



A SYMPOSIUM ON TRANSPORTATION, GROWTH, & THE ECONOMY

Symposium Summary

The Symposium on Transportation, Growth, and the Economy was held at the University of Maryland on November 20, 2009. The event was co-sponsored by the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), and the University of Maryland (UMD). Additional detail on the event can be found at www.mdot.maryland.gov/Planning/Moving_Maryland_Symposium.

Purpose

To facilitate dialogue on key policy questions related to transportation mobility and access, economic vitality, and environmental performance and to collectively consider how best to measure Maryland's progress toward achieving these multiple policy goals.

Participants

The Symposium had over 100 people in attendance, including a dozen State legislators; local officials; staff from MDOT and modal agencies, MDE, and other interested state agencies; industry experts; and individuals representing a wide range of stakeholder groups.

Guiding Questions

Following are five key questions that served to guide the day's discussions:

1. What are Maryland's goals for economic growth and the environment and how can our transportation system support these goals?
2. What policies would be most effective in reducing Maryland's VMT and congestion?
3. How would VMT and congestion reductions affect Maryland's economy, growth, and environment?
4. What role should local governments play in efforts to reduce congestion and VMT in Maryland?
5. What are the next steps for policy setting in Maryland as it relates to congestion and VMT and what information or analyses are needed to assess options and evaluate progress?

Summary of Events

Following is a summary of the Symposium, including synopses of presentations and discussion highlights. In addition to this summary, copies of all presentations can be found at www.mdot.maryland.gov/Planning/Moving_Maryland_Symposium.

Welcome & Introductions

Harold Bartlett (Deputy Secretary, MDOT) welcomed attendees and recognized elected officials present. **Mr. Bartlett** established the purpose of the Symposium: *to serve as an important first step in addressing Maryland's (and the federal government's) concerns about congestion, vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and global climate change.* He noted the themes that will likely be central to reauthorization of the federal surface transportation programs – increased

interest in performance-based outcomes and the use of competitive grant programs to support objectives – and noted the Symposium’s role in helping to lay out the issues and advance the discussion in Maryland.

Shari Wilson (Secretary, MDE) followed by welcoming attendees and stating that the “best and brightest” are thinking about the issues of transportation, growth, and the environment. She noted that while VMT has increased 40% since 1990, there have been 50% reductions in ozone pollutants – and 40% from mobile sources. She thanked Tad Aburn (MDE) for his efforts but noted that the State is still not meeting overall federal air quality standards, which are getting tighter and will continue to do so. With regard to climate change, she commented that more than a technical fix is needed (i.e., can’t simply focus on fuel efficiency) and highlighted *some of the work that has been done thus far – diesel fuel retrofits, CHART, commuter choice program, electronic truck stops, park and ride lots, bike and pedestrian facilities, electronic tolling, traffic light timing, Bike to Work Day promotion, etc.* Ms. Wilson concluded by stating that with all this, however, we are still not “cracking the VMT nut.”

Gerrit Knaap (National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education (NCSGR&E)) welcomed participants on behalf of the University of Maryland and University sponsors. He described the collaboration the University has had with state agencies wrestling with many planning and environment issues and announced the creation of a transportation policy research group working with MDOT to develop a statewide transportation model. Mr. Knaap concluded his welcoming remarks by saying “*good public policy is based on good information.*”

The Big Picture: Framing the Issues from the National Policy Context

Cindy Burbank (Parsons Brinckerhoff), serving as the Symposium moderator, kicked off the formal program with a summary of *Symposium goals*:

- To consider how Maryland’s transportation system can simultaneously support a healthy economy, contribute to a high quality environment, reduce congestion, and maintain mobility and access for Maryland citizens and businesses.
- To consider how best to measure Maryland’s progress toward achieving these multiple policy goals.
- To discuss whether Maryland should set targets for reducing VMT – and if so what policies would be needed to achieve those targets.
- To hear from and digest information and perspectives from national experts on these issues.
- To have a healthy, open discussion about these issues – not with the expectation of achieving consensus but with the expectation of gaining new insights that will enable sound policies to be forged for Maryland.

