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Maryland
Transportation
Authority

**BALTIMORE
PENINSULA**

Reconnecting **South Baltimore:** *Narrative*

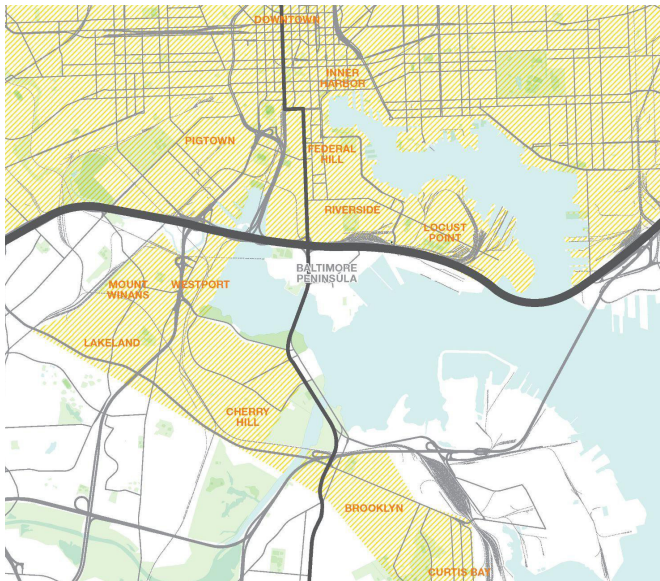
RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES PILOT



I. OVERVIEW

The Maryland Transportation Authority (“MDTA”) is seeking a \$2M federal planning grant through the federal Department of Transportation Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Program for the “Reconnecting South Baltimore” project. The requested grant will fund the planning costs associated with the required federal environmental analysis of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), community outreach and engagement, and plan design for critical infrastructure improvements to Reconnect South Baltimore to the central business district.

The needed infrastructure improvements are additional on and off ramps to Interstate 95 and bicycle and pedestrian connections to the surrounding neighborhoods, which will enable the further development of a new neighborhood called Baltimore Peninsula, a public-private partnership (PPP) that is the linchpin for reconnecting South Baltimore to the rest of the City. With these improvements, South Baltimore will be safely reknitted back to the rest of the City and equitable accessibility for all will be achieved.



I-95 bisects the City of Baltimore. The six neighborhoods directly South of Baltimore Peninsula – Cherry Hill, Brooklyn, Curtis Bay, Mt. Winans, Lakeland, and Westport – have been significantly economically and physically impacted by the location of I-95, which creates a literal barrier for its roughly 30,000 residents from the economic

engine of the City. Due to the I-95 facility, as well as an existing freight rail line, there are currently no safe ways for workers and residents to bike, scoot, or walk from the neighborhoods South of I-95 to the City center. Highway commuters that want to access shopping, residences, and work at Baltimore Peninsula or any of the neighborhoods to its South must weave through a maze of unsafe turns that run underneath a dark and unsightly elevated highway.

Interstate 95 was one of the networks of highways and roads that were brought through South Baltimore in the 1960-70’s to support the Port of Baltimore and to revitalize and bring investment downtown. Although much economic benefit ensued for the City as a whole, the interstate network sliced through the Locust Point area and fundamentally reshaped neighborhoods, losing vital connections to other communities, jobs, and services. The subject project area has fallen victim to the burden of this Interstate facility and the scope of this project is to mitigate the burden caused by the decision to construct the facility dividing South Baltimore neighborhoods from opportunity.

Directly adjacent to the six communities disconnected from the remainder of the City, some 235 acres of industrial land sat vacant, further adding to the urban blight South and East of the highway. Redevelopment of this site, the former Port Covington, is now underway and a vibrant neighborhood is rising called Baltimore Peninsula. This new neighborhood, Baltimore Peninsula, a 235-acre mixed-use purpose-driven development and its projected 25,000 jobs and \$5.4 billion in economic activity, can only happen with safer ramp, pedestrian and bike improvements. The initial Environmental Impact Statement for the 14M SF full build of Baltimore Peninsula requires specific transportation improvements to I-95 and surrounds. With this grant we can unlock economic opportunity through additional development at Baltimore Peninsula.

- Baltimore Peninsula is a Public- Private Partnership (PPP) led by a WBE, MAG Partners LP, in partnership with Sagamore Ventures and Goldman Sachs Urban Investment Group (“Private Partner”);
- \$450 million of private money invested to date, with 1.2M square feet of mixed-use development completed;

- Baltimore City's investment, in the form of Tax Increment Financing (TIF), will total \$660M at full build-out. The first TIF tranche totaling \$137,485M allowed for ~1.4 miles of new streets to support 15 blocks of vertical development, ~6.1 miles of utility systems, 125 micro bioretention stormwater treatment facilities, 285 street trees, 226 streetlights, and 4 new signalized intersections;
- The City sponsored TIF has created the first phase of the new neighborhood; now we need to tie the neighborhood back into the remainder of the City; this requires Federal Funding and will allow for the neighborhood to be equitably accessible for all; and
- The proposed project will create a more sustainable way to access the new neighborhood.

