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Mayor Dixon and County Executive Smith Endorse Red Line Alignment Solution

*Leaders Envision Project Benefits Beyond Reducing Congestion;
Community Revitalization and Job Creation are Keys to Red Line Success*

Baltimore, MD (December 11, 2008) – Standing with community, business and civic leaders from Baltimore City and Baltimore County, Baltimore Mayor Sheila Dixon and Baltimore County Executive Jim Smith today announced their preferred alignment solution for the Red Line Transit Project. The local executives are supporting an alternative known as "4C" which provides for two strategically-located tunnels under Cooks Lane and Downtown/Fells Point, and dedicated surface lanes along Edmondson Avenue and Boston Street.

The over 14-mile light rail project will connect the Woodlawn area in western Baltimore County through downtown and to the Bayview Medical Center in Southeast Baltimore.

"I believe that Alternative 4C represents our region's best chance at securing the federal funds necessary to build the Red Line," said County Executive Smith. "Baltimore County and the region will benefit greatly from the Red Line as we build a true system of rapid rail lines like other competitive metropolitan areas have."

County Executive Smith highlighted the opportunity to revitalize the Security Square Mall area through transit-oriented development as a benefit of the Red Line.

"This alternative is fiscally-responsible and responsive to the concerns raised by community leaders throughout the Red Line corridor," said Mayor Dixon. "With Alternative 4C, we can leverage a billion dollar transit investment to achieve community revitalization, protect environmental resources, create careers in the construction trades and support local, minority- and women-owned businesses."

Dixon added that her administration would continue to work with communities along Edmondson Avenue and Boston Street who are concerned about a surface alignment to make sure that those concerns are addressed during the engineering of the Red Line project. "We can build a brand new Edmondson Avenue and reverse four decades of blight and disinvestment with the Red Line," said Dixon.

Red Line Alternative 4C is expected to cost between \$1.3 and \$1.6 billion and would be funded through a variety of federal, state and local government sources. The official public comment period on the Red Line Draft Environmental Impact Statement runs through January 5, 2009.

In light of the emerging regional consensus towards Alternative 4C, Mayor Dixon and County Executive Smith urged Governor O'Malley to formally designate Alternative 4C as the "locally preferred alternative" quickly upon close of the public comment period. The leaders stated a goal of breaking ground on the Red Line by mid-2012, which requires MTA to submit its "New Starts" transit funding application to the federal government in the Spring.