Ms. Burbank then set the stage with information about the national context, noting that transportation and economic growth are intertwined – in Maryland and nationally. National data shows that VMT and the economy move forward – or stagnate – in lockstep. There is, however, also increased concern about how transportation affects the environment. Policies, programs, and investments to provide more transportation choice, change land use, and protect the environment have been made at the national level and carried out in Maryland. The Symposium is an example of the State’s consideration of these issues.

Ms. Burbank noted that US VMT growth rates have been slowing over time – perhaps as a result of demographic and policy changes (Nationally, the VMT growth rate is now about 1.4%

per year). Congestion, however, continues to increase – not just in Maryland but nationally, almost everywhere. It is easy to take congestion for granted because it is ubiquitous and grows gradually, but the cost of congestion is significant – even more than people realize.

Ms. Burbank described that worldwide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are increasing at a rate that poses severe worldwide consequences within 50 years or sooner and we need to reduce GHG emissions by 70 - 80% of 1990 levels to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. And, transportation needs to be a major player. Low carbon fuels and more fuel efficient vehicles will be a significant component of reducing GHG, but transportation technology alone will not be enough. We also need to improve the efficiency of the transportation system and reduce VMT growth or even reduce VMT to an absolute level. She showed a graphic illustrating that even if we achieve a 100 MPG-equivalent car, we also need to improve the efficiency of our system by reducing congestion and managing speeds and reducing the growth in VMT. Another point of this analysis is to show that continued or increased congestion will cancel out much of the benefits of managing VMT. *We, therefore, need both – to reduce congestion and to manage VMT – along with dramatic technology improvements – to achieve GHG reduction targets.*

Ms. Burbank mentioned relevant experiences from two states – Washington and California. In Washington, legislation was enacted to set goals of reducing per capita VMT by 18% by 2020, 35% by 2035, and 50% by 2050 – an extraordinary level of reduction. California has not adopted VMT reduction targets per se, but it has adopted legislation – SB 375 – that aims to reduce VMT by getting local governments to adopt compact land use policies in order to meet GHG reduction targets for passenger VMT. This is a groundbreaking law providing incentives for land use planning. The significant challenge, however, is for jurisdictions to figure out just how to implement the legislation and whether it is even possible.

In conclusion, **Ms. Burbank** reviewed activities at the national level, noting that Congress is considering climate change and transportation legislation and that while Cap and Trade bills do not call for VMT reductions, they would establish new transportation planning requirements, including GHG reduction targets and strategies. These will be important issues to states and MPOs and it will be necessary to wait and see what happens during reauthorization.

Ms. Burbank then introduced Terry Moore.

Terry Moore (NCSGR&E) provided a presentation entitled *Congestion, VMT, and Public Policy*. The presentation was drawn largely from a background discussion paper prepared by the University of Maryland for the Symposium (available at www.movingmaryland.net or via www.mdot.state.md.us/Planning/index). **Mr. Moore** first reviewed broad goals for the transportation system and honed in on specific objectives related to congestion and climate change. He described the *policy toolbox: new road capacity (noting that we can't build our way out of congestion), more efficient use of existing capacity (transportation system management), incentives for travel type, time, and location (travel demand management), and development of alternative travel modes (e.g., transit, bicycle, pedestrian)*. He then reviewed the experience of congestion and VMT nationally and in Maryland. Noting that both congestion and VMT have grown unremittingly for decades and that there is only recent evidence of some slowing of the *rate* of growth, Mr. Moore commented that the challenge for federal, state, and local government is real and continuing.

Mr. Moore discussed the challenges of evaluating policies to address congestion and VMT and the particular challenge of balancing competing objectives and making necessary tradeoffs. He concluded with a set of questions: *VMT targets, or not? If so, what are they? And, how are*

they best achieved? That is, which incentives and restrictions (e.g., travel demand management/pricing, land use, investment in alternative modes, etc.) will work?