The Baltimore Peninsula neighborhood at full build out is expected to generate thousands of new jobs and \$250M in State and local taxes, annually. Traffic studies undertaken by the private partner, have shown that for Baltimore Peninsula to achieve full density, critical transportation improvements are required. The neighborhood, and the accompanying economic impact cannot exist without the help of the federal government for these critical infrastructure improvements.

The subject site, approximately seven-mile section of I-95, carries roughly 46 million vehicles annually, serving as a vital part of the artery that serves the Eastern seaboard. Unfortunately, over the decades, the highway has also served as a physical and economic barrier disconnecting South Baltimore from the heart of the City and its economic engine, making it challenging for its residents to access services and jobs. The proposed project will mitigate the barrier by amending the connection points. This is a critical need for the impacted communities disconnected from the City. The proposed improvements will address major existing safety concerns, create economic opportunity, and catalyze community revitalization, along with 40 acres of open space and waterfront access. Funding awarded through the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program will allow for the project to advance from the planning phase to design and construction.



The I-95 improvements, undertaken by the State of Maryland, will enable the development of Baltimore Peninsula to move forward, while aligning with other improvements to be undertaken separately by the City and local community groups to create a multi-modal transportation network in South Baltimore. In addition, the proposed improvements will expand the reach of the improvements to be undertaken by the City of Baltimore pursuant to a 2024 \$15.5 million RAISE Grant for the adjacent Route 2 (Hanover Street Bridge) Corridor. Taken together, the projects would reconnect South Baltimore, which consists predominantly of historically disinvested Black neighborhoods, back to the rest of the city, finally mitigating the bifurcation of the City caused by the construction of I-95 some fifty years ago.

When the public private partnership for Baltimore Peninsula was created in 2016, the Private Partner agreed to fund a historic Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) providing over \$135MM in direct cash benefits to the Community and the six communities surrounding Baltimore Peninsula. The 2020 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the private developer and the City of Baltimore creates the framework for a 30 year partnership. Pursuant to the MOU, the Private Partner brought together Baltimore Peninsula with the six communities to create the South Baltimore Seven Coalition (SB7). This

coalition serves as a community oversight board for this portion of South Baltimore. This PPP would leverage as much as a billion dollars in private investment and a \$135M Community Benefits Agreement including 20% of Baltimore Peninsula's residential units to be affordable.

Moreover, realistically, the development will uplift all of South Baltimore with the historic Community Benefits Agreement and its impactful commitments to the surrounding community, thus continuing to empower its residents, an underserved, predominantly Black community with enormous potential for economic development. However, because of its virtual adjacency to I-95, in order for the Baltimore Peninsula project to proceed, these key transportation improvements are vital; simply put, **the new neighborhood and associated ~\$135M in additional benefits cannot exist without the transportation improvements.**

A portion of this planning grant will be allocated to a robust and inclusive public engagement process so that the overall vision and goals of a comprehensive, improved transit network are aligned. Outreach will be closely coordinated with community, business, and advocacy stakeholders. The planning grant provides an opportunity to undertake a unified stakeholder effort to create a coherent vision across different stakeholder groups and planning agencies in order to create a multi-modal mobility corridor for South Baltimore. The SB7 Coalition, the key community advisory board, will be a leading stakeholder in this important initiative and effort. **Complementary efforts currently underway in South Baltimore include:**

- City of Baltimore complete streets program;
- South Baltimore Gateway Partnership's Reimagine Middle Branch Master Plan, an 11-mile waterfront restoration project¹;
- City and State efforts to improve the Route 2 Corridor. City was just awarded a \$15.5M RAISE grant for planning efforts along Route 2 Corridor; and
- City of Baltimore DOT and Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) coordination for additional bus service routes throughout surrounding community.

On the public side, Baltimore City has agreed to \$660 million of Tax Increment Financing to enable

Reconnecting South Baltimore will meet the RCN Program's objectives in the following ways:

1. Mitigate and repair the divide through Baltimore created by the existence of I-95;
2. Create a safer multimodal transportation network for South Baltimore;
3. Ensure community centered transportation improvements are coordinated with key local stakeholders; and
4. Provide access to jobs, healthcare, food, nature, and recreation for Baltimore City residents, fostering equitable development and ecological restoration.

