

Neighborhood Questionnaire on Streets and Transportation

Cindy Walsh responds

1. Problems:

A public transportation system consistently mainly of a State-operated local bus service, which

- Is unreliable (buses late or no-show)

- Lacks real-time (next-bus) information

- Is not welcoming, not customer-oriented

Is currently subjected to potential route changes that would eliminate or reduce service to corridors with particularly heavy ridership.

To begin I want to be open about the goals of a Baltimore Development Master Plan these few decades. It is driven by the vision of Baltimore as an International Economic Zone with global corporate campuses and global factories taking much of our surrounding communities and Greater Baltimore with just a city-center of communities that will if left to continue be filled with the rich of the world connected with these multi-national corporations and their high-level executives. This is why all of Baltimore's surrounding communities have been left to crumble with no development plans; it is why MTA in Baltimore has been left underfunded and much of revenue misappropriated elsewhere which is why Baltimore's public transit is so bad; and it is why we only see a very basic Circulator system being installed reaching only to what will be those city-center communities deemed to be developed. I will note that all of the transit development in these few decades has been to global corporations tied to transportation like global VEOLA TRANSPORTATION now calling itself TRANS DEV----and we now have Governor Larry Hogan wanting to move his version of global private transportation into Baltimore as rapid commuter bus service around the Baltimore region again, tied to these global corporate campuses structures and moving people to work and not to REAL public transportation needs. This is why you are seeing the rerouting of major bus lines heavily traveled----those buses heading beyond those designated city center

communities will no longer have routes out that far as global corporate campuses will have their own transit on their campuses.

2. Street and traffic operations designed to move automobiles rapidly through local neighborhoods without regard to the effects on residents.

If we understand that the traffic downtown will consist mostly of wealthy homeowners in city center and that Baltimore and regional citizens will be directed to these surrounding global corporate campuses then you see why such designs are allowed to exist. The goal will have less traffic heading downtown through city center neighborhoods with strong private transit from Circulator to College Town buses taking much of the citizens downtown or to our city-center universities/colleges. College Town buses are also global VEOLA TRANSPORTATION so you can see the pattern. We know the goal of Maryland Assembly and Baltimore City Hall as very corporate politicians is to end public transportation and replace it with only private. Each global corporate campus will have its own private transit for workers as is happening in San Francisco with global Google taking control of much of that city's public transportation system. Again, this is happening because the current politicians are tied to Baltimore Development and its vision of Baltimore as an International Economic Zone. As a social Democrat I am fast to say this-----the people's Democratic Party does not include Wall Street or corporations and their power or profit as their mission so the current politicians running as Democrats need to go and that is who Cindy Walsh for Mayor of Baltimore is-----a real social Democrat who is a strong public transit supporter ready to reverse all of these policies and build a real public transit system in Baltimore.

3. Aggressive and inattentive driving---speeding, failure to yield, etc.

To understand Baltimore's inattention to driving laws one has to acknowledge Baltimore's history of failing to enforce ANY Rule of Law across all sectors of government. We have a police department structure built almost exclusively on street crime----and the reliance on speed cameras is an extension of this. These laws are slowly being enforced in city center as bike lanes are opening but very slowly. If you understand that police have historically not pulled people living in what are called AFFLUENT neighborhoods-----this is the standing view of police not engaging with citizens according to community and it is not without coincidence that these affluent communities often have the people speeding and failing to yield to pedestrians.

Keep in mind the short-term history of our city center. This decade alone has moved our Baltimore City university and college system from students from Baltimore or from surrounding areas often to that of bringing students from far away states and many different nations. Laws regarding pedestrian right-of-way are different from state to state and when a citizen in Baltimore who knows pedestrians have the right-of-way steps out in front of these out-of-state/country

drivers---they lose. Johns Hopkins spent lots of revenue on educating on this issue on its campus----not much is spent around the city.

The issue of texting –while –driving is new and much education is happening but we know this----when a city-center is filled with students we know this group tends to be the biggest text message group. All population groups are doing it so city-wide enforcement with warnings from community police or security can be done in a friendly way at first with getting tougher with increasing warnings. This is how they installed the Seat Belt laws that work well today.

