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Baltimore Community Leaders to Discuss Lessons Learned from West Coast Rail Transit Projects Tonight

Presentations in University of Maryland Biopark Auditorium

BALTIMORE, MD (October, 20, 2008) - Neighborhood activists, elected leaders, developers and City officials are set to give an account this evening of what they saw, heard and learned during their recent two-day West Coast visit to study rail transit projects in Los Angeles, Phoenix, Portland and Seattle. These cities have light rail projects similar to Baltimore's proposed Red Line.

Presentations and roundtable discussions will begin at 7 p.m. in the University of Maryland Biopark Auditorium, 801 W. Baltimore Street. Garage parking is available, and MTA Routes 1, 10, 20 and 23 are nearby.

As Baltimore's Red Line Project moves closer to construction in 2012, decisionmakers are seeking to understand more about transit-oriented development, economic opportunities and construction mitigation techniques. The tours were jointly sponsored by the Central Maryland Transportation Alliance, Baltimore City, the Citizens Planning and Housing Association, and the Maryland Transit Administration.

During the west coast transit tour, participants posted pictures on Flickr, a photo sharing service, and comments on Twitter, a free social networking service. Below are a few of their comments posted on Twitter:

- * AR-Pdx. Success: think outside the box, respect your workers. It's abt more than a transit project, its about community development.
- * AR-Pdx. Strategy: develop minority business involvement early on to create jobs and ensure equity. 4:52 PM Sep 30th from mobile web
- * LA- LA Mayor's office thinks our Red Line community compact is a great idea- they wish they had one for the Gold Line extension. 3:50 PM Sep 30th from mobile web
- * LA- MTA requires the design-builder to hire a firm that is solely responsible for recruiting local workers for Metro jobs 2:51 PM Sep 30th from mobile web
- * SEA - visiting seattle's freeway park - a "lid" built over the downtown expressway w park on top 2:29 PM Sep 30th from mobile web
- * SEA - when tunnel was built, contractor used the dirt to build beautiful trails along rainier valley behind TOD sites 9:08 AM Sep 30th from mobile web

Four years ago, CPHA and the Greater Baltimore Committee sponsored similar trips to transit projects around the country. Out of that came the Red Line Community Compact, signed September 12th by Mayor Dixon, Maryland DOT Secretary John Porcari and more than 65 community, business, environmental and civic organizations.

Tonight's event at the University of Maryland Biopark is free and open to the public.