By jumpstarting Reconnecting South Baltimore with RCN funds, the project will:

- Leverage ~\$523M of additional local spending;
- Leverage hundreds of millions of dollars of private investment;
- Jumpstart the creation of a multi-modal transportation network in South Baltimore;
- Create a grand, new welcoming entrance to Baltimore from I-95;
- Create bicycle and pedestrian connection under I-95 to encourage safe crossing and accessible connectivity between essential destinations for all users;
- Start the physical planning process needed to begin to knit South Baltimore back to the rest of the City and draw six Baltimore communities back into the economic engine of Baltimore.
- Provide the ability to create the new neighborhood, Baltimore Peninsula, which will trigger milestone payments and other means of support to the surrounding communities by way of the historic and immensely impactful Community Benefits Agreement

the construction of on-site public infrastructure. We are seeking Federal assistance to complete the work of connecting this new neighborhood to the disadvantaged six adjacent communities back into the City. None of the other investment - the billion dollars in private money, the \$660 million TIF, the \$135 million CBA - can happen without the federal government assisting with the funding for improvements to I-95. We are prepared to begin to reverse fifty years of disinvestment in South Baltimore's disadvantaged communities. We need your help.

II. LOCATION & MAP

The subject site and proposed study area of the NEPA analysis is the approximately seven miles of I-95 corridor in the area generally bounded by Caton Avenue to the West and the Fort McHenry Tunnel to the East, Hanover Street, McComas Street, and Key Highway. The Baltimore Peninsula Development area is



generally bounded to the North and South by the public rights of way (ROW) comprising Hanover Street (MD Route 2), the Hanover Street Ramp, McComas Street between the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River and Key Highway, and the area over the CSX railyard in this same area. The subject site is in South Baltimore, bisecting Federal Hill, Riverside, and Locust Point from Cherry Hill, Brooklyn, Westport, Mt. Winans, Curtis Bay, and Lakeland. Settled in the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River,

Baltimore Peninsula is surrounded by 2.5 miles of waterfront to the South and I-95 to the North.

III. MERIT CRITERIA

Merit Criteria #1: Equity and Justice40 Initiative

Across the neighborhoods of South Baltimore, existing transportation infrastructure profoundly divides neighborhoods from one another and from the region at large, as well as from their scenic waterfront bursting with opportunities. That includes highways and rail, all of which were intentionally sent through South Baltimore. I-95 is the most visible example of this larger historic trend and I-95 is the existing facility preventing Baltimore Peninsula from reaching its potential and therefore distributing the critical community benefits promised as part of the rise of the new neighborhood.

While not all neighborhoods affected by the construction of I-95 were historically African American, it is worth noting the lack of consideration for African American communities affected by this major infrastructure decision. For example, the case of Sharp Leadenhall, a historically Black and Quaker neighborhood, became “a pawn relative to the more influential White neighborhoods” as a portion of this neighborhood was condemned to allow for the I-395 modification². The 1967 Highway Condemnation Ordinance worsened the condition of the community, forcing much of the neighborhood to be relocated for the highway alignment⁴. There are many such examples of how the highway network was the catalyst for public and private disinvestment in South Baltimore.

Although much of Baltimore's waterfront has been the subject of urban revitalization, the South Bal-

timore waterfront continues to be inaccessible and largely ignored as a resource for the local communities and for the City as a whole. It is time to correct the mistakes of the past, to right the wrongs that have come from infrastructure bisecting and disconnecting neighborhoods in South Baltimore. Communities cannot rely solely on developers to bridge wealth gaps caused by systemic inequities. Developers often are forced to prioritize profitability and market demands, unintentionally neglecting marginalized communities and worsening wealth disparities. To effectively address these issues, these types of initiatives are needed that support local small businesses. Collaboration among governments, developers, community organizations, and residents is crucial to ensure that development projects benefit everyone and contribute positively to equitable economic growth. This collective effort is essential for creating inclusive and sustainable communities.

The socioeconomic disparities are starkly apparent from communities North of the interstate to those communities to the South. The highway has served as an economic barrier disconnecting South Baltimore from the heart of the City and its economic engine. According to the USDOT Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer in 2023, 65.71% of population of the six communities directly to the South of I-95 are at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty line; this is a 47.31% increase in comparison to the neighborhoods directly to the North of I-95³. The median household income is \$24,877/year, which is \$73,248 less than to that of its neighbors to the North⁴.

Long-term, lasting benefits of the PPP commitments:

- Twenty percent (20%) of Baltimore Peninsula's residential units will be affordable housing at 80% Area Median Income (AMI), 50% AMI, and 30% AMI. Affordable units will have the same finishes as the market-rate units, distributed evenly throughout the buildings.
- \$25MM over a 15 year period for workforce development initiatives, including the development, construction, and operation of a Workforce Development Training Center and apprentice programs (Reference MOU)

Through the planned multi-modal connections and the historic Community Benefits Agreement executed by the Baltimore Peninsula developer, this project addresses Equity and Justice40 (EJ) in many ways, not limited to, but inclusive of the following: improved access to and from I-95 opens up opportunities for the surrounding communities, improved bike and pedestrian network under and across I-95 creates safer connections and equitable transportation, and the historic Community Benefits Agreement with above and beyond commitments to at least 20% affordable housing neighborhood-wide, at least 51% of new hires to be Baltimore City residents, and a minimum of 27% minority-owner businesses to be utilized for project infrastructure. Local hiring participation on the current build out of the project to date, included over \$134 million in contracts awarded to Baltimore City MBE/WBE; this is just the beginning. The planned transportation improvements allow for the significant commitment made by the PPP to be

delivered and thus positively impact Baltimore City and the surrounding region.

