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Council Connections

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Tri County Council
For Western Maryland

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August 12-15, 2015
[MACo Summer Conference](#)
Ocean City, MD



**APPALACHIAN
REGIONAL
COMMISSION**

Cumberland Economic Feasibility Analysis and Implementation Plan for Strategic Opportunity Areas

The [Appalachian Regional Commission](#) announced approval of a \$30,000 grant to the [City of Cumberland](#) for the Cumberland Economic Feasibility Analysis and Implementation Plan for Strategic Opportunity Areas project. The project will identify critical next steps for how the City and stakeholders should proceed with the redevelopment of four (4) of the City's strategic opportunity sites. The project focuses on evaluating the feasibility of the redevelopment of 4 of the seven (7) opportunity sites identified in the recent (2014) City of Cumberland Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP).

The 4 sites proposed for further evaluation include: Downtown/Baltimore Street, Cumberland Plaza, Rolling Mill Corridor, and Willowbrook. The project would include retail opportunity analysis, impediments to private investment (with focus on impediments to upper-story redevelopment), site redevelopment design and catalyst projects with which to move forward. The project will also take into consideration a cost benefit analysis on the economic feasibility of completing such redevelopment of the opportunity sites. The implementation plan for each opportunity site will address visions, objectives, and goals and will identify actionable items and strategies to be implemented including a specific catalyst project for

each opportunity site.

The City of Cumberland has experienced several decades of economic decline; however, local and regional leaders believe the Cumberland area is well-positioned for economic growth. An EDSP has been completed and its implementation will play an integral role in guiding the city and surrounding region to better retain existing businesses, attract new industry and increase the well-being for the residents of the region. In addition to ARC funds, local sources will provide \$35,000, bringing the total project funding to \$65,000.



MTA Leads Coordinated Transportation Planning Update

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) legislation continued the coordinated transportation planning requirements established in previous law. Specifically, the legislation notes that the projects selected for funding through the Federal Section 5310 program must be "included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan."

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) guidance defines a coordinated public transit-human service transportation plan as one that identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, seniors, and people with low incomes, provides strategies for meeting those local needs, and prioritizes transportation services and projects for funding and implementation.

There are four required plan elements:

- An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers
- An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities and seniors.
- Strategies, activities, and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery; and
- Priorities for implementation based on resources (from multiple program sources), time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities identified.

To respond to the MAP-21 legislation, MTA's Office of Local Transit Support (OLTS) is leading the update of previous regional Coordinated Transportation Plans. In conjunction with regional coordinating bodies and with assistance from the KFH Group, the MTA has conducted regional workshops and followup meetings across Maryland to gain input from a wide range of stakeholders

on transportation needs and strategies to improve mobility. The coordinated transportation planning effort is not solely limited to the Section 5310 program. While the plan is only required in communities seeking funding under the Section 5310 program, Maryland's regional Coordinated Transportation Plans incorporate activities offered under other programs sponsored by Federal, state, and local agencies to greatly strengthen its impact. The updated plans will also include strategies and potential projects beyond those eligible for funding through the Section 5310 program. Therefore, each plan will be designed to serve as a blueprint for future discussions and efforts in the region to improve mobility, especially for older adults, people with disabilities, veterans, and people with lower incomes.

More information on the coordinated transportation planning process is available at

<http://www.kfhgroup.com/mdcoordinationplans.htm>



CMRT's Transportation Resource Information Point (TRIP) Project Expands Statewide

Central Maryland Region Transit ([CMRT](#)) is excited to present the Transportation Resource Information Point's ([TRIP](#)) statewide expansion project. TRIP will be creating and updating all public transportation information in Google Maps' Transit option in order to make life easier for commuters all across Maryland.

TRIP is a one-click, one-call transit information source that provides information for transit agencies in the Central Maryland region. The TRIP program received a VTCLI (Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative) grant that will allow this program to go a step further by making all of Maryland's transit information accessible through Google's interactive trip planning tool, as well as other providers who choose to display this information (such as Bing and HopStop). With the help of this grant, TRIP is able to expand its focus to veterans. The goal is to make this information more readily available to them by developing travel information kiosks that will be displayed in U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities, as well as on military bases, and in other areas with high veteran populations.

Because transit agencies will change their services on occasion, TRIP plans to train the various transit providers on how to keep their information updated and current in the system. CMRT and the TRIP team are very excited about this project and how it can better serve transit

users in Maryland. We look forward to receiving feedback from the transit community on this exciting initiative.

For more information please contact Chris Firehock, Project Manager, at chris.firehock@cmrtransit.org or (240) 581-5800.

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