



RED LINE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Framework for Meaningful and Equitable Public Involvement

July 2024



MARYLAND TRANSIT
ADMINISTRATION

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PURPOSE OF THE ENGAGEMENT PLAN



PURPOSE OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

The Baltimore Red Line is an opportunity to transform mobility in the Baltimore region via a new high-frequency, high-capacity, east-west transit line through the heart of Baltimore. The Red Line planning and design can and should bring people together in a shared mission to provide increased equity in mobility and access to residents in the Baltimore region. This Community Engagement Plan (CEP) outlines the approach and tactics that will be used to bring community members and partners into the planning and design processes, including the engagement timeline and tools and types of information the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) will be sharing and requesting. This engagement will lay the groundwork for future Red Line design phases built on the public trust and broad agreement necessary to advance the project efficiently into a functioning and beloved transportation service. The CEP is a living document and serves as an update and refinement of the [2023 Red Line Community Engagement Plan](#). It incorporates what we heard from participants during 2023 community engagement activities, and it identifies those who have yet to hear from us to ensure meaningful participation from all who might benefit from this impactful transit investment. This Plan includes:



2023 Outreach Events



Refined community engagement goals for meaningful and equitable input for the project



A summary of public priorities expressed to date



Ways in which communities can engage in 2024 and 2025

The CEP is based on United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) guidance from “Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making” (November 2023)¹, and defines specific milestones to engage, inform, and/or involve partners and the public.

¹ See the USDOT document here: <https://www.transportation.gov/priorities/equity/promising-practices-meaningful-public-involvement-transportation-decision-making>

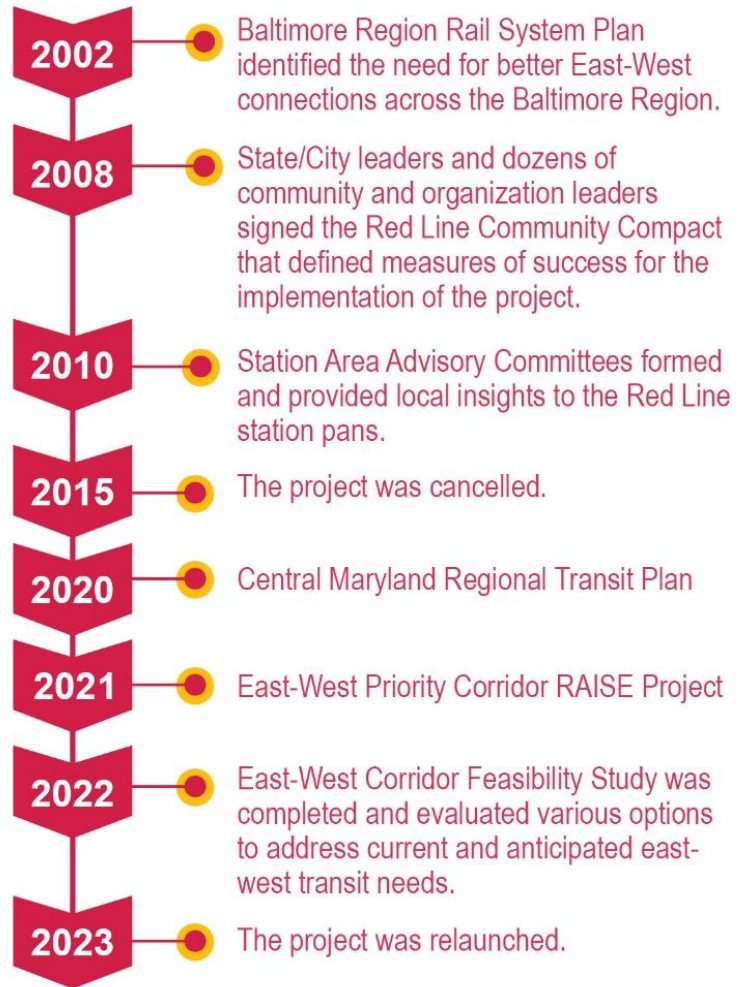
RED LINE PROJECT BACKGROUND

In June 2023, Governor Moore relaunched the Baltimore Red Line, which was canceled in 2015 after more than a decade of planning and design. This decision revitalized efforts to address an important gap in east-west transit service between Bayview and Woodlawn through downtown Baltimore City. A primary objective of the relaunch was to reintroduce the Red Line to the public. This was accomplished by drawing from past studies and engaging a broad cross-section of community members and partners.