The transportation system planned along with the Baltimore Peninsula project supports equity and EJ through multi-modal connections. The neighborhoods directly adjacent to the South and West of the subject project are within EJ40. By implementing the proposed access improvements to lessen the burden and mitigate the negative impact of the existing I-95 and freight rail infrastructure, a gateway is created bringing South Baltimore back into the economic engine of the City. Receiving the planning grant will serve as the kick start to moving forward with the proposed project which will ultimately increase accessibility and create safe bike and pedestrian connections directly impacting the surrounding communities, which are located within EJ40; these communities will directly inherit the benefits of this project.

Merit Criteria #2: Access

Due to the site's proximity to I-95, any adjacent development must always be cognizant of the impacts on this major artery. The NEPA and associated studies will focus heavily on creating North- South acces-

sibility for pedestrians, bicyclists and future mass transit improvements. Currently, in addition to I-95, the North-South divide is exacerbated by the presence of freight rail tracks, effectively blocking access to Baltimore Peninsula by all but the most intrepid motor vehicles. Our plan would convert highway underpasses into welcoming, safe, and attractive bike and pedestrian paths connecting with other, similar regional efforts. By doing so, the project will improve mobility and access restoring community connectivity through the additional access points from North to South. This will ultimately improve transportation connections for all vulnerable users.

Without these improvements and the Federal dollars needed to implement them, Baltimore Peninsula could only be a small island of private development without any connectivity to the region; with the planned improvements, Baltimore Peninsula would be part of a larger network of connective tissue bringing South Baltimore back in conversation with the rest of the City.

By creating the improved access to I-95, Baltimore Peninsula is able to be built out to its capacity allowing for the neighborhood to deliver on the commitments to the City. Additionally, by creating the bike and pedestrian connections from the North under I-95 and above the existing freight rail tracks, the existing access barriers will be reduced, directly benefiting the disparaged neighborhoods to the South. Major progress will require major investment to study and implement affordable and accessible transportation throughout South Baltimore. The PP will work with City DOT for additional bus routes (notably Baltimore City Circulator's newest 'Cherry' route), as well as collaborate with the Reimagine Middle Branch Plan to ensure alignment and connectivity for equitable access to all. Tying into the Reimagine Middle Branch Master Plan will provide continuous access throughout the South Baltimore neighborhoods to the South.

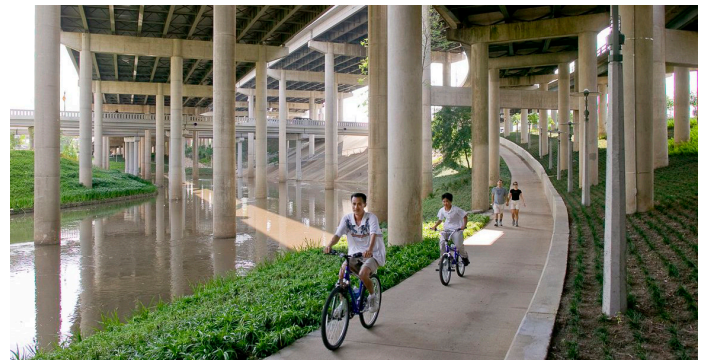
The I-95 improvements, undertaken by the State of Maryland, will align with other efforts by the City and local community groups to create a multi-modal transportation network in South Baltimore and to begin to redress the economic and environmental challenges posed by the I-95 divide in Baltimore. To make South Baltimore truly accessible and to resolve the user vulnerability, which is the unsafe lack of connectivity, plans must take into account more than just cars. A major focus of our efforts will be safe bicycle and pedestrian access on North-South axis to Baltimore Peninsula, creating safe and attractive passages under the interstate. According to Baltimore City DOT, there are 359 vulnerable road users on a daily basis utilizing bike and pedestrian trips in this area⁵. We will also work with City DOT and MTA for additional bus routes, water taxi services, and include future light rail connections in our planning efforts.

Along with City and stakeholder plans for redesigned road networks and complete streets, there are increased possibilities for additional public transit, a key element critical to this area. By providing convenient, accessible systems and opportunities, we will create sorely needed connectivity for all of South Baltimore.

Additionally, during the community engagement and collaboration phase of planning, Baltimore Peninsula's 2.5 miles of waterfront will be studied and evaluated for meaningful experiences and access to the natural ecosystem. During the planning phase, we plan to collaborate with local community organizations



Reimagine Middle Branch



Precedent Image: Sabine Promenade, Houston

such as the SB7 Coalition, as well as the South Baltimore Gateway Partnership and their Reimagine Middle Branch Master Planning team to ensure consistency with their goals.

