



**Maryland Transit Administration**

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March 3, 2017

Mr. Brian O'Malley  
Central Maryland Transportation Alliance  
2 East Read Street  
Baltimore MD 21202

Dear Mr. O'Malley,

Thank you for Central Maryland Transportation Alliance's (CMTA) continuous advocacy for transportation in Maryland and for your feedback on the BaltimoreLink plan. The MTA welcomes comments from our riders, operators, community organizations, elected officials, and other stakeholders, such as the CMTA, and incorporates many of those comments into the network redesign.

Many of your suggestions on the first draft of BaltimoreLink were incorporated into the plan; for instance, increasing bicycle infrastructure and the use of metrics to measure the plan's success. Incorporating your comments, and analyzing the feedback of more than 3,000 others, will help make BaltimoreLink the best plan for our riders and customers.

The MTA also welcomes independent analysis of our service and plan. When we approved your request for Draft 2 data, we did so in good faith and with the understanding that the analysis would be conducted responsibly. As our staff conveyed to you in a meeting on October 31, 2016, shortly after the publication of your *Will We Be Better Off?* report, we have serious concerns about the assumptions inputted into a constrained modeling software package, and more importantly, the drastic conclusions drawn about the plan based on those flawed figures.

The MTA did, in fact, address your report's findings in a 10-page document that we submitted and discussed with you in person – not one that we broadcasted to the public. As presented to you, Sugar Access modeling software does not account for existing trip patterns, and upon the MTA bringing many errors to CMTA's attention – such as the claim that BaltimoreLink will reduce weekend service when it will increase service by 14% – you chose to publish the report anyway.



**Maryland Department of Transportation**

Larry Hogan, Governor | Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor  
Pete K. Rahn, Secretary | Paul Comfort, Administrator

We believe that BaltimoreLink will be transformative for the Baltimore region, and here is why:

- We are drastically expanding our high-frequency CityLink service into low-income, minority areas in East, West and South Baltimore and providing **30% more people** with frequent service across the region. In addition, the new network structure breaks up our longest and least reliable routes and ensures connectivity of the entire transit network to all other modes.
- Express BusLink routes are connecting job centers and neighborhoods in ways that have never been connected before and are having positive impact on many commuters' lives. We hear stories every day about people traveling from suburb-to-suburb who can now get to work faster and more directly while our ridership continues to grow.
- Over 5 miles of new dedicated bus lanes will allow for faster operations and allow our buses to easily navigate downtown congestion. The benefits of these dedicated lanes will ripple from downtown across the entire network.
- Transit signal priority on two pilot corridors will – for the first time ever – allow MTA buses to communicate with traffic signals, shortening red lights and lengthening green lights to improve bus speed and reliability.
- Riders will be able to transfer with ease, by rail or bus, at the West Baltimore MARC transfer center and many other new transfer facilities.
- Over 5,000 bus stop signs will be replaced with new, more informative signs, as well as improved system maps and real-time signage that will ease the burden and diminish the confusion of riding public transit.

To date, the MTA has solicited an historic level of public involvement with BaltimoreLink. We have hosted hundreds of meetings since October 2015, and garnished the support of communities and elected officials alike. Just as important is the large-scale public education campaign we'll undertake in Spring 2017. Street teams will be deployed on vehicles and at our highest ridership routes and stops, handing out brochures and teaching riders about the changes taking place with BaltimoreLink. We will be providing Travel Training for communities in partnership with the Center of Mobility Equity. We're training our operators, reprinting all of our schedules, planning community events, and working in conjunction with a number of stakeholders in the region to get the word out.

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Thank you again for your feedback on BaltimoreLink and we look forward to your involvement in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Comfort', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul W. Comfort, Esq.  
Administrator & CEO