



RED LINE READER

NEWS AND UPDATES FROM THE CITY OF BALTIMORE ON THE RED LINE TRANSIT PROJECT

A Monumental Occasion – Community Compact Signing Ceremony

On Friday, September 12, Mayor Sheila Dixon joined Maryland Transportation (MDOT) Secretary John Porcari, Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) Administrator Paul Wiedefeld and more than 60 community leaders to endorse the Red Line Community Compact. Since May, groups have worked to refine guiding principles and strategies for the Compact – this ceremony marked a major milestone for the plan.

“The Red Line is essential to Baltimore’s future,” said Mayor Dixon. “We know that there are tremendous opportunities and community benefits with this project. Our partners in the state and city have pledged to work together to meet the challenges that come with a major public works project.”

“The Red Line expands and connects our existing rail network and gives our citizens a way to get to life’s activities while beating the high price of gas,” said Secretary Porcari. “Opportunities like the Red Line do not come around very often, and we have to get it right. The compact we are signing today will help us do that.”

A steering committee composed of cabinet members, community leaders, and MTA/MDOT staff will monitor the Compact’s implementation and provide an annual progress report to the Mayor. Appointments to the committee will be announced in early October. To read the Compact and see updates on the Steering Committee, go to www.gobaltimoreredline.com.



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Sheila Dixon
Mayor, Baltimore City

Transit Around the Nation II

At the end of September, groups of Baltimore citizens will head out west to observe new transit systems in Los Angeles, Phoenix, Seattle, and Portland, OR. The tours are being sponsored by Baltimore City, Maryland Transit Administration, Central Maryland Transportation Alliance and Citizens Housing and Planning Association and will be led by representatives from the City Department of Transportation and Maryland Transit Administration. Participants will see light rail projects under construction as well as transit vehicles, maintenance and operation centers, and some completed transit stations. Following the tours, participants will have various opportunities to share their experiences in both formal and informal settings at a public forum on October 20th, 6:30pm, at the University of Maryland BioPark, 801 W. Baltimore Street. This forum will allow participants to share what they learned with the many other community leaders and residents who were not able to attend these trips. Parking will be available in the garage in the 800 block of W. Baltimore Street; MTA routes 1 and 20 serve the Biopark directly and 10 and 23 are just a few blocks away.

DEIS Hearings

The Draft Environment Impact Statement (DEIS) on the Red Line Corridor will be released at the end of September. The DEIS reports on the physical impact the Red Line will have on nearby neighborhoods. Public hearings are scheduled for the first week in November. At this time, everyone is strongly encouraged to testify on the Red Line—this is an opportunity for each person's voice to be heard. Testimony may also be submitted to the Maryland Transit Administration in writing and on their website through January 5, 2009 at www.baltimorelined.com

Health & the Red Line

The Red Line is a major project for the City of Baltimore. It will affect everything: jobs, housing, the environment, and the look and feel of Baltimore neighborhoods. The one factor that connects all of these issues is human health. Anna Ricklin, a new staff person with the City's Red Line office and a graduate student at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, has been examining how the Red Line can affect the health of people living along the planned route. Some issues regarding health and environmental concerns have been outlined in the Community Compact; this project takes those objectives one step further.

During September, Ms. Ricklin met with individual community members to discuss their thoughts on how health, transit, and neighborhoods are connected and to discover their priorities for enhancing neighborhood well-being. Working with partners at the state and city health departments, and using data on health status along the line, Ms. Ricklin plans to put together a report assessing how the Red Line can influence human health along the corridor. The goal of this project is to make the Red Line – and everything that goes with it – the best it can be to promote healthy communities. The team will submit their report as a formal comment to the DEIS. Further, officials at the City have pledged their commitment to do what they can to address these recommendations.