With a huge emphasis on connection with ecology in fundamental, surprising, and joyful ways, the activation and implementation of planning efforts will focus on public access to green spaces and the natural shoreline. People feel better when they are connected to nature; creating enjoyable and readily accessible ways to experience nature is an important aspect of this project. Whether it is through art, building architecture, or environmental design, the new neighborhood Baltimore Peninsula will immerse residents and visitors with the natural world by celebrating the “Middle Branch” of the Patapsco River, as well as the 40+ acres of public green space planned for the neighborhood.

Newly constructed and improved access points will facilitate connections within and to South Baltimore. The mission for the Baltimore Peninsula PPP is to create a vibrant, energetic, progressive approach to urban development for all to work, live, and play to move freely to and within the site with or without a car.

Merit Criteria #3: Facility Suitability

The divide created by I-95 has separated and cut neighborhoods in South Baltimore from the vibrancy and economic opportunity of Baltimore as a whole. This divide has tremendous social, economic, and environmental impacts and user vulnerabilities that must be corrected.

Historic disinvestment in South Baltimore is an ongoing issue, particularly in the area of transportation. The average household in the neighborhoods South of I-95 spends 37.49% of their income on transportation in comparison to neighborhoods to the North which spend 9.46% of their income on transportation⁶. This historic divide is critically affecting the ability for neighborhoods South of I-95 to access jobs, groceries, recreational amenities, and much more. The requested planning grant will focus on creating a regional, multimodal transportation system reknitting connections to the entire City and providing equitable access and transportation opportunities to resolve the existing condition.

Currently, secure and protected at grade crossings under I-95 do not exist. The burdening facility's existing condition create unsafe crossings for pedestrians and cyclists as they are surrounded by the heavily trafficked Hanover Street (MD Route 2) and busy McComas Street. These heavily trafficked streets are not designed to support vulnerable users. As a result, compared to adjacent communities to the North, the neighborhoods to the South suffer from disconnected and poorly served transportation options with very limited access to public transportation and no safe multimodal transportation options. Complete street design, which will be

addressed during the planning stages, will complement I-95 access improvements. The emphasis on alternative transportation options will lower traffic volumes on the roadway to create safer conditions while improved traffic patterns will increase the safety for drivers.

These multimodal transportation improvements, which will largely be implemented by our local public and private partners are an important part of this planning grant. The City and State will need to identify funding for initiatives such as the Route 2 corridor and the Hanover Street Bridge. Fortunately, Baltimore City was recently awarded \$15.5M through the RAISE grant program to study improvements to the Route 2 corridor. The Reimagine Middle branch vision will be implemented, in part, using funding from a portion of Local Impact Grants generated by video lottery terminals.

Baltimore Peninsula will be a thriving community for individuals to work, live, and play, creating transportation opportunities open for everyone to move freely with or without a car with easy access to natural areas. The 2.5 miles of waterfront will have a pedestrian trail coordinated with the Reimagine Middle Branch Master Plan and ultimate City wide Greenway Network connection. This is a further example of how the improvements at Baltimore Peninsula will span the wider community and tie the surrounding areas in to the North with additional multimodal connectivity. The design of public space throughout the overall Baltimore Peninsula Master Plan vision encourages connectivity across the subject site and beyond to the surround-

ing neighborhoods. The planning grant will assist with community outreach and stakeholder involvement to ensure future plans are considered and there is collaboration and shared implementation among City Dot, Reimagine Middle Branch, and other local stakeholders with the ultimate goal of creating a coherent, thoughtful, safe, and cohesive multi-modal accessibility plan for South Baltimore.

Merit Criteria #4: Community Engagement and Community-Based Stewardship, Management, & Partnerships

When the public private partnership for Baltimore Peninsula was created in 2016, the Private Partner agreed to fund a historic Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) providing over \$135MM to the City and the six communities surrounding Baltimore Peninsula. Pursuant to the CBA, the Private Partner brought together Baltimore Peninsula with the six communities to create the South Baltimore Seven Coalition (SB7).

The way in which this agreement works, is fundamentally simple: as the community grows, the contributions grow. Specifically, the private partner committed to an annual payment of \$0.25 per square foot of commercial and retail property leased on an annual basis and to one-time payments of 10% of City transfer taxes on land sold. The commitment to impact for all of Baltimore is the top priority of the Baltimore Peninsula PPP.

Along with the financial commitments, the Private Partner commits to being an advocate for the Six Communities for City services, businesses, and cultural attractions, and in seeking funding from public and private entities. Additionally, the Private Partner provides technical assistance on a variety of housing and economic development issues and provides funding for revitalization of communities.

In addition to its financial commitments, the Private Partner has committed to joining in advocacy efforts for City services, businesses and cultural attractions, and seeking additional funding from public and private entities.