The audience was invited to ask questions of Mr. Moore. Following is a synopsis of some of the areas of inquiry and key themes:

- Need for consideration of opportunities to shift to non-automobile transportation modes and pricing those modes so that they become more attractive.
- Need for consideration of ways to improve efficiency of the transportation network such as through dedicated bus lanes and reallocating travel lanes to more dense travel modes.
- Importance of realizing that all VMT is not equal (e.g., heavy duty vehicles make up 20 percent of GHG but only 8 percent of VMT) when designing strategies.

What Are the Right Questions for Maryland?

Following questions for Mr. Moore, the floor was opened for a more general discussion of the Symposium guiding questions (see above). Following are some highlights from that discussion:

- **Bill Bronrott (Delegate, Maryland General Assembly)** noted that there needs to be a sea change in emphasis, that we need to focus on smart growth, transit-oriented development, communities that are bicycle and pedestrian friendly and all that goes into that. He noted that maximizing walk and bike trips would reduce congestion and VMT and that we need to invest more in transit, with the Purple Line being a good example. He also noted the need to consolidate housing and jobs at stations and the importance of Maryland having the opportunity to have less reliance on single-occupancy vehicle trips.
- **Marc Elrich (Councilman, Montgomery County Council)** commented on the need to stop being parochial. The issue is not just about pricing, but also a broader social policy and how to make somewhere the right place to locate. He noted the need to get away from the mentality of “if we don’t get it in Montgomery County, it will go to Virginia or West Virginia.” Why not Prince George’s County? There are lots of people who live in Prince George’s and work in Montgomery. If we have more jobs in Prince George’s, there would be less Beltway traffic.
- **Anne Healey (Delegate, Maryland General Assembly)** commented that land use needs to be coordinated with transportation and that local government controls land use. Decisions are not made centrally and there is no magic solution. If there were, it would have been done. She noted the challenges associated with the different needs of the State. Some areas need local economic development, for example the more rural parts of the State. She remarked that people live in Washington County or Carroll County or Southern Maryland because it’s cheaper and we can’t stop that and that we need to change the incentives so that it costs less to live near work.
- **Paul Pinsky (Senator, Maryland General Assembly)** noted the need for policies – either incentives or restrictions – to reduce VMT. He commented that we haven’t found a way yet because policy and politics get in the way. He noted the need to create a culture change toward using transit, concluding that we haven’t made the jump yet on changing behavior when it comes to growth and planning.
- **David Harrington (Senator, Maryland General Assembly)** asked the question: “How will transportation create equity and deal with social policies that contribute to disparity?” He responded, it takes political will, but we need to speak clearly and

explicitly about where development and transportation will go. We need social policy – inclusionary zoning, increased access to jobs, health and welfare services linked to transit. He concluded that transportation is not a silo issue and that it needs to be used to build better communities and reduce disparities.

There also was discussion of the following topics by other Symposium participants:

- The importance of job location and the need to focus not on where the jobs are today, but also where they will be 20 to 25 years from now.
- The importance of reinvesting in existing centers and the role of location efficiency and smart growth principles.
- The potential value of de-coupling VMT and Gross State Product (GSP), with an example offered of how California has done this with its electricity (i.e., the State is consuming less energy and has seen an increase in GSP).

Following the open discussion Arlee Reno and Jose Gomez-Ibanez were introduced.

