

# Community Advisory Team Meeting Summary

Date: August 7, 2024

Location: Baltimore War Memorial



## Notable attendees

- MTA Leadership
  - » **Allison Scott**  
Red Line Senior Project Director
  - » **Erica Rigby**  
Red line Deputy Director
  - » **Ken Melton**  
Red Line Communications and Community Engagement Director
- Breakout Group Facilitators
  - » Alvaro Sifuentes
  - » Leo Sawada
  - » Caitlin Tobin
  - » Yolanda Takesian
  - » Minahil Mehdi
- Breakout Floaters
  - » Jerome Horne
  - » Della Moore

## CAT attendees

- |  |                           |                               |
|--|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>1. Bernard K. Sims</b>                                    | <b>6. Ginger Hanson</b>   | <b>12. Mansur Abdul-Malik</b> |
| <b>2. Bree Jones</b>   | <b>7. Glenn Smith</b>     | <b>13. Manny Grogan</b>       |
| <b>3. Cynthia Shaw</b>                                       | <b>8. Greg Dewey</b>      | <b>14. Ryan Dowdell</b>       |
| <b>4. Derek Moore</b>  | <b>9. Howard V Hughes</b> | <b>15. Samia Rab Kirchner</b> |
| <b>5. Donnell Nance</b><br>(proxy for Nadine Ngouabe Dlodlo) | <b>10. James Footman</b>  | <b>16. Sonia Eaddy</b>        |
|  | <b>11. Katie McRury</b>   | <b>17. Sue Carlin</b>         |



## Agenda

- 1. Welcome and Introductions**
  - Andrew Bing, CAT facilitator, started the meeting and reviewed the agenda
- 2. Review of CAT Purpose and Goals**
  - Andrew reviewed roles and responsibilities of the CAT, ground rules and expectations
- 3. Re-cap of CAT Kickoff Meeting**
  - Andrew provided an update on action items from the CAT Kickoff Meeting



## Discussion

- **How does public engagement play a role in decision making?**
  - » The role of public input into the decision-making process is coming up in the presentation, tabling the conversation for later.
- **How do you check CAT member's availability when scheduling a meeting?**
  - » Team mentions the difficulty in finding a day/time among CAT members but will discuss within the project team. The team is trying to schedule as far in advance as possible and will have all of 2025's meetings scheduled by the next meeting in October.
- **Liz Gordon, Director of the Office of Planning and Programming, presented on the state structure and how decisions are made for various types of agency investment.**
  - » How are points assigned to the equity score?
    - MTA underscored that we need to invest in a system that brings people where they want to go. Existing ridership is an important proxy to represent that.
  - » How is Justice 40 incorporated and communicated?
    - Creating access to jobs and opportunities for Justice40 communities is important for upward mobility. Setting up the Measures of Effectiveness, "MOE's", are indicators that are important to addressing inter-generational wealth and compliant with FTA. Our goal is to go beyond compliance.
- **Alvaro Sifuentes, consultant from Jacobs leading the design, presented on the Mode Selection and reviewed how the team incorporated technical analysis and public input to make that decision.**
  - » What happens if project doesn't receive funding?
    - As noted by a fellow CAT member, USDOT is focused on Justice40, and we feel this is a strong and competitive project. We are confident that if we can secure half of the local funding, we are likely to get federal funding granted.
  - » On Zero-Car Households: it can feel like you "pity" them, maybe frame it as building on transit-oriented neighborhood, to include people who choose not to own a car or can't own a car.
    - The project team understands the point about the framing. ZeroCar Households is a metric given to us; it is a metric that does include people who choose not to own a car and people who can't.
  - » What other sources of funding are you considering? A new tax/revenue is going to impact lower income people the most. Have you thought through where we need to go to find money? We should deliver in a manner that doesn't over burden taxpayers.
    - We are expecting to get 50% from FTA. We are not shying away from other Federal grant programs, RAISE, etc. Any capital project can have up to 80% funding. Liz described the sources that make up the transportation trust fund, and how it all gets divvied up among the various needs.



## Breakout

### LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

#### Breakout Group 1: CMS to Hilton Parkway

##### Comments:

- The project needs to consider having an alignment in front of Chadwick Elementary and the impact created by noise.
- Alternative 2A and 2B make sense from access standpoint
- The team must consider aesthetics for the station from a design and security/safety standpoint
- Community members voiced concerns about property loss and logistical hurdles along the route - one community member referenced Edmondson Village and previous and ongoing eminent domain property loss as well as houses between Security Blvd and 695.

**Question:** Is the project team considering one direction or two directions for the light rail?

Response: We are working on two directions for the light rail.