Additionally, the Private Partner provides technical assistance on a variety of housing, economic development and community revitalization issues. The Private Partner has committed to work with SB7 and South Baltimore Gateway Partnership SBGP to achieve the following goals:

- I. Coordinate planning efforts;
- II. Identify a broad swath of stakeholders; and
- III. Assume that plans developed for and analyzed by the NEPA process are aligned with the broader vision for the multi-modal transportation corridor in South Baltimore.

It is important to understand that the purpose of the public engagement under this grant funding opportunity will be to inform and learn. To this end, we will undertake public engagement as follows:

- Identify and interview stakeholders including community groups, local businesses, transportation advocates, local Private Partners, and, as appropriate, commercial and industrial users of the relevant portion of I-95;
- Inventory existing plans within a 5- mile radius of the proposed improvements;
- Identify any areas of dissonance;
- Scope and undertake traffic studies;
- Develop alternatives for I-95 access and associated improvements and demonstrate how these improvements will work as

The MOU memorializes commitments between the Private Party and the City, including:

\$21MM

Has been contributed to date

\$39MM

In funding over a 20 year period

\$10MM

In funding over a 20 year period to benefit other communities within the city

\$25MM

Over a 15 year period for workforce development initiatives, including the development, construction, and operation of a Workforce Development Training Center and apprentice programs (Reference MOU)

part of a multi-modal mobility corridor in South Baltimore;

- Share alternatives with and solicit input from stakeholders; and
- With MDTA, the City, and the Private Partner, develop and present preferred alternatives

We fully embrace the principle that I-95 access and the accompanying improvements that are the subject of this planning grant must be fully aligned with other State, local and private initiatives in South Baltimore. Everything we do will be guided by this principle. The Planning Grant, if awarded, will include a robust planning process with surrounding community Organizations, such as the SB7 Coalition.

Merit Criteria #5: Equitable Development

The foundation of what Baltimore Peninsula does and continues to strive for, is a commitment to an equitable community. We know that we must address longstanding inequities and foster economic empowerment for marginalized communities. Leveraging a funding source presents a unique opportunity to combat these inequities and create a more inclusive and prosperous urban environment in Baltimore. This type of funding can be strategically utilized to empower underrepresented people and reshape community narratives in Baltimore City.

Funding such as this is specifically designed to assist in closing the racial wealth gap that plagues Baltimore City through transportation split communities. Funding this project is not just funding a study, it is funding systemic grassroots change for better access to wealth.

Communities cannot rely solely on developers to bridge wealth gaps caused by systemic inequities. While developers play a crucial role in urban development and economic growth, their primary focus is often on profitability and market demands. This can lead to projects that prioritize high-end developments, which can see the unintended consequence of neglecting the needs of marginalized communities and exacerbating existing wealth disparities.

To address systemic inequities and bridge wealth gaps effectively, governments must implement comprehensive policies and initiatives. This includes supporting funding such as this request. Collaboration among governments, developers, community organizations, and residents is essential to ensure that development projects benefit everyone and contribute positively to equitable economic growth.

With the help of our public partners, the equitable long term benefits of this project would be substantial. The CBA “describes the manner in which the Communities will share in the economic, educational, cultural, environmental, and social benefits associated with the” project “and mitigate or ...any adverse direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the project on the Communities.” Long term equitable benefits include:

Housing

Twenty percent (20%) of Baltimore Peninsula’s residential units will be affordable housing at 80% Area Median Income (AMI), 50% AMI, or 30% AMI. Affordable units will have the same finishes as the market- rate units, distributed evenly throughout the buildings.

Employment

- The creation of ~ 25,000 permanent jobs
- Developer is committed to achieve the target that 30% of all on-site employees
- The Developer will provide \$25MM in addition to the founding for YouthWorks jobs over a 15 year period on workforce development initiatives including the development, construction, and operation of a workforce development training center focused on workforce education, job training, retention and recruitment for temporary and permanent positions created by the Project and as a resource for City-wide projects to meet Baltimore City established hiring goals.

Construction Generated Economic Activity

- 55,000 construction jobs,
- \$5.5 billion economic activity from construction, and
- \$9.4 billion construction related economic activity.

Economic Activity at Full Build-Out

- \$5.4 billion in economic activity
- \$250 million in annual State and Local revenues

Representing an almost unparalleled opportunity, the 235 acre former Port Covington site is virtually vacant land, and thus there is no direct displacement caused by the new neighborhood. Baltimore Peninsula is planned as a transformational development with the scale and ambition to lift Baltimore and create a model for urban redevelopment. A thriving business district will create jobs, supported by waterfront events and activities, new restaurants and social destinations that bring opportunity to Baltimore and strengthen the spirit of the City.

Already to date, \$134M in contracts awarded to Baltimore City certified W/MBE, 51% percent of newly hired employees are Baltimore City residents, and \$21M have been funded towards the CBA commitments. It has the power to become a vibrant mixed-income neighborhood with grocery and retail creating a lively ground floor pedestrian experience.