Lastly, Baltimore has a very large drug/alcohol addiction problem that reaches all economic groups. Again, police patrolling for street crime often do not look as closely to these drivers as they should. Having a Baltimore Police Department with many categories of police including community relations police and a Baltimore City agency tied to public safety with public employees tasked with simply protecting and serving within each community will have citizens used to going without notice now feeling they had better pay attention. Addressing the rebuilding of all our communities with housing, small business economies, and bring all Baltimore City agencies into each community is a must in reversing the chronic fight against alcohol/drug addiction which is often tied to pedestrian and bike accidents.

4. I would like to say I would not bring the current speed camera program back as it is tied to a global corporation taking ½ of the revenue collected making it very aggressive in assessing fees to the extent we saw where calibrations and functioning of equipment caused massive problems for our citizens following street laws. Having a physical public employee in our communities has always worked and the costs are not as high as ties to these corporations end being. Police cars with radar posted at school zones before and after school acted as a safeguard. We need to return to community policing and move away from surveillance and speed cameras under the guise of being cost-effective. I am not against speed cameras owned and operated by Baltimore City Hall. My platform has all city agencies built out with oversight and accountability and that would include keeping equipment like speed cameras operating in the public interest and not as a revenue-source. The issue is public safety and not finding more ways towards revenue for the city from our citizens.

Speed bumps and circular intersection structures are what many citizens in communities want and this is an easy and less expensive method to slow our traffic flow. Working with Maryland Department of Transportation on these issues would be a priority for my administration. 4-way stops at intersections slows all traffic down creating more opportunity to be aware of pedestrian, bike, car activity especially in local communities.

5. I talk at length about the failure of time studies not only for our public transportation venues but our traffic light timing almost all of which hampers free traffic flow. My early years working as an Industrial Engineer for United Parcel

Service makes me the only candidate actually knowing how all this is done. I will make the trains run on time as they say with industrial engineering policies. Giving citizens diverse venues to come downtown takes away the car traffic congestion and lightens traffic through our communities. Traffic light timing that works towards a steady flow of car traffic will have fewer cases of drivers trying to beat yet another red light although I understand there will always be those red-light rebels.

I wanted to include my responses to another public transportation organization's questionnaire because I go more heavily on what I see a real public transportation system being in Baltimore.

Thank you for these important questions,

Cindy Walsh for Mayor of Baltimore

BALTIMORE TRANSIT QUESTIONNAIRE FROM MARYLAND AND BALTIMORE DEVELOPMENT NON-PROFITS.

- 1 What is your vision for transportation in Baltimore to meet the needs of our economy, provide access to opportunity and connect people to the places they need and want to go? What measurable outcomes would you aim to see improved through your administration's work on transportation?**
- As someone who has used public transportation for two decades as my primary mode of transportation and as someone who lived in Seattle for a decade developing those habits----Seattle has been these few decades the best in the nation model for public transit----I am the candidate with the vision, experience, and knowledge of implementation to build a strong, public, affordable transit system to address the needs for transport to work and for movement throughout the city and region in personal pursuits.**

The State of Maryland and especially Baltimore has a long history of defunding/underfunding/re-appropriating transportation funds

throughout the state/city and that would be the first step in serious transit infrastructure development----securing the funds in the Maryland Transportation Trust and the funds allocated for MTA coming to Baltimore. Baltimore's allocation for MTA should be adequate to begin rebuilding our transit infrastructure as we press for more funding from state and keeping an eye on Federal funding for Transportation.

After securing funding from government Baltimore must review current contracts with outsourced services with private corporations like VEOLA, small transit businesses augmenting transit services. The priority initially must be rebuilding a strong, public transit system that then can be augmented by private, local businesses. Currently, Baltimore's system is so outsourced and defunded that we don't have the backbone of an MTA system that many other cities in the US take for granted. This is not a policy to exclude private augmentation of transit service----it is a step back to reassess how the core of the public transit works best for the citizens and businesses and making sure that works for all.