What are the Possible Answers? – Policy Strategies and Measuring Progress

Arlee Reno (Cambridge Systematics) provided a presentation entitled *Transportation, the Economy, and VMT* in which he reviewed the interrelationships among the three. He reviewed the academic literature on rates of return on transportation investment and offered specific highlights of economic impacts of transportation. For example, each investment of \$1 billion in public transportation capital creates or supports 24,000 jobs, increases net business sales by \$3 billion per year, and increases net gross domestic product (GDP) by \$1.5 billion per year. Returns on investment in public transportation operations result in even higher economic benefits. **Mr. Reno** reviewed statistics related to VMT growth rates, noting that the rate of growth has slowed. He then reviewed the relationship between VMT and economic growth and focused in on the *question of whether economic growth can occur independent of VMT growth. His answer: it depends on whether the economic benefits of mobility are foregone due to measures to reduce VMT.* In reviewing the relationship of income growth to VMT, **Mr. Reno** posed the question, “What are the impacts on the economy if we try to slow VMT growth while income grows at a reasonable rate?” He then reviewed some specifics such as the impact of pricing (e.g., VMT fees, fuel taxes, congestion fees); he asserted they will have a negative impact on personal income and also some adverse impacts on equity if not managed through specific programs. In closing, **Mr. Reno** explained that some strategies reduce VMT but replace mobility; pricing strategies reduce VMT, mobility, and net income and must be associated with mitigation and equity measures; and that reinvestment of pricing revenues into the transportation system can offset some lost economic benefits.

Jose Gomez-Ibanez (Harvard University) provided a presentation based on a recent Transportation Research Board sponsored study, *The Built Environment, Driving, and Global Warming*. In his presentation, **Dr. Gomez-Ibanez** reviewed a range of options for reducing motor vehicle GHG emissions and offered some insights regarding other studies in the field. He highlighted key characteristics of the built environment and their roles in VMT. The study showed that *doubling* residential density could result in 5% - 12% less VMT and doing this in combination with transit and other measures could potentially result in 25% less VMT. **Dr. Gomez-Ibanez** then addressed the obstacles to actually achieving this: 1) durability of the housing stock; 2) local zoning considerations; and 3) uncertainty about consumer housing

preferences. He then reviewed alternative policy options, such as taxes and fees and vehicle technology and their potential impact. He summarized the recommendations of the TRB Study Committee: 1) policies that support more compact, mixed-use development and reinforce its ability to reduce VMT, energy use, and Co2 emissions should be encouraged and 2) more carefully designed studies are needed to implement compact development more effectively.

Following presentations by Arlee Reno and Jose Gomez-Ibanez, the audience was invited to ask questions and share their thoughts. Following are some highlights from that discussion:

- Need for appropriate balance of local control of land use and zoning relative to State objectives.
- Discussion of potential lessons from international experience, with a note by Dr. Gomez-Ibanez that such international studies are limited.
- The balance of strategies that is needed to be effective.

In response to a question of what strategies can actually get us there, **Cindy Burbank** commented that addressing GHG will require a package of strategies and that a “good chunk” can be achieved through cleaner fuels. The issues we are dealing with at the Symposium are: 1) how much reduction can we get from managing VMT and 2) what strategies can be employed to achieve VMT goals. **Arlee Reno** further commented that there is enormous slack in our vehicle systems. The US has been increasing horsepower not decreasing fuel use while Europeans and Japanese have much higher fuel efficiencies than we do. He noted that the technology is there and they are using it and we are not. **Dr. Gomez-Ibanez** noted that we need to make fuel part of the equation but that the question is whether consumers will choose a more efficient vehicle or will the government have to mandate it. History shows that US consumers will choose size and power over fuel efficiency. **Ms. Burbank** also commented on the worldwide context and that vehicle ownership in China, India, Brazil, and Indonesia will explode in coming years, with five times the vehicles we have. She concluded that “we must de-carbonize fuels. We can be leaders with CAFÉ, research and development, economic incentives, etc.”

Following the open discussion, Senator Brian Frosh and Delegate Tawanna Gaines were introduced.

Maryland State Legislator Roundtable Discussion

Senator Brian Frosh and **Delegate Tawanna Gaines** participated (Senator Pipkin was to participate but had emergency surgery that kept him from attending). The session consisted of each legislator making a brief statement and then opening the floor up for questions and answers and open dialogue.