At full build out, the new neighborhood will offer ~40 acres of public green space and public right of way with the ultimate goal of connecting to the City wide greenspace. This will be achieved by tying into the Reimagine Middle Branch Master Plan. The Baltimore Peninsula neighborhood is part of an 11 mile regional shared use path with the master planning efforts being led by South Baltimore Gateway Partnership. As part of the Baltimore Greenway Trails Network, Baltimore Peninsula, once developed, will help in closing the existing critical gaps and reverse the urban fragmentation created by infrastructure divides. Alongside the mission of Rails to Trails, our project improvements will take former industrial coastlines and reconfigured roadways and transform from barriers in the built environment to community- based assets centered on trails generating a myriad of long-term impacts related to social equity, health, environmental conservation, active transportation, and economic development⁷.

Elijah's Park, one of the first public parks delivered within the Baltimore Peninsula neighborhood, will be a living memorial to iconic Baltimore native Congressman Elijah Cummings. Delivered in the Fall of 2023, a mosaic and mural were created by local artists paying tribute to Congressman Cummings.

Contributing to the pedestrian environment, local artist's work is prominently featured in unoccupied retail creating vibrant use of ground floor space. Baltimore Peninsula is currently an active



destination for programming, inviting the community to experience the formerly industrial waterfront in a new way. Information on activities and events can be found here: baltimorepeninsula.com.

With improved transportation connectivity, the doors of opportunity open for City residents. The neighborhoods and communities surrounding this newly created neighborhood will directly benefit the surrounding neighborhoods both economically and environmentally. Through joint efforts we are elevating Baltimore through a rising tide of impactful, inclusive, and equitable development.

Better physical access to opportunity not only drives economic activity, but also instills a sense of pride and ownership among community members. The inequities faced in Baltimore City are multifaceted, ranging from limited access to capital to systemic barriers in business development. This funding source can directly address these challenges by providing access to better transportation.

Merit Criteria #6.1: Climate Change Mitigation and/or Adaptation and Resilience

By creating safe connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists to access South Baltimore Communities through passages under I-95, vehicular trips

will decrease directly correlating to a positive impact on the environment and surrounding communities. The planned improvements will support sus-

tainable and resilient waterfront development process in Baltimore Peninsula. Tying into the Baltimore Greenway Network will create a more conveniently walkable neighborhood encouraging fewer and shorter vehicular trips.

At full buildout, the Baltimore Peninsula plan calls for roughly 1 million square feet of density to be allocated for energy gateway infrastructure. The Master Plan anticipates building a Northeast corridor clean energy hub. Due to the rare direct deep water access, abundant space to locate any and all kinds of green energy production (inclusive of wind, solar, geothermal, and steam production) the neighborhood's location allows for significant storage capacity with options that could include molten salt and sand, compressed air, hydrogen, and battery storage.

With 2.5 miles of living shoreline at Baltimore Peninsula, the Private Party will construct new wetlands and restore the natural shoreline to enhance the water quality, restore the local habitat, and provide additional measures to protect against outfalls of climate change and increased natural disasters. This initiative will be included in the planning portion of the grant. In addition:

- All buildings are designed to meet or exceed 2018 International Green Construction Code;
- Cleanup efforts include the Gwynns Falls Trash wheel and march and wetland management;
- Site buildings raise above 500- year flood plain;
- City approved storm water management (SWM) master plan will be implemented;
- Strategically ideal site for building a Northeast Corridor clean energy hub within the newly emerging urban oasis. The site is connected to the City's steam and electric grids and to the broader PJM Interconnection, a regional energy transmission organization that coordinates movement of wholesale electricity in 13 states and the District of Columbia;
- Additional sustainability measures include Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations, green roofs, cisterns, wastewater facility with aquifer;
- We are a low impact development with strategies including vegetative bioretention, LED lighting, recycling, floating wetlands, and more;
- Neighborhood will have cycle network with protected lanes and on-site storage; and
- 40 + acres of greenspace and all streets are treelined with native vegetation and tree canopy shading as much as possible.

The proposed Reconnecting South Baltimore Project will lower greenhouse gas emissions on impacted communities by mitigating the queuing of cars on I-95 with the improved access ramps, create the necessary infrastructure for separated pedestrian walkways, and designated bike and scooter lanes which will ultimately encourage and promote alternative modes of transportation outside of vehicular travel. These transportation mode shifts will allow for reduced impact on the environment and the surrounding impacted communities by reducing the greenhouse gas emissions from cars, oil leaking from vehicles and washing into the Patapsco River (a river that feeds directly into the Chesapeake Bay), improving air quality, and more. Our proposed project will promote alternative transit and other means for reducing traffic to and from Baltimore Peninsula. This infrastructure will reach further than Baltimore Peninsula itself, as it will connect directly into the Route 2 corridor (currently undergoing a \$15MM planning study for improvements) expanding the reach of these public/private improvements to create a fully coordinated and executable regional mobility plan.

