



NICK MOSBY

FOR MAYOR



TRANSPORTATION PLAN

REWRITE BALTIMORE'S TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIC PLAN

We are more than halfway through the second decade of the 21st century, but Baltimore's transportation strategic plan has not been updated since Martin O'Malley's first term as Mayor in 2003. Perhaps it should come as no surprise, then, that Baltimore's transportation system is suffering from a lack of vision.

In Baltimore, leadership in transportation has always been the driving force behind our success, from clipper ships to the first bicycle, from railroads to our modern intermodal port. The 2003 strategic plan set forth eight clear goals that addressed safety, livability, funding, and regional partnership.

Nick Mosby will update the City's transportation strategic plan so that we have a clear blueprint for 21st century transportation in Baltimore. We do not need to reinvent the wheel, but in the wake of the Red Line cancellation and with so many long planned initiatives stalled, reaffirming our strategic vision is critical to reclaiming Baltimore's rightful place as a transportation leader. It is important that this vision be a multimodal one, with each mode of transportation serving as a supplement for areas that the others do not reach. For instance, a comprehensive bike plan for Baltimore can and should be used, in part, as the City's connective tissue between fixed-route transit options like the MARC Train or Light Rail, with all dedicated bike lanes connecting to one another rather than starting and stopping piece meal throughout our neighborhoods.

Nick Mosby will work with transportation experts to set ambitious but attainable goals for modal splits, which means the percentages of commuters who use cars, bikes, buses, rail, and so on throughout the week. By creating clear goals for what percentage of commuters should ideally use each mode of transportation, the City can become more intentional in its capital investments.

JOBS SHUTTLES FOR CENTERS OF INDUSTRY

Baltimore is the fifth wealthiest metropolitan area in the United States, and is projected to create an additional 400,000 jobs over the next 25 years. The Central Maryland Transportation Alliance recently found that only 11% of regional jobs are accessible to City residents in under an hour if they use public transit, however, yielding a grade of D for job accessibility. Even if the window is widened to 90 minutes, the number of accessible jobs only increases to 30%.

Long or difficult transit commutes are one of our most debilitating employment barriers, straining healthy home life and job security. In fact, as the New York Times reported in 2015, transit travel times are the number one predictor of whether a person will escape poverty. A long or difficult transit commute may also impact the ability of employers to hire and retain the employees they need, or of employees to keep their jobs.

The “last-mile” problem (sometimes referred to as the “first-mile” problem) is a leading transportation barrier to employment. The last-mile problem is a function of “job sprawl,” which occurs when jobs become diffusely spread throughout suburban locations, making them difficult to serve with fixed-route public transit. 85% of new job growth in our region is in suburban job centers, indicating that job sprawl will continue to be a challenge in the near future.

Nick Mosby will tackle the last mile problem by establishing shuttle service from urban population centers to suburban job centers during shift changes, encouraging industrial parks and large employers to run shuttles from these City-run drop points to their individual businesses, and creating bike infrastructure at shuttle hubs that increases the reach of each hub.

Bikes are one of the most cost-effective ways to expand the reach of the traditional transit system. Bike facilities like racks and lockers are not expensive to install at transit hubs or high-volume stops. Many employers may already have lockers, showers, or bike racks on premises, or could see these investments as the low cost workforce aids they are. As Baltimore’s bike share program takes shape, special attention will be given to the potential for bike share to provide a last-mile solution to transit riders.

Similarly, free shuttle service between Baltimore and surrounding job centers, like Arundel Mills, White Marsh, Woodlawn, or the planned development at Sparrow’s Point can provide a crucial link for Baltimore’s job force. This shuttle service should attract private funding from employers interested in a stable and growing labor pool or providing low-cost transit incentives to desirable employees. It should also attract funding from regional governments interested in economic growth by utilizing Baltimore’s under-tapped labor pool. Some last-mile connections could also create a profitable market for private operators of transit services.

Solving the first-mile/last-mile problem means including all Baltimoreans in our economic prosperity. Nick Mosby will bring stakeholders to the table and ensure that these barriers do not continue to hold Baltimore back.

WORK WITH THE MTA TO PUT GPS TRACKERS ON BALTIMORE’S BUSES

Reliability is the number one hurdle to increased transit use in Baltimore. A late or no-show bus can turn a 30-minute transit commute into a 2-hour ordeal. The MTA’s BaltimoreLink

bus proposal aims to address reliability issues by simplifying bus routes while increasing transit staff and buses. Even in high-performing transit cities though, bus reliability lags behind other modes like rail because buses operate in mixed traffic.

Real-time arrival data can help to reduce the uncertainty of the bus system, meaning quicker travel and less stress for transit commuters. The GPS units that can offer this data also allow transit agencies and the City's traffic management center to monitor transit vehicle movement and ensure that transit operations are as effective as possible.

