urban trends in the USA in the 21st Century (the latter is referred to explicitly under Goal #8, Strategy E). This goes beyond supporting “active living and physical activity” as is suggested in Strategy F under this same goal.

Art Cohen

Ensure cleaner streets around public transportation by holding retailers accountable for maintaining public space around establishments.

Andrea Jackson

Continue to promote environmentally friendly transportation as an alternative to driving.

Melvin Blickenstaff

Continue to improve stormwater management

Melvin Blickenstaff

Add a strategy that states: incorporate latest technologies and very best of practices.

David Skinner

Barriers to Conserving and Enhancing the Environment

Market driven pressures to build and invest in highway infrastructure.

Olivia Ceccarelli

Capital costs for projects (stormwater) and other projects that don't directly influence/improve transportation for the users would be tough to sell.

Melvin Blickenstaff

Funding and administrative will.

David Skinner

The minds of people who do not want to change anything for fear of unknown and it may cost profit initially.

The existing “built” environment of row houses, high-rises, parking garages all done without emphasis on open green space. Need more avenues, circles, and one way streets that allow multiple tree pits and/or planting zones.

Kyle Bressant-Page

None. Water is free – no rights of way needed to be purchased or maintained for a high speed marine ferry system.

Craig Purcell

Simple will. Commit to it, reward any action that ensures complete streets principles, and call out those that don't.

Robbyn Lewis

Goal: Improve Security

Recommend the following changes:

Strategy B and Strategy E appear to be somewhat redundant, referring as they both do to emergencies. There should be a way to combine them into a single strategy.

Strategy D is vague in its reference to “regional priorities.” More specificity is needed here, if only by way of examples.

Art Cohen

Expand transit safety forces.

Andrea Jackson

Emphasize redundancy in systems. Redundant safety features, especially to help reduce accidents.

Melvin Blickenstaff

Safety and security phrase doesn't reflect underlying objectives and goals. Coordinate relief and emergency systems. Educate public about the difference between safety and security.

Anonymous

Barriers to Improving Security

Using technology to its fullest potential.

Melvin Blickenstaff

Administrative will.

David Skinner

Goal: Promote Prosperity and Economic Opportunity

Strategy A calls for incorporation “as appropriate” of the “six livability principles” jointly developed at the federal level by HUD, USDOT, and EPA. As stated, the strategy begs the question as to what would be considered “appropriate.” Are these six principles “for real” and to be taken seriously, or are they not? This is important, because the HUD description of them states unequivocally that they “will act as a foundation for interagency coordination.” Five of the six principles - address the transit problems of residents who need and depend on public transportation.

It would seem that the liability principles are always appropriate when undertaking transportation planning. Therefore, the “as appropriate” qualifier should be deleted.

Art Cohen

Better coordinate land use and transportation.

Stuart Stainman

Focus on freight movements

Jackie Seneschal

Think comprehensively about TOD in Red Line & MARC corridors.

Robbyn Lewis

Integrate transit stations into existing communities.

Melvin Blickenstaff

Use the advantage of having a captured audience of Metro riders to inundate them with messaging, imagery and language reflective of prosperity and economic opportunity.

David Skinner

We should be developing around each transit node. Each node should have a theme based on the personality of the neighborhood – must consider diversity of population, incomes, types of businesses and encourage entrepreneurship on every level of life – especially craftsmanship, trades and ability to WALK, scooter and bike ride to the shopping, office and educational facilities, and parks and cultural centers – music.

Kyle Bressant-Page

Barriers to Promoting Prosperity and Economic Opportunity

Coordination with developers and municipalities as well as neighborhoods/communities.

Melvin Blickenstaff

Administrative will.

David Skinner

Bureaucratic inertia with change.

Craig Purcell

Goal: Foster Participation and Cooperation Among Stakeholders

This goal has been a sticking point during the past 30 years in the Baltimore region. If the BRTB and the MTA are serious about public engagement in the planning process, and treating members of the public as true partners, then that engagement should start at the very beginning – including shared planning and decision-making at the scoping and screening stages for projects. Anything less represents little more than lip service.