Merit Criteria #6.2: Workforce Development & Economic Opportunity

Workforce

At full build out, the development of Baltimore Peninsula is projected to support or create 54,000 construction jobs and 25,000 permanent jobs throughout multiple industries. For the neighborhood's infrastructure, the Baltimore Peninsula Development Team will utilize a minimum of 27% minority owned businesses, 10% woman owned businesses, and 20% of apprentice work performed by workers with defined barriers to employment. To date, more than \$134M in contracts have been awarded to WBE/

MBE firms and similarly, as the neighborhood develops, this will increase. At least 51% of newly hired employees are Baltimore City residents and the local hiring commitments for contracts are 30% of onsite workers are Baltimore City residents.

Additionally, under the MOU between the Private Partner and the City, \$25M will be allocated towards workforce development (construction of a training center and local hiring coordinator). The Private Partner's commitment to delivering a workforce training center is closely aligned with the Biden-Harris Administration public-private investment strategy to train and connect American workers to jobs created by the President's Investing in America Agenda to "ensure a diverse and skilled workforce can meet the demand for labor driven by these investments⁸." Baltimore is one of the five focused Cities within the Investing in America Workforce Initiative; as such, we believe our application is a very strong candidate for this planning grant.

Economic Opportunity

The Baltimore Peninsula PPP commitment is demonstrated by the dozen or so businesses that occupy the 43,000 SF Impact Village. Since 2020, the mission of Impact Village is to empower local organizations and small businesses that are making an impact in Baltimore City. By providing complimentary office space, operational capacity is drastically increased by reducing overhead costs. Annual cost to the Private Partner is approximately \$250,000 annually.

A historic partnership between the Private Partner and Sweeten created a database for businesses to access Maryland registered WBE/MBE firms. This database is used to track previously utilized firms throughout construction of the new neighborhood, as well as identify WBE/MBE firms for future work. Additionally, \$15MM will be funded for City-Wide community and faith-based initiatives. \$2.5MM will be funded for scholarships at Baltimore City Public Schools and Community Schools.

Merit Criteria #6.3: Planning Integration

This is a planned, timely, and needed project for the region. The proposed project improvements are currently approved through the Maryland Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), "The I-95 Fort McHenry Tunnel: I-95 Access Study⁹" The MDTA and Baltimore City have developed a suit of improvements to I-95 ramps and other nearby transportation facilities to support ongoing and planned redeveloping of the peninsula in South Baltimore to address traffic needs in the area. The traffic study limits for these improvements are Caton Avenue to the Fort McHenry Tunnel, involving approximately seven miles of I-95 and sections of Hanover Street, McComas Street, and Key highway. The improvements will support local and regional economic development in Baltimore and the region. They will improve connectivity to existing land uses along the I-95 corridor and major local roads, specifically in coordination with the City's recently awarded RAISE grant for Route 2 Corridor improvements, the Baltimore Green Network, Reimagine Middle Branch Master plan, and additional initiatives with Baltimore City Department of Transportation. The improvements will increase access to planned developed that is envisions for the peninsula, thereby increasing connectivity to planned residential development, businesses, waterways, parks, and new transit facilities on improved street grids.

The I-95 improvements, undertaken by the State of Maryland, will enable the development of Baltimore Peninsula to move forward, while aligning with other improvements to be undertaken separately by the City and local community groups to create a multi-modal transportation network in South Baltimore. In addition, the proposed improvements will expand the reach of the improvements to be undertaken by the City of Baltimore pursuant to a 2024 \$15.5 million RAISE Grant for the adjacent Route 2 (Hanover Street Bridge) Corridor. Taken together, the projects would reconnect South Baltimore, which consists predominantly of historically disinvested Black neighborhoods, back to the rest of the city, finally mitigating the bifurcation of the City caused by the construction of I-95 some fifty years ago.

Enclosed please find our letter of support from the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board "BRTB" endorsing this application.

ENDNOTES

¹ [“Reimagine Middle Branch” Executive Summary](#)

² Paull, “Stop the Road,” 252.

³ “ETC Explorer” ETC Explorer | [US Department of Transportation](#)

⁴ “ETC Explorer” ETC Explorer | [US Department of Transportation](#)

⁵ Counter Program | [Streets of Baltimore](#)

⁶ “ETC Explorer” ETC Explorer | [US Department of Transportation](#)

⁷ Rails to Trails: Baltimore Greenway Trails Network - Rails to Trails Conservancy | [Rails to Trails Conservancy](#)

⁸ “Biden-Harris Administration Announcement” | <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/state-ments-releases/2023/05/16/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-announces-strategies-to-train-and-connect-american-workers-to-jobs-created-by-the-presidents-investing-in-america-agenda/>

⁹ 25-28 TIP Maryland Transportation Authority (baltometro.org)

References:

Paull, E. Evans. 2022. “Stop the Road: Stories from the Trenches of Baltimore’s Road Wars” edited by Boyle & Dalton. United States of America