Modern GPS systems can also provide a database of high-quality statistics on bus operations, allowing the City to analyze the effectiveness of its investments, while planning future capital expenditures.

In 2015, there is no excuse for MTA's failure to provide real-time information to its riders. The Charm City Circulator has featured this technology since its inception, and even Baltimore's college shuttles have it. MTA Maryland was an innovator in the early 1990s when it installed an early version of real-time tracking technology that operated using radio signals. Sadly, the MTA has spun its wheels since then.

Baltimore must have better. Nick Mosby will consider creative solutions like paying for GPS transmitters on Baltimore's MTA buses, a one-time investment that should not run more than \$3.2 million, while encouraging the MTA to pilot usage of these GPS transmitters in the City to help inform their eventual statewide implementation. Solutions like this allow Baltimore to regain its place as a transit leader in Maryland.

UPDATING BALTIMORE'S TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT CENTER AND INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS, WHILE IMPLEMENTING TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The Baltimore Metropolitan Area is projected to surpass 3 million people by 2040, and our commute times and congestion are already among the worst in the United States. Baltimore City, our region's transportation anchor, must partner with regional governments to employ a broad range of approaches aimed at moving more people more quickly, while promoting safe, livable communities.

When Baltimore unveiled its Traffic Management Center (TMC) in 2008 — a nerve center for the City's transportation system — it was hailed as one of the finest in the nation. The \$26 million project to update Baltimore's signaling system and centralize operations in the TMC helped pull Baltimore out of the 1970s. Sadly, it has not lived up to its potential to bring Baltimore into the 21st Century. Many drivers and transit riders would be surprised to discover that Baltimore has a TMC if told the benefits they should see from it.

We must do better, and Nick Mosby has the experience to bring real change. He knows that the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) field changes at the pace of technology, requiring constant analysis and attentive management. The Mosby Administration will immediately assess the center's staffing needs, traffic management strategy, ITS software, and hardware needs. Small investments in smart, connected technology and skilled staff will help Baltimore maximize its existing wealth of infrastructure assets while better understanding future needs.

These investments, along with demand management and traffic calming, will improve mobility and safety for automobiles and transit vehicles. Traffic incidents cause “non-recurring” congestion, which leads to over half of all regional congestion. Using smart technology to prevent and minimize harm from traffic incidents is the most cost effective way to cut congestion — the NHTSA found that unimpaired traffic incidents could be cut by as much as 80% through ITS.

Even with the most sophisticated ITS, our roads have capacity limits. Too much fast-flowing traffic in City corridors can also harm residential neighborhoods and stymie economic development by discouraging the foot traffic that fuels many small businesses. Trip reduction through coordinated Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies for City and regional activity centers will allow our region to grow, while avoiding wasteful and unnecessary infrastructure spending. Just as importantly, it protects the vitality of communities that might suffer from heavy auto-traffic.

TDM strategies use data, incentives, planning, and stakeholder coordination to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of road and transit infrastructure. Transit plans can be coordinated through employers and other stakeholder groups for each corridor or Transportation Management Districts. Strategies that encourage biking and transit use are important components of Transportation Management Districts. Nick Mosby will ensure that we better manage our infrastructure by making alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle trips accessible, convenient, and enjoyable.

CREATING PRIORITY TRANSIT CORRIDORS

Baltimore’s bus system serves the majority of Baltimore’s transit riders, but the average speed of a Baltimore bus is only 11.5 mph. Besides being slow, system reliability can be as low as 72%, meaning 1 in every 4 buses is more than 1 minute early or late. We must improve these numbers to make transit a quick, reliable option for our residents.

A corridor strategy maximizes the impact of each dollar invested in public transit. For instance, the MTA’s 10 most high ridership bus routes already serve 108,000 daily riders, which is nearly half of the ridership across MTA’s 57 routes. That means an investment in only 18% of MTA’s routes can benefit 50% of MTA’s riders, providing a fantastic return on investment. If Baltimore creates Priority Transit Corridors with high ridership, these high return investments can be the norm for our public dollars. Stretching our dollars further, in turn, makes it much easier to improve the speed and reliability of our transit options.

By utilizing Intelligent Transportation Systems infrastructure, along with careful planning and community input, Baltimore’s corridors can be designed to maximize transit speed, reliability, system access, and system productivity. In high-ridership corridors, transit vehicles must be given signal priority and dedicated lanes when possible. Doing so increases speed and reliability, and dedicated lanes can be built for as low as \$3 million per mile. The MTA is already planning to install Traffic Signal Priority (TSP) equipment at 200 intersections in the City, and Baltimore can scale the impact of the new equipment by putting TSP equipment in additional intersections then integrating it into MTA’s signal framework.