Brian Frosh (Senator, Maryland General Assembly) began by commending the speakers from the day for sharing their expertise. He noted that the elephant in the room is the price of gasoline and that we have a problem with sprawl because of our cheap gas; it drives all our problems. Externalities and the low price of gas are what cause sprawl, pollution, and congestion. How do we solve this when we don't address the pricing? In 1999, he submitted a bill that asked MDOT to consider the VMT impact of every project. In his words, it was “crushed”, and he was stunned. People want to drive more? No one enjoys it, so why not reduce it? In 2009, he reintroduced the bill to somewhat less hostile reception. **Senator Frosh** noted that MDOT didn't oppose it but rather said that we should study it for the 2010 session and address whether we really want to decrease per capita VMT or create a mandate. He noted that we must fight against

vested interests – not just businesses but our own selves and how we live, work, travel, etc. He concluded that there is no silver bullet, but it is difficult to create change when we encourage people to drive big cars because gas is too cheap.

Tawanna Gaines (Delegate, Maryland General Assembly) spoke next. She explained that as a member of the Appropriations Committee she knows that they are constantly looking to the Transportation Trust Fund to bail out the State, but DOT looks to those funds for system preservation. She noted that needs are often in competition, but that we need to create “One Maryland” and provide for all citizens. She noted that there also is competition for development – and that some places want density, while others do not. **Delegate Gaines** spoke of the need to try to balance the General Fund but that the Transportation Trust Fund is needed to meet other State needs and that we need to stop raiding it and understand that we are putting critical infrastructure at risk. She also commented that we need to consider how we will pay for things if the Transportation Trust Fund funding is reduced through improved fuel economy or VMT restrictions.

Senator Frosh and Delegate Gaines then received questions and comments from Symposium participants. Following are some key questions, themes, and highlights from that discussion:

- The first questioner posed a series of questions: What is the problem we are trying to solve? VMT is not the ultimate target; increasing energy efficiency and reducing GHG may be. What are the “buttons” to push? 1) Reducing VMT through land use changes; 2) fuel efficient vehicles; 3) the congestion button hasn’t been talked about much yet and could have a huge impact; 4) raising the gas tax – the business community is supporting an increase. When will legislators step up?

Senator Frosh noted that he would support a gas tax increase but doesn’t think that it would have an impact. It would need to be more than five or ten cents. He noted that we won’t be raising taxes this year and if, when, we raise the gas tax it won’t be enough to have an impact on behavior.

Delegate Gaines noted that she has recommended indexing the gas tax so we won’t have to ask again.

Cindy Burbank noted that gas is a very small part of the cost associated with automobile usage. There are lots of other pricing strategies beyond gasoline pricing – pay as you drive insurance, congestion pricing, parking pricing, national level interest in a VMT fee – that could help with GHG, congestion, and land use. There is a wide array of pricing tools that could be used in combination.

- Discussion of the need to do more than address vehicle technology and the potential role of VMT targets in getting to those other strategies, including land use and pricing.
- **Marc Elrich** offered the comment that the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) discusses how we need to change the built environment but we also need to change mode split. He noted that we should require developments to have mode share goals and plans to achieve them.

Senator Frosh responded that we need clear standards for smart growth, but counties are resistant to the State providing land use oversight.

Delegate Gaines commented that we need to get local jurisdictions to look at and support development at Metro stations.

- Discussion of pricing strategies and the potential for legislative action in Maryland, including both pricing strategies and incentives, such as Cash for Clunkers and incentives for transit use.
- Discussion of the need to consider additional costs such as health care and to quantify the benefits of livable communities.

Following this discussion, the group adjourned for lunch where they also enjoyed an address by Emil Frankel.

Luncheon Address

Emil Frankel (representing the National Transportation Policy Project of the Bipartisan Policy Center) discussed the relationships and trade-offs between transportation, economic growth, and environmental sustainability (including energy security and climate change). **Mr. Frankel** noted the great expertise in the room and the historic leadership of the Maryland Department of Transportation in thinking about and implementing innovative and visionary policies and programs. He commented on the parallels between the Symposium themes and that of the National Transportation Policy Project (NTPP) study and recommendations – focusing on the need to go beyond issues of capacity and mobility to broader societal goals traditionally thought to be outside of transportation policy but now central to it such as economic growth and climate change. He then provided background on the NTPP and the Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC). The NTPP was launched in mid-2007 and co-chaired by four former elected officials – two Democrats and two Republicans. The NTPP issued its report in June 2009 focusing on *national* policy while recognizing that key investment and operational decisions are made at the state, local, and regional level.