Strategy A refers lamely to “foster communication and encourage input” as the way to enable stakeholders (including the public) to participate. For reasons stated above, this is insufficient.

Strategy D calls for “encouraging matching contributions from entities that stand to benefit from transportation projects and programs ... [including] local communities.” Just what does the BRTB have in mind in terms of community contributions? Are they to be monetary, and if not, what are they to consist of?

Art Cohen

Better coordination of public and private modes.

Andrea Jackson

Number one goal should be a unifying vision from the state to jurisdictions.

Anonymous

Coordinate state and local government efforts to promote smart growth strategies.

Stuart Stainman

More social media options, meetings and open houses do not get enough participants.

Jackie Seneschal

Need community involvement as plans are developing. Take into consideration neighborhoods/locations impacted by the plans put into place – neighborhood safety, etc.

Jerry Fuss

Continue to increase public engagement in transportation to satisfy the needs/wants of the public.

Need to market to communities – get them involved – if local communities on-board for new projects, they can be used to help the region get projects underway.

Melvin Blickenstaff

Listen to the stakeholders. Don't consider them just a step to follow to get the funding, actually listen to them. Get them involved early enough when there is still time to change plans.

Robert Reutter

Meet people where they are; Get communities mobilized to provide input.

Anonymous

Regional Coordination - Get Locally Operated Transit Service (LOTS) providers working together. Foster conversation between jurisdictions.

Anonymous

Barriers to Fostering Participation and Cooperation Among Stakeholders

Communication and coordination with communities.

Melvin Blickenstaff

Geographic disparity

Craig Purcell

Many public meetings are held where access by non-drivers is poor (for example, this location had no obvious pedestrian path through parking lot, access was through driveway instead of designated pedestrian access/ sidewalk, and transit stops too far away and across six lanes of traffic).

Anonymous

Goal: Promote Informed Decision Making

Recommend the following changes:

In assessing this goal, refer back to the comment under Goal #8 above. There can be no informed decision-making without early, continual, full, and genuine engagement of the public. Planning and programming that are both policy-driven and performance-based are indeed called for by this Goal, but the resultant accountability, transparency, and improved project decision making do not go far enough. Such active public engagement is indeed "doable" and has already been done in several other metropolitan areas around the US.

Strategy D refers to "the trade-offs" involved in transportation alternatives. It would be useful here to include some examples of what this means.

Art Cohen

Incentivize participation contract/grant awards based on measurable levels of authentic community engagement and input.

David Skinner

More conversation and shared information with those that are affected (positively or negatively) by a lack of transportation. What existing nodes would be better served if the lack of transportation would be addressed? Also, consider areas that are thriving and/or on the upswing – how can they be improved through better transit?

Kyle Bressant-Page

Promote a regional vision.

Anonymous

Make informed decision-making a higher level goal (not last on the list).

Anonymous

Promote visioning, funding, and implementation.

Anonymous

Barriers to Promoting Informed Decision Making

Need an objective method to select most important projects since everyone has a different opinion.

Melvin Blickenstaff

Decision making in Maryland is not based on studies; Disconnect between MTA and the public; Disconnect on a regional basis (parochial) - County governed approach; People do not talk to each other.

Anonymous

Too much policy and not enough implementation.

Anonymous

★ COMMENTS RELATED TO EXISTING OR PROPOSED PROJECTS -----

The BRTB appreciates your comments on existing projects and new project ideas. We have shared your comments with the state agency or local jurisdiction responsible for building or operating these projects.

Could there be shared use of 4th rail line to Martin State Airport Station with light rail? If Amtrak could agree with scheduling with freight and MARC service. This could provide intermittent service to eastern Baltimore County. Imagine a connection to future station at John Hopkins Bayview?