We gathered valuable community input on various aspects of the Red Line’s design, including mode types, route alignments, and the choice between tunnel or surface transit placement. This input helps refine and update options for further evaluation and lays the groundwork for upcoming funding, approval, and collaboration processes.

The 2023 Red Line outreach efforts connected with more than 5,500 community members and project partners. We employed diverse outreach activities, including open houses, pop-up meetings, participant surveys, door-to-door visits, and meetings with community groups, institutions, businesses, and elected officials. The knowledge gained from these activities is helping the MTA make decisions that affect critical local support and federal environmental processes related to the Red Line. These are key to delivering the right project for the Baltimore region, gaining necessary funding, and ensuring the project’s development is well-informed and community-driven.

Brief Project History



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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

As the Baltimore Red Line advances, community engagement activities will focus on continued opportunities for the public to learn about the project and provide input to decision points. Community engagement will also facilitate activities that engage community partners and high school students through regularly programmed activities and working groups. The table below summarizes updated Community Engagement goals for the Project.

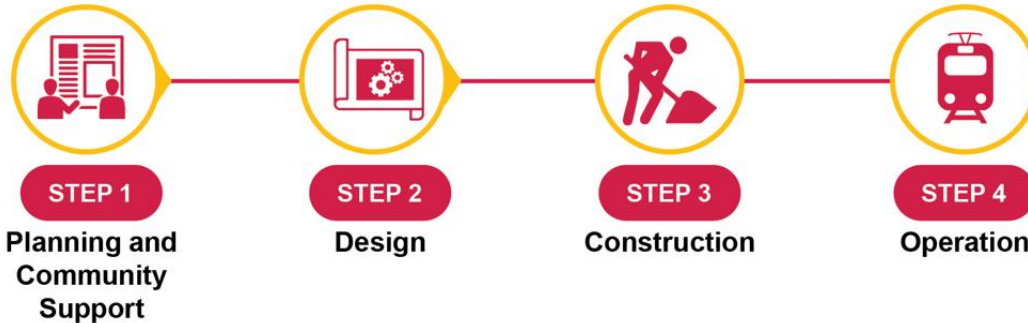
Table 1 Red Line Project Community Engagement Goals and Objectives

#	Goal	Objectives
1	Create meaningful opportunities for all communities to engage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use tailored strategies based on quantitative (e.g., Census, ACS, etc.) and qualitative (e.g., interviews and plan review) data sources to understand current demographics and community needs • Provide a variety of ways to access and understand information and contribute to the project, including digital, in-person, and on-demand resources • Partner with community-based organizations and faith-based organizations for outreach and engagement
2	Prepare communities for implementation by building durable and collaborative community relationships through engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop partnerships on a one-on-one or small-group basis to build deeper trust and relationships to advance the project to full implementation • Assist diverse communities to find common ground and shared values that guide the project forward
3	Build strong support to implement the Red Line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to understand community and partner needs first • Convey issues in ways that are meaningful to various interested groups
4	Provide timely, accurate information and transparency in the decision-making process and throughout construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide summary results of milestone engagement activities and show a connection between public input and decisions or outcomes

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC INPUT IN SHAPING THE BALTIMORE RED LINE

Public input plays a significant role in shaping the Red Line. By building community outreach and engagement into the planning and design process, the project will advance in alignment with community needs and preferences. The Red Line is expected to significantly impact the Baltimore region; creating opportunities for the public to weigh in on these impacts helps shape a more robust project.