Public transit is a broad topic. It goes from walking, biking, buses, taxis, light rails, subways, and yes, kayaking/water taxis. The smaller transit issues like walking and biking will be addressed in development of our streets and sidewalks and must have a greening/easy access plan that allows citizens to feel safe and healthy. The water taxi/kayaking is also an easier transit to address as the funding to make this work is not as large an investment. I used to kayak across Lake Union in Seattle to work and citizens in Fells Point and Federal Hill can do that as well. Creating a water-taxi system geared to rush hour traffic like our buses will encourage their use by citizens and not only tourists. Many tourists like being in the midst of local citizens in the course of daily routines.

The bus is the backbone of major city public transit and for Baltimore---to little fault of MTA drivers--- the system is dismal from lack of management oversight, lack of buses assigned to rush hour or ready for emergency detours. Time studies done every two years would replace the failure to do time studies for decades. I hear

officials say they are doing them but anyone riding buses in Baltimore know schedules are not working. My early profession with UPS was doing just that-----operational systems around transit. Connecting buses to light rail and subway schedules would be next. Baltimore cut and changed its light rail schedule to one that really does not work for many citizens as we went from a schedule of rail service coming every 15-20 minutes to waiting almost 50 minutes depending the destination. While it is true light rail service to destination stops like Cromwell and Hunt Valley, we must restore better service to light rail to the city borders. Time constraints for BWI passengers must have that steady flow to the south. I would support and fight for the RED LINE----we definitely need an EAST/WEST boost in all public transit.

Baltimore has completely abandoned public school buses and that must be reversed. Having students loading city buses during rush hour makes conditions poor for daily adult riders and it is not a safe or dependable option for our Baltimore City children. My development plan rebuilds public schools in all communities to eliminate the need for all this busing and I will make sure public school buses are available as much as possible for those students heading out of their communities.

I am a strong advocate for commuter MARC trains and will maintain the discounted fare 7 days a week and I will provide oversight and accountability on our rail system for passenger and environmental safety.

Government subsidy of all public transit must keep all fares affordable to be the effective, efficient choice for all citizens as we promote the concept of leaving your car at home.

1 What are your spending priorities and how would your administration implement your transportation vision? How would your budget reflect your transportation priorities and would you support using Baltimore City's general funds to improve transit?

- **I spoke to funding above but I can expand on this. If you are a candidate with a platform of building oversight and accountability, reviewing existing corporate subsidy and tax breaks, eliminating misappropriation----there will be plenty of general funds and yes, they would go to meet these public transit goals. Citizens of Baltimore rightly demand roads and sidewalks be addressed immediately and I will do that. With a plan to rebuild ALL COMMUNITIES and starting on that right away comes that plan to build in road/sidewalk pedestrian transit. My vision is a greening of sidewalk/community roads that make walking and biking pleasant and safe. Many communities will see large demolition of crumbling housing and this opens up that new vision of widened distances between housing and street. In communities gentrifying around existing housing/street distance the city must take responsibility for that part of the sidewalk closest to the street as in many other cities because then we can create that consistent greening all along the edge of the street AND have public works employees maintain these green public spaces as well as our sidewalks. This will provide walking safety without placing the burden of paying for sidewalk upkeep on taxpayers.**

Building biking stations would be handled as building bus shelters and I would see biking stations connected to local zoning for ZIP CARS for example. Those options go well together. We will have Federal funding for infrastructure coming in the next 4 years and as mayor I will fight to have those funds coming to the City of Baltimore with our Baltimore Public Works leading this effort and any outsourcing will go to our local contractors. The current direction of City Hall is attaching a global corporation---VEOLA TRANSPORTATION to control these projects and privatizing roads and bridges with tolls and higher taxes. We do not want that vision of Greater Baltimore transit.

1 Over 40% of Marylanders live in the greater Baltimore region. One of the four transportation goals from the [Opportunity Collaborative's 2015 Regional Plan for Sustainable Development](#) was "Create more opportunity for mid-skill workers to commute to family-supporting jobs via public transportation." Most of those jobs are outside the City. How would you use the leadership position as Mayor to forge partnerships at the regional, state, and national levels to achieve that goal?

- First, my development plans for Baltimore has rebuilding a local, domestic, small business economy and as such eliminate much of the need for many citizens to travel far from the city. Rebuilding our Baltimore City agencies with oversight and accountability and our public works and services agencies will provide a great number of strong wage jobs. This will address not only the unemployment of existing citizens, but will allow our new citizens to find employment fast once coming to Baltimore.