Jim Murray

Growth in gentrifying neighborhoods of the City will be compromised if we don't invest in growth of the transit system (subway, light rail, potential street car routes). As population is increasing in City neighborhoods the parking situation is getting worse and the streets are getting more clogged with traffic. A city's growth cannot be sustainable with buses and cars. Recommendations:

Start putting the streetcar system back in for shorter routes and expand on the existing system.

Number#1 priority should be getting the red line built to create an east-west connection.

Number#2 priority, the metro subway line should be extended from the Johns Hopkins station to out to NE Baltimore and continue to White Marsh. There should be a large parking garage built for all of the commuters from Harford County and beyond. This will alleviate the daily commuter traffic coming off of Rt95 and clogging the city streets with traffic. Maybe in turn we can build less parking garages and fill those spaces with residential or commercial uses.

Priority#3, should be a light rail or subway line built from Federal Hill towards downtown up the spine of the city through Mt Vernon, Station North, Barclay, Charles Village, Waverly, up the York Rd corridor and ultimately head towards Towson and beyond. It totally makes sense to include Towson as part of the line because of the high density in this area.

Priority#4 is to add a new rail line to connect Columbia, Ellicott City, Catonsville with the city (again these are growing areas).

Dan Rieger

I believe the use of additional sound walls along highways would reduce traffic and commute times by encouraging smart growth. My reasons are as follows: (1) Undeveloped parcels adjacent to highways are not desirable for housing due to traffic noises. Sound walls would make these parcels more attractive. (2) Developing these undesirable parcels would reduce commute time since they are closer than the current new housing.

Kim Moran

Improve accessibility by permitting transfer between MTA light rail and subway systems.

Stuart Stainman

Here are my dreams for Carroll County.

1. A regular bus link to the Owings Mills metro stop.
2. Extending metro from Owings Mills to Finksburg with parking available.
3. A commuter rail service serving Westminster and connecting with Baltimore Penn Station and Light Rail with service to BWI.

Without a car, we are pretty isolated in Carroll County. Some folks like it that way. Not me.

David Highfield

Incentivize the use of zero-emission vehicles at Park-&-Rides. Install 20 standard 120v EV charging outlets at P-&-R for no more than the cost of a single typical EV charging station. This not only incentivizes the use of zero emission vehicles but also the use of public transportation and congestion reduction! (Proposal submitted)

Robert Bruninga

In Europe, children travel to school within the existing transportation network – unlike America which operates an extremely large (and expensive) door to door bus service. Europe also has, working from the train station out, a range of overlaying transportation systems... from the taxis curbside to the trolley system to a network of buses which extend into the suburbs. One starts where the other leaves off. Higher vehicle taxes, expensive gasoline, and other vehicle related expenses has many Europeans keeping their cars tucked away for that special weekend event, deferring instead to public transportation, transportation they've learned they can count on. In contrast, America has a lack of coordinated transportation infrastructure ('sidewalks to nowhere', etc).

Maryland needs to make a commitment to public transportation with a large fleet of clean, safe, affordable buses driving over dedicated routes which prospective home buyers (or renters) can count on. As it is, it seems a route is tested then abandoned before it's ever really given a chance to populate itself.

Peter Bell

Better integration of existing light rail/metro/MARC stations into nearby communities – i.e. separate paths from communities with improved signage allows people to more easily walk up to the stations from their homes and businesses.

Melvin Blickenstaff

Focus on the potential for development around existing transit/MARC stations.

Integrate transit stations with communities through signage and pedestrian improvements.

Melvin Blickenstaff

Red Line along Boston Street is not a good idea. It is expensive to dig a tunnel in an area already heavily built up and with people who love their cars! Boston Street is far away from the people who live on the side streets – bank, Pratt, Lombard, Potomac, Foster who may be hard pressed to walk that distance.

We would reach more people by improving service along Baltimore St. with small shuttle buses or a subway/light rail. Baltimore St. would reach Butchers Hill, Highlandtown, Middle East along Orleans (which could go from City into Golden Ring and WHITE MARSH).