Red Line Project Process



As the Red Line progresses, it will involve more complex technical work, additional long-form community feedback efforts, coordination with elected officials, and evaluation of funding and cost-effectiveness. MTA and the Federal Transit Administration are preparing a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act. This process allows community members to provide input on the project's environmental impacts and/or benefits during formal public comment periods.

MEASURING AND TRACKING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The MTA will track the effectiveness of engagement activities to ensure that collecting community sentiment is equitable and meaningful. This involves continuously measuring the outputs and outcomes of events and evaluating metrics that indicate whether engagement is reaching the intended audience. The table below shows how MTA will evaluate engagement efforts.

Table 2 Measures for Tracking Community Engagement

Coverage Type	Metric to Measure Participation
Participation in engagement activities reflects the corridor demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Race • Age • Disability status • Primary language • Car ownership • Transit dependence/use
Participation is balanced across the corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census tracts/blocks • Zip Code • Neighborhood
There is participation within the project area and throughout the greater region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the project area • Regionally

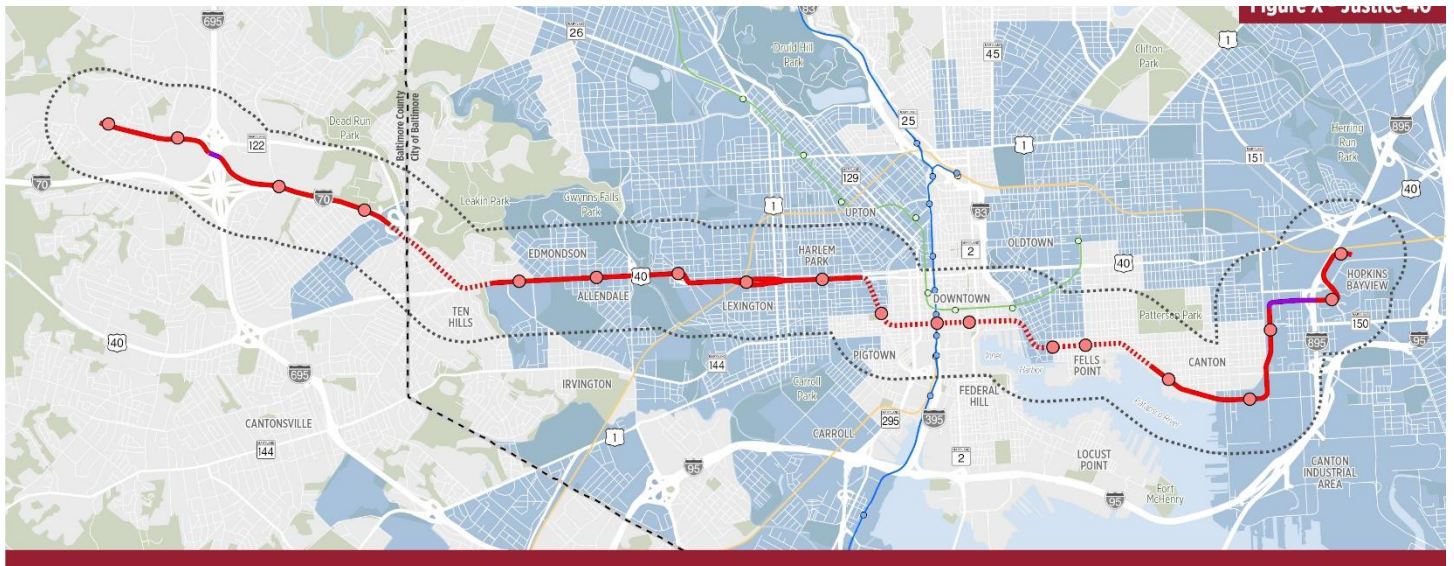
REACHING IMPACTED COMMUNITIES

As part of the overall engagement strategy for the Red Line, MTA set out to support participation by traditionally underserved and underrepresented people in public involvement. A large part of this effort will be utilizing data and local knowledge to geographically focus on those communities while maintaining contact with those MTA is typically able to reach. The map below illustrates Justice40 Areas, one of the many tools that will assist MTA in targeting these underserved and underrepresented communities. The areas are determined by combining eight factors into an index that acts as an indicator of persistent environmental and economic disadvantage, inclusive of:

- Climate change
- Clean energy and energy efficiency
- Clean transit
- Affordable and sustainable housing
- Reduction and remediation of legacy pollution
- Critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure
- Health burdens
- Training and workforce development

While we will use these datasets to inform our outreach efforts, information gathered from the local community and information collected from project partners will also guide where outreach will occur.