According to **Mr. Frankel**, the federal government influences decisions through the “power of the purse.” The NTPP recommendations center on the basic tenet that “***US transportation policy needs to be more performance-driven, more directly linked to a set of clearly articulated goals, and more accountable for results.***” **Mr. Frankel** described the goals that the NTPP believes should be at the core of national transportation policy: economic growth, national connectivity, metropolitan accessibility, energy security and environmental protection (particularly climate change), and safety. He described these as prescriptive at the national level but permissive at the state and local level (i.e., permissive as to how they are achieved). He also noted that the focus of the NTPP recommendations is on the need for ***program-level rather than project-specific performance measurement.*** With respect to the topic of VMT, **Mr. Frankel** noted that the NTPP did not recommend VMT reduction as a performance metric per se, instead recommended reductions in petroleum and Co2 emissions. He also noted the linkage between how transportation funds are raised and system performance and the recommendation that revenue should be linked to performance and thus a transition to a system of funding based on user fees in which *all* costs are captured, including those related to the environmental, energy, and congestion costs imposed on others. **Mr. Frankel** concluded by noting that the economic and fiscal challenges that all states, including Maryland, now face heighten the need to use limited resources more wisely; to link transportation investments to a range of economic, energy, environmental, and social values that are their real purpose; and to emphasize performance, outcomes, and accountability.

The question and answer session that followed included the following highlights:

- In response to a question regarding grant evaluation, **Mr. Frankel** noted the need to move away from “modes” and toward “goals.” He asserted that we need to get away from the transit set aside and instead think about meeting *goals*. For example, we want to solve global climate change. Increasing transit may be a solution for Maryland, but not everywhere. The federal government’s attitude should be “we only care about the result.”
- In response to a question about Congress’s receptivity to the NTPP report’s conclusions, **Mr. Frankel** discussed Congressman Oberstar’s bill and the fact that it included performance measures. He noted that we can debate whether they are the right measures, but at least they are there. Mr. Frankel noted that with 10.5% unemployment, this is a difficult time to be having this discussion, but that there has been more progress than he thought possible. He concluded that if we can get a bill to say that global climate change and reducing petroleum usage are goals that would be a *huge* step forward.
- In response to a question regarding what can be done in Maryland to “help move the boulder up the hill,” **Mr. Frankel** noted the importance of talking with your members of Congress, governor, legislators, and department heads. Members of Congress get their information from local elected officials saying “we need...” If they were to start hearing, “we want performance measures,” then we will see change. It will be different from what they have been hearing and still hear today.

Following Mr. Frankel’s presentation and discussion, Don Halligan introduced Jon Laria and Rich Hall.

Current Actions and Next Steps in Maryland

Don Halligan (MDOT) kicked off this segment of the Symposium by saying “we’ve spent a lot of time talking about VMT and congestion, which are perpetual issues for us. But we haven’t really talked about growth – the next two speakers will.”

Jon Laria (Ballard Spahr Andres & Ingersoll, speaking at the Symposium as Chair of the Task Force on the Future of Growth and Development in Maryland) discussed the activities of the Task Force, noting that it represents a recommitment to smart growth. He commented that Maryland was a leader and is associated with the smart growth “brand”, but a key question is whether we are still keeping up and doing it in an effective way. A goal of the Task Force is to make Maryland the leader again. The Task Force was created in 2006, enabled in 2007, and started in 2008. There are 21 members who represent broad and diverse backgrounds. The *Where Do We Grow from Here* report came out in the end of 2008/beginning of 2009. It has 52 recommendations. Phase II will work on refining the recommendations. ***About 10 to 12