



Seize the Time! Complete the Red Line Light Rail Project!

Since 1992, Baltimore has seen its share of transportation plans. However, only one, the Red Line light rail plan, has been fully approved, fully funded, and has received the coveted Record of Decision (ROD). The Red Line Final Environmental Impact Study (FEIS) is a catalogue of multiple studies and findings that have been independently verified and certified by federal transportation agencies.

The ROD is the signal that all qualifying hurdles at each level of government recorded in the FEIS have been surmounted and the sponsoring state is eligible to begin construction on the project.

During the transit-fallow, eight years of the Hogan administration, BTEC learned to distinguish between earnest efforts to improve Baltimore's underperforming public transportation system and those efforts that have not been independently vetted and are without credible claims.

Recently, a group of charlatans parading as transit advocates have revealed their "heavy-rail subway" alternative to the Red Line project that was cancelled and stolen by Governor Hogan in 2015. The heavy rail subway is purportedly an east-west transit system operating from CMS Woodlawn to Sparrows Point.

Review by experienced transportation advocates and BTEC, the subway project has been found to provide no credible technical details, no timeframe for build-out, no confirmed commute times, no ridership projections, no realistic long term funding strategy, and no set of cost estimates for capital equipment and construction based on industry standards.



With these weaknesses in the plan, why is it being announced now? BTEC and concerned transportation advocates can only speculate that the group seeks to disrupt the growing, solid support for the construction of the Red Line project by Governor Moore.

Based on the history of the group's members during the thirteen-year planning and approval process successfully navigated by the Red Line light rail project from 2002 to 2015, we do have reason to doubt the bona fides of the authors of the heavy rail subway scheme. Among their number are advocates for the "loot rail," and the "right rail," two failed concepts offered as alternatives to the Red Line.

Imitating former Governor Hogan's unverified "boondoggle" claim, the heavy rail subway group declares that the Red Line is a \$6.0 billion project in the same report that correctly cites the Red Line as a \$2.9 billion project including tunneling. The scheme is rife with misinformation and misleading claims.

On June 15th, an anticipated announcement by Governor Moore prompts BTEC and our allies to urge him to affirm that he and his administration will pursue the most cost- and time effective path to completion of the Red Line project. That path includes re-evaluation of the Red Line Final Environmental Impact Study (FEIS) in collaboration with the USDOT in two years or less according to the Federal Transit Administration.

Where the re-evaluation of the Red Line FEIS indicates that certain changes have occurred in the project's alignment or environmental conditions, those changes can be addressed leaving the project eligible for approval and access to federal and state funds to begin construction.



No other transportation project, east-west transit scheme, or unvetted “pop-up” subway concept can claim as can the Red Line that it has been fully approved, fully funded, and recipient of the ROD and a \$900 million federal grant.

That time-consuming success by the Red Line planners, engineers, and community activists, demands exploration of the current readiness of the project to be completed. Favorable disposition of any changes occurring in the FEIS over the past eight-years commands the Governor to step into a generational improvement of public transit capacity and a bold Moore-Miller vision for transit equity and economic transformation of the Baltimore region.

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