Justice40 - Underserved Communities



Proposed Red Line	● Light RailLink Stop	■ Justice40 - Disadvantaged Community
— Elevated	● Metro SubwayLink Stop	⋯ Influence Area
— Surface	● MARC Train Stop	⋯ County Line
⋯ Tunnel	— Light RailLink	■ Park or Open Space
● Proposed Station	— Metro SubwayLink	

0 1 2 Miles

3

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT



ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

Activities for engagement are intended to facilitate open communication, gather feedback, and foster collaboration between MTA and the communities affected by the Red Line. The process is designed to engage the community at these early stages of project development to gather insights and identify concerns, while collaborating on the project's goals, benefits, and potential impacts. This process also establishes a mechanism for continuous feedback throughout the project lifecycle. The upcoming engagement activities will provide regular updates on how community feedback has shaped the project and informed decision-making, and ensure transparency and accountability between MTA and the community.

Community Advisory Team

The Community Advisory Team (CAT) is a group of individuals who will bring voices and perspectives from the full range of affinity groups and neighborhoods living, working, and investing along the Red Line transit corridor. The CAT is expected to serve as a vital link between the MTA and the diverse communities of the greater Baltimore region.

What's the CAT's Role?

- ✓ Bring a range of perspectives from diverse communities into the Red Line project process to promote the flow of information and ideas.
- ✓ Share opportunities for partnerships with local groups/organizations.
- ✓ Help identify community assets, characteristics, and needs that could be impacted by the Red Line.
- ✓ Advise on approaches and methods for successful local engagement.

The CAT will include community representatives who live, work, play, or invest in the project area, and are active and trusted community members and small business owners. The selection approach prioritized geographic diversity and included members from underserved communities.

High School Internship Program

The High School Internship Program is based on the original Red Line Internship Program, which ran from 2009 to 2015. This initial effort resulted in more community engagement from underrepresented communities and institutions, including parents and neighbors within Baltimore County and West and East Baltimore communities. Ambassadorship for the project grew to include more students and their families, who elevated the project's visibility.

Alums from the past internship program will be able to participate in the following activities:

Speakers Bureau: Alumni can serve as speakers to share their experiences and insights, inspiring and educating the new interns and the community.

Community Engagement Opportunities for Red Line High School Program Alumni: Establish opportunities for alums to engage with the community actively, fostering a more robust community connection to the project through high schools and raising awareness and participation in the program.

Station Area Advisory Committee (SAAC): When the SAACs are established in the coming years, alums can participate in SAACs to provide valuable input on station area development and community integration.

Mentorship Program: Establish a mentorship program where alums can mentor current interns, offering guidance, support, and a sense of continuity.

The program's re-launch will engage a new generation of students, including alums who now work in transportation. The new program will consist of office and field-directed activities for high school students within the Red Line study area. Current high school students will have opportunities to fully engage with the Red Line while gaining valuable experiences and skills to carry into their future endeavors. Additionally, students can network with major agencies, organizations, and staff who will serve as career mentors in transportation or other professions. The Pilot Internship program will be implemented from June 2024 to August 2024, with plans to continue and expand the program through 2025 and beyond.

Table 3 lists activities and tours for internship participants. The Pilot Internship program will be implemented from June 2024 to August 2024, with plans to continue and expand the program through 2025 and beyond.