**Question:** Are you connecting with Hunting Ridge for community buy in?

Response: We are continuing to hold conversations with communities along the corridor and we presented to the Hunting Ridge Community Association on July 1. We will continue to engage with them as the project progresses.

**Question:** How does MTA access property when building a tunnel under that property and compensate that property for any damages that occur?

Response: MTA does property assessments and conducts a post-construction survey after the construction. If damage occurs, then the contractor is obligated to offer a settlement for the impacted property.

**Question:** For surface alignment on Cooks Lane, what happens to the parking?

Response: We are proposing to take one side of the parking.

#### Breakout Group 2: Hilton Parkway to Bio Park

##### Comments:

- There has been opposition to the tunnel through Poppleton, prefer surface options; when previously asked about routing tunnel to Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. the community was told it was too expensive. Preference to run the tunnel under MLK rather than under Fremont.
- Penn Ave at the market you can feel train vibrations - other breakout group member describes alternative experience as they did not experience feeling or hearing the tunnel and it travels directly under his home.
- Several neighbors use light rail regularly (e.g. flight attendant to BWI), problems with trains getting sideswiped and other minor incidents shut the whole thing down, and prefers grade separated; when trains get stuck and there are no other options, you can't get to your job, people in the neighborhood work at Harbor East and look forward to the service.
- Interest is mentioned in the travel time difference between different options, while minor for short trips - tunnel is the better alternative due to commute times and reliability. Additionally, surface options have other noise - such as honking horn and rail rumble, amongst other noises.
- Heritage Crossing could prove beneficial to "bring the pride" in the neighborhood, like choosing the additional station option near Heritage Crossing and choosing MLK as it is a major thoroughfare.

**Question:** Possible to change station name from Lexington Terrace to Heritage Crossing to reflect the current community? The name was changed when rebuilt due to abuse scandal by staff of residents, so the name is important.

Response: Team has taken note of this suggestion for consideration.

**Question:** What will be the noise levels (bells/whistles) associated with the surface option?

Response: Red Line is not yet in that stage of the project. The team will take note of the question and follow up in subsequent meetings.

**Question:** Could you put the train as surface on the street at Fremont?

Response: Freemont was considered as a possible surface option early, but MLK was considered less impactful due to the width and potential residential parking impacts due to two-way operations required.

### Breakout Group 3: Bio Park to Fells Point

Comments:

- A tunnel in this segment would help reconnect neighborhoods on both sides of U.S. Route 40.
- However, the downtown tunnel option is less popular as Light Rail Transit is the chosen mode, it's costlier and people prefer to see it as surface-running.
- Alignment 2A has a greater number of stops which would provide more opportunities to invest in the underserved areas along West Baltimore St. and Lombard St. This alignment would work well as there are existing bus lanes that can be converted for Light Rail use along the two streets.
- Alignment 2B focuses more on tourist-traffic areas which would cause some residents to feel disconnected from the Red Line. There are some residents who already feel the Red Line is not intended for them. This alignment may exacerbate this feeling for those that live and work in Baltimore. Also, there is expected to be an increase in traffic with planned developments on East Pratt St. which could pose an issue for the Light Rail.

## FALL OPEN HOUSES

### Breakout Group 1: CMS to Hilton Parkway

How can we improve outreach?

- The Red Line should work with CAT members to be community liaisons for the Red Line. For example, CAT members could be present at back-to-school events or PTA meetings and provide pamphlets to parents/families.
- Red Line also needs to work to bridge the digital divide. For example, Red Line could send out mailers as well as text messages to community members.
- Red Line should continue to work with elected officials.
- The open houses should be from 5:00 - 8:00 PM with refreshments provided.

### Breakout Group 4: Fells Point to Bayview

Comments:

- There is a lot of new growth north of Eastern Avenue, more activity and destinations.
- Boston Street connects to Canton Crossing shopping and apartments.
- Parking impacts will be a concern, need to help community members envision this project as helping build a city where you don't need a car. We need to empower the people who can be convinced that things can change and car free is possible with more access. There are more of them than you think.
- Community members have concerns about vibrations on historic and old homes and longer construction times (both tunnel and surface alignments).
- For the surface alignments, community members cannot picture a light rail through historic Fells point. Visuals from Europe could show how it works and that it is feasible in older, historic neighborhoods.

**Question:** Is it possible to show the walksheds and show who you're reaching?

Response: Yes

**Question:** As a result of vibrations, residents are concerned that vibrations will result in them needing to replace old windows. Is there a possibility for mitigation in the form of a window replacement grant program for impacted households?

Team will follow up on this with more information.

### Breakout Group 2: Hilton Parkway to Bio Park

How can we improve outreach?