Improvements like these make the transit system more effective for everyday riders, but also create a more attractive product for “choice” riders who have other transit options available

to them, but can be persuaded to increase their transit use. Their choice may be driven by increased transit speeds and lower travel times, but perhaps the most important improvement is buses that run predictably and on schedule, eliminating the stress that comes with an unreliable commute. The valuable data collected through ITS systems also allows the City to make more informed, impactful transit decisions, especially for future capital projects.

PILOT BUS RAPID TRANSIT ON EAST-WEST CORRIDORS

It has been almost 18 years since Baltimore expanded its regional rapid transit system. The loss of the Red Line may make further gains feel equally distant. Nick Mosby believes that Baltimore must take its transit future into its own hands though. That means taking proactive steps to make Baltimore competitive in the 21st century, and doing so with the support of a broad coalition of stakeholders. A bus rapid transit pilot in high-ridership, job dense corridors is a crucial step that Baltimore can take today, while laying the groundwork for the future investment that the City and region deserve.

With the MTA proposing to eliminate the existing QuickBus service as part of its Baltimore-Link plan, there is more reason now than ever for the City to use available resources to fill this newly created service gap. Rapid bus service in a priority transit corridor could cut commute times by as much as 25% over CityLink.

RESPONSIBLE FUNDING FOR AN EXPANDED CHARM CITY CIRCULATOR

Baltimore's Charm City Circulator came about after the failure of the downtown DASH shuttle system. It utilized a unique funding scheme that asked parking providers to pay for service that enabled higher usage of their parking facilities under a "park once" philosophy for downtown access. Today, the Circulator is in danger of becoming a victim of its own success.

While service has expanded, no dedicated funding mechanism has been tabbed to pay the difference between the Circulator's expanded service and its limited funding. As such, the City has been using money from its general fund to float the Circulator's operations. In the midst of this financial uncertainty, many neighborhoods are left to question why free transit service is not being provided in their communities.

Nick Mosby will rethink the Circulator in order to create a fiscally sustainable service that serves thriving downtown and waterfront neighborhoods, but also Baltimore's traditionally disinvested neighborhoods. An important funding stream should come from the MTA's "BaltimoreLink" bus reboot — the program promises additional funding for the Circulator. By providing higher-frequency service to the Circulator's high ridership corridors, the City could serve existing populations while relocating low ridership lines to new communities with higher potential ridership, improving the ratio of dollars spent to citizens served.

Nick Mosby knows that leading on the Circulator means bringing stakeholders together to form a plan that is fiscally-sustainable, as well as fair and equitable. That means asking institutional partners and employers to chip in, and considering a full array of progressive value capture mechanisms that do not tie up more money from the general fund.

COMPLETE STREETS AND TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Complete Streets is an approach to urban design that allows for walking, cycling, public transportation, and automobile traffic to all seamlessly and simultaneously take place on the City's corridors. The key is proper infrastructure investments, be it wider sidewalks, raised crosswalks, angled parking, bus shelters, planted medians and sidewalk barriers, protected bike lanes, edged car lanes, or curb extensions to name a few. These infrastructure improvements mean that pedestrians who are walking or cycling do not have to worry about their safety, because they are protected from the flow of traffic. Traffic benefits, because drivers do not have the constant fear that errant walkers or cyclists will enter the flow of traffic. Transit usage is encouraged, because expanded bus shelters with improved amenities like electronic charging stations make for a better passenger experience.

Transit-oriented development (TOD) can and should go hand in hand with complete streets. TOD focuses on mixed-use development that combines residential and commercial spaces, which has been proven to ease access to public transportation. The transit stop serves as the central hub of the TOD development area, with commercial and residential spaces radiating around it.

Nick Mosby will develop a transit oriented development plan for the City, so that we can work proactively with private developers to guide investment to new transit hubs. Those areas will thrive if complete streets infrastructure is put in place so that the communities are more walkable, livable environments for potential residents, leading to increased foot traffic for local businesses. This is yet another example of how transportation connects to other improvements like a strong housing market or economic growth, but also highlights the extent to which there are connected layers of impact within transportation itself. That is why Nick Mosby's comprehensive vision for the City is uniquely positioned to connect these dots, and carry Baltimore into the 21st century.

BRINGING BIKE SHARE TO BALTIMORE

In 1818, a Baltimore piano maker made the first modern bike in the United States (a German-designed "velocipede") but today, competitor cities are leaving Baltimore behind on the biking front. Baltimore's compact design makes it a perfect candidate to be a true bike city. This opportunity is especially important, as we know that bikes provide the connective tissue between other parts of the transportation network.