Table 3. Internship Activities

Internship Office Activities	Internship Field Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Onboarding ▪ Pre and Post Test ▪ Introduction to Journaling ▪ Overview of the Red Line Transit Project ▪ How are Transit Projects Planned and Delivered ▪ Research Careers in Transportation ▪ Meet and Greet MTA Administrator ▪ Career/Shadow Day- Consultant Firm ▪ Career/Shadow Day – MTA Employees ▪ College Preparation ▪ Public Speaking ▪ Presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Red Line Corridor Tours ▪ MTA Bus Operations ▪ MTA Light Rail Operations ▪ MTA Police Department ▪ Baltimore City Communication Operation Center ▪ Enoch Pratt Library ▪ Morgan State University ▪ University of Maryland College Park ▪ State Highway Administration ▪ One-on-One Lunch w/MTA & Consultant ▪ US Capitol Building via MARC Train ▪ Assist and engage the public at summer outreach events

Direct Methods for Community Engagement

MTA will also establish regular checkpoints, milestones, and community events with local community members through events, meetings, and digital platforms to effectively reach diverse stakeholders. MTA will be implementing targeted strategies throughout the corridor, based on lessons learned and critical issues that need to be explored with project partners and the community. Table 4 summarizes the toolkit of activities and strategies MTA will use throughout the project, and how they may inform project decisions and milestones. MTA will proactively assess the correct type of engagement at the right time with the right tools to create opportunities for meaningful engagement.

Table 4. Methods of Staying Engaged

Activity Type	Engagement Activity	Outcome/How Input Is Used
Providing Input on Engagement Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Advisory Team 	Helps to inform and guide engagement activities
Building Capacity and Enthusiasm Along the Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Leaders Education Series High School Internship Program “Corridor Stories” or “Riders Stories” 	Helps to inform technical decisions
Collecting Input on Geographic-Specific Issues and Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Association Meetings Community Event Engagement Faith-based Organization Outreach Open Houses 	
Engagement with Corridor Businesses, Partners, Organizations and Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner Meetings Business Community Roundtables 	
Non-Digital Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mailings Printed Newsletters in Community Centers/anchors Radio Advertising 	Provides up-to-date information about the ongoing activities of the project to the public, including the non-digital community
Digital Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Media Website Digital Newsletter Earned Media 	
Large Public Open Forums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Hearings 	Direct feedback opportunity for decision-makers

STAYING ENGAGED AS THE RED LINE ADVANCES

Everyone has a different level of interest in getting engaged; there are a variety of avenues to participate! Learn more about the Red Line engagement tools and opportunities that are most relevant to you by jumping to the description that most accurately describes your interests:



“I just want to stay informed”

Check out the Communication Channels for information

- » Learn more about the Red Line online by visiting: www.redlinemaryland.com
- » Stay apprised about the Red Line by following the project on social media
- » Stay in the know about the latest progress with the Red Line by subscribing to the project YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@RedLineMaryland>
- » Email feedback, ideas and questions to: outreach@redlinemaryland.com
- » Sign up for Red line email updates
- » Attend Community Association meetings



“I want to ensure my community/my voice is part of the conversation”

Engage with Community Advisory Team (CAT) members and follow the CAT meeting notes online

Request MTA attendance at a Community Association or Special Interest Group Meeting

- » A Community Association or Special interest Group leadership can request that MTA staff either present at a standing meeting, or meet with leadership to provide an update by emailing outreach@redlinemaryland.com. So MTA can confirm and hold the appropriate staff’s availability, a minimum of 30 days notice before the meeting is requested.

Look out for our pop-ups at community events

Email pop-up location suggestions to outreach@redlinemaryland.com



“I have specific interests along the Red Line and I want to inform the project process”

Business, Institutions & Special Interest Groups

- » Request a meeting/call with a Red Line team member via email at outreach@redlinemaryland.com

Residents

- » Work through your community association leaders
- » Request a meeting/call with a Red Line team member via email at outreach@redlinemaryland.com

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- [Red Line Project Website](#)
- [Red Line CAT Webpage](#)
- [2023 Community Engagement Plan](#)
- [2023 Outreach Summary Report](#)
- [2023 Outreach Materials](#)