Kyle Bressant-Page

Jersey City uses/allows private buses (little buses) to run routes that complement MTA, especially on streets with high population and tight roads

Kyle Bressant-Page

Establish high speed passenger only ferry system for Chesapeake Bay. Do not build an expensive third bridge and build a passenger only high speed ferry system.

Study other marine transit systems - Washington State Ferry System is a model - and their landside connections. Study growth patterns resulting from new marine transit modality.

Improve accessibility by allow swift movement across bay (Canton/Harbor East to Rock Hall, Betterton, Galena, Kent Narrows and St. Michaels) without automobiles and save time. Improve mobility by increasing choices and speed of passage. Enhance the environment by using less gas than single occupancy vehicles. Improve System Security by providing emergency connection across bay when bay Bridges are clogged or shut down due to an event. Preserve infrastructure by reducing impacts on aging functionally obsolete Bay bridges. Promote Prosperity and Economic Opportunity on the Eastern Shore and Baltimore City with jobs from a high speed ferry.

Craig Purcell

Street Car System (8, 15, 19, 13).

Anonymous

★ COMMENTS RELATED TO SPECIFIC ACTION ITEMS -----

The BRTB appreciates your suggestions. Several advisory groups to the BRTB also are developing lists of short-term action items such as the ones you have recommended. While these items are outside the scope of the 20-year regional transportation plan, the BRTB is interested in receiving these specific recommendations and will work with staff to identify the ways in which your recommendations might be incorporated into the BRTB's annual work program and products. These ideas will also be shared with BRTB members for inclusion in their work.

Ideas:

- Consistently post on trains, buses, and metro stops that rewards are offered for citizens who provide tips that lead to apprehension/identification of perpetrators of crimes and violations.
- Provide audio ports for personal listening and Bluetooth devices.
- Create forums or social media that celebrates and honors those who participate and cooperate.

David Skinner

Coordinate with Marine Transit Committee on Baltimore City's Transit Choices group.

Craig Purcell

Connect with elementary school kids to promote safe streets and other transportation issues.

Anonymous

Reach out to neighborhood association reps for an update on neighborhood projects.

Camille Burke

- Increase funding
- Revisit state process (cradle to grave)
- Ascertain impact of federal rules and regulations on ability to move projects forward.
- Identify a sound presentation plan that is sustainable and practical.

Anonymous

★ HOW DO YOU SEE THE FUTURE OF TRANSPORTATION? -----

Thank you for sharing your vision of the future of transportation in our region. We will strive to incorporate these concepts throughout the development of Maximize2040.

We want a northern Baltimore Transportation Plan that integrates movement of cars, buses, bikes and people without negative impact on our residential communities.

We want to help by mailing low-cost suggestions, listening, sharing, learning and giving feedback. We know our communities, their needs, demographics, resources and concerns.

Dr. Shelley Sehnert

Connected vehicles will change how we plan infrastructure within 20 years. As will the internet and telecommunications change work and travel patterns.

Jackie Seneschal

Engender a culture of respect between all users of the road – pedestrians, bikers, transit, drivers

Olivia Cecarelli

Getting big visions of future needs to guide directions for plans and implementation. Demographics, needs of the population, ways to reduce dependence on proliferation of highway expansions. How can the jurisdictions that resist planning for inter-connected transportation be encouraged to think cooperatively?

Jerry Fuss

If we plan comprehensively now, we can have a world class system. Glad you are initiating this process.

Robbyn Lewis

Need to grow communities – connect people from home to work and play, wherever it is.

Secure funding and public support – find innovative methods to do so.

Continue to improve existing infrastructure - provide better connections to existing communities and promote new development around existing transit infrastructure.

Melvin Blickenstaff

The future will be a very personal and emotional decision that commuters make out of practicality.

David Skinner

Need to look at big picture, get more bang for buck by linking nodes - stronger as a chain than individually built.

Kyle Bressant-Page

Multimodal – train to water to bike/ped. Focused growth around marine terminals in transit oriented development.

Craig Purcell

All about process

Anonymous

Unused studies

Anonymous