In Baltimore, bike share has become a symbol for the failure of city government to act effectively on even low-hanging fruit that would have a huge impact on the quality of the transportation system. Deploying bike share does not have to be difficult or time consuming. Bikeshare.com lists almost 50 U.S. cities with an active bike share program.

With Mayor Mosby, Baltimore will become a bike city with a robust bike share program that connects neighborhoods, transit hubs, and activity centers, while providing first-mile/last-mile access between transit hubs and nearby destinations. In Baltimore, bikes will become part of the backbone of our transportation system, as a low-cost, healthy option that maximizes equitable access.

PROTECTED BIKE LANES

Bike share and bike facilities are only as good as the infrastructure that connects them. Safety is, after all, the most important transportation priority for any mode of travel. Protected bike lanes make the streets safer for everyone, cutting injuries to bicyclists by 75%, and injuries to all street users by 56%. The extent to which bike infrastructure makes traffic more predictable for drivers cannot be understated. After Chicago installed bike-specific signals at stoplights, for example, light compliance for bikers rose from 31% to 81%. Less crashes also means quicker transit times for bikers and drivers alike.

Bike infrastructure is also one of the most impactful and cost-effective strategies for creating livable streets where pedestrians, bikes, transit, and cars coexist successfully. Protected lanes attract many more bikers, increasing ridership by as much as 86%. They also benefit commercial spaces by improving “foot” traffic in the area: After a protected bike lane was added to New York City’s Union Square, vacant commercial spaces fell by 49%, relative to a 5% increase in vacant commercial spaces throughout Manhattan. New York City also saw a nearly 50% rise in local commercial sales along a new protected bike lane on 9th Avenue, relative to an only 3% rise throughout the borough.

Protected bike lanes can deliver these benefits, all while ensuring bikes serve as a true alternative to cars, which alleviates congestion by taking cars off the road. Nick Mosby believes these low-cost high-return investments are a vital part of Baltimore’s future.

ROLLING BACK PARKING MINIMUMS

It may seem like more parking is always better, and that the best price for parking is “free.” History tells a different story though. In urban areas, providing more parking than there is a demand for, or failing to price parking properly, costs city taxpayers much more than they bargained for.

Parking requirements drive up rental costs, plain and simple. Studies show that as much as \$200 of monthly rental costs per rental unit can be attributed solely to the expenses a developer incurs to provide parking. That means that parking alone is a major hurdle to providing affordable housing, especially in dense development areas. Imposing minimum parking requirements for affordable housing at such a high cost to the resident is especially frustrating when many residents in the target population do not own a car. Eliminating parking requirements allows developers to build projects that make sense, and to do so at controlled costs. It also allows the private market to create solutions for parking demands that do exist.

Parking requirements dramatically dilute the tax productivity of City properties as well. When property tax values are assessed, a parking lot adds almost no assessable value. For a typical parking lot in the heart of downtown Baltimore, the improvement value of a surface lot is roughly \$1.80 per square foot. Compare this to \$227 per square foot for even a modest 5-story building. At those assessable improvement values per square foot, the 5-story building would generate \$5.10 per square foot in property tax each year for the City, as compared to 4 cents per square foot each year from the parking lot. Such disparities make it clear that minimum parking requirements undercut the City’s attempts to reduce property tax rates, by greatly weakening the City’s revenue from our most valuable real estate.

Parking and transportation have an inverse relationship: providing more parking nearly always incentivizes the single-driver car trips that strain transportation systems and lead to unsafe, congested commutes. Reducing parking spaces and pricing them relative to a market demand incentivizes higher use of walking, bikes, transit, or car-pooling.

Many cities are reducing parking minimums, or eliminating them altogether. Baltimore cannot be left behind as development models shift in the 21st Century. Strong Towns has documented 70 U.S. cities that are eliminating parking requirements in some form, and that number will only continue to rise. Nashville, for example, recently restructured its zoning code to contain no minimum parking requirements whatsoever within city limits.

Nick Mosby knows that in high density, urban environments, transit, bikes, and pedestrian travel become even more important to the transportation system. The additional income made available to the City by removing harmful parking requirements is a natural source of income for the City that can also fund investments in transit, bikes, and pedestrian infrastructure. It also drives down the cost to build and rent City properties. All of this is possible without costing the City a single dollar.

BRANDED, SEAMLESS TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Baltimore can ease the difficulty of transit usage by creating consolidated payment methods for City controlled services like bike share, the Circulator, and water taxi, while working with the MTA to add its services to the City's single card or online app as well. A consolidated card would allow seamless movement between all available modes of public transportation, mimicking the convenience of a car.

It is also important that we coordinate with the MTA to expand locations where its Charm Card is available, while working with the MTA to study electronic fare payment for buses. Electronic fare payment will help reduce boarding time. Reduced boarding time means increased speed, which creates increased reliability.

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