That said, Maryland has never funded adequately a state commuter bus system where citizens CAN choose to live in Baltimore and work in Howard County for example. Many states have strong, public state commuter systems and I would definitely work towards that and support this with any general funding possible. Currently, Governor Hogan is pushing a global corporate rapid bus system seen in developing nations that has a history, as does most global corporations, as failing in the long-term to provide quality and affordable rates. This is why I would as mayor fight to keep this regional system as public MTA. Knowing a public system cannot meet all those regional needs augmentation with local transit businesses would be vital .

1 How will you address possible concerns of City residents when efforts to improve bus routes and enhance the network efficiency result in changed routes, possible longer walks to stops, etc?

- **I addressed much of this above but let me emphasize----if your development goal is creating small business economies in all communities with a local, domestic Baltimore economy then finding a job in your community or nearby will become easier. Walking and biking becomes easier. Many cities have free-bus fares in the downtown centers and buses with bike racks to allow citizens to navigate the need for both kinds of transit. I would do this. Maintaining bus stops whether those with shelters or not is critical. In winter with snow plowing no thought is given by Baltimore MTA to have employees clear bus stops for our riders. Baltimore has major roads needing pedestrian overpasses and our downtown could use some of these as well in the most congested areas. Timing stop lights in downtown areas is key to maintaining car traffic flow and if you have pedestrian overpasses this car traffic does not need to stop as often. Overpasses can be environmental and greening while allowing our vehicles more time between stop lights.**

1 What is the role of the water taxi system and the circulator in your transit vision for Baltimore? And how can these systems be sustainably funded?

- **I see both as part of Baltimore MTA---public transit with existing coverage expanded. My plan for free-downtown will pull current Circulator into this plan and water-taxi must be handled by the city for insurance and safety purposes. Moving tourist around the harbor on water-taxis should be free as a promotion for all of our community businesses and citizens travelling to work via water taxi will hopefully have a corporate annual MTA public transit pass as part of their wage and benefit package at hiring. This is my next point. Baltimore must encourage our downtown corporations whose employees are using transit the most to be good corporate citizens in providing those Baltimore City transit**

passes to be used on any public transit option.

- 1 Please briefly describe the role of bikes and pedestrians in your vision for a better local and regional transportation system? And what changes do you think Baltimore should make to achieve these goals?
- When a citizen chooses a public transit option often travelling outside the city means changing from bus to subway, from bus to light rail, from commuter bus to walking/biking and in each case we must have our transit vehicles capable of allowing for bikes, wheelchairs, and providing for adequate shelter for those passengers while changing between modes of transportation. Baltimore is doing better in getting bikes onto most of these options but can do better. As someone using MARC train and light rail I know the value of having buses and subway schedules align with arrival times. No one wants to wait on a platform especially out of rush-hour for extended periods and with no shelter. The current light rail and subway does a good job with shelter but the schedules do not correspond with our bus system. This is especially true closer to the city border.
- 1 The State, through the Maryland Transit Administration, is directly responsible for most transit operations in the region. However, the City does have direct authority over land use, development, and parking. How can you use your authority in those areas to improve mobility and access in the City?

I see Baltimore as driving the state development structures as they approach our incorporated areas. Use of eminent domain is something citizens in Baltimore do not want taken lightly and I would be a public interest politician in this regard. That said, inter-county connections of these statewide transit systems require Baltimore to accommodate when necessary especially for transit projects projected into the future. My vision of Baltimore does not

embrace global corporate campuses and global factories taking the surrounding city communities and I do not support their existence in Maryland's economy as these global structures take too much control from our public policy decisions, too much of our government revenue with demands for global corporate tax – free designation. These global corporate campuses devastate our environment and subject citizens to ever lower wages. This said, I would not envision a state transit plan designed to accommodate these kinds of business destinations. Citizens want small business manufacturing across all communities with transit needs to and from those kinds of employment as critical. I would not dismantle our Baltimore MTA choices and schedules to make way for a Maryland rapid bus system when our buses are already prepared to offer that service. Transit centers for these regional bus systems can be located outside our city center and connected to existing bus routes.