- The Red Line should hold space and time to meet with impacted communities that might benefit from new technologies. For example, Freemont residents could benefit from tunneling technologies. Potentially, the Red Line could consider an equity fund for impacted residents. To meet with these communities, it might be best to utilize venues familiar to residents. Saturdays from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM or 2:00 PM seem to work best for attendees.
- Red Line should consider using paper communications instead of just electronic communications, especially for older residents. Sometimes, door hangers and door knocking can be the best way to reach people.

- CAT members should have access to materials like text messages, fliers, and door hangers so that they can share with their networks.
- The No Boundaries Coalition in Central West Baltimore hires youth from the community to distribute fliers and door hangers. This may help reach beyond the immediate corridor. Red Line should also connect with other community associations in the area and potentially attend their meetings.
- Future open houses should include a presentation with graphics to help orient listeners to area-focused discussions and provide incentives for attending.

### Breakout Group 3: Bio Park to Fells Point

How can we improve outreach?

- Create QR Code stickers that redirect to the Baltimore Red Line website, place them along the route and at existing Light Rail Transit "LRT" locations, and give them out as needed.
- Connectivity is Key. To truly make this a system for Baltimoreans, we should inform the public that it is not directly connected to the LRT route.
- Drop newsletters or post signage on community boards in corner stores and grocery stores along the corridor.
- Door knocking was particularly effective for Red Line in the past and should be considered again.
- Add link or invitation to elementary/MS newsletters within the corridor
- Ask city/community leaders and government leaders to share in newsletters
- Conduct a pop-up at Cold Spring Station and tabling at the Downtown Farmers market, Druid Hill Park, and Waverly
- Adding to all Baltimoreans informed and belonging to the project.
- Ensure there are kid activities at Open Houses
- Host Red Line Day at Morgan State to encourage fellowships, internships, and general information for potential employees of this project. Include them in Community Compact.

**Question:** Why aren't Higher Education locations (notably and most interested in Morgan State) more involved?

Response: The team just concluded their High School internship pilot program with Edmondson-Westside High School. Morgan provided an intern-mentor for this pilot program. We are continuing to work with higher education institutions.

### Breakout Group 4: Fells Point to Bayview

How can we improve outreach?

- Digital media is the best way to reach Upper Fells/Fells Point.
- Suggest MTA provide templates for what Community leaders can post, they can help share information.
- Signage about the project and upcoming meetings in the park. Can advertise the public meeting with a QR code to the upcoming events part of the website and social media.
- Red Line 1.0 put up street signs that said "This is the Future Route of the Red Line" - those were powerful.
- All of the local schools and libraries have representatives who do outreach to Spanish-speaking community members. Many members won't show up if they're not sure someone will be there to help with translation.
- Southeast library is a big gathering space for all communities - great place to distribute information and advertise public meetings.
- The Navy route bus stops are also good place to advertise meetings.
- Weeknights seem tough in this area - may get higher attendance midday on a Saturday.
- Did not know about the previous narration of the boards - that is also helpful and community leaders can help share that video.
- Location is important - Suggested locations for public meetings:
  - » Senior center in the Park
  - » Outside in the Park
  - » Southeast Library
  - » Hamstead Hill Academy

**Question:** Could you do a live stream of the public meeting on social media?

Response: We do not have plans to live stream public meetings at this moment, we currently narrate the boards. CAT members agreed that was good and should be something to make sure community leaders share on their networks.



## Upcoming Events and Engagement Opportunities

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| August 17       | Fell's Point Farmers Market                      |
| September 5     | WTMD's First Thursday Festivals                  |
| September 5     | Jazzy Summer Nights at the Baltimore Peninsula   |
| September 6 & 7 | OweFest  |
| September 14    | Tianquitzli: The Three Sisters/Las Tres Hermanas |
| September 14    | Love Groove Festival                             |
| September 14    | Associated Black Charities Cookout               |
| September 15    | Ravens Tailgate                                  |
| September 22    | The 22nd Annual Pigtown Festival                 |

Visit our website for more updates: <https://redlinemaryland.com/staying-engaged/>



## Summary of Action Items

- 2025 schedule: circulate a form to schedule CAT meetings at a time and day suitable for most members.
- Expanding outreach: Consider suggestions received on expanding outreach for Fall Open Houses
- Continue engagement: Continue dialog with CAT members on outreach opportunities and establishing connections with activity centers and institutions along the corridor
- **Follow up:** Reimburse CAT members for travel expenses/parking
- **Follow up:** Work with technical team to respond to outstanding questions/comments in the upcoming outreach events.



## Next Meeting

**These dates are tentative and will be confirmed.**

**Date:** Wednesday, October 16, 2024

**Time:** 5:00 - 7:30pm

**Location:** Southeast segment of the corridor (exact location TBD)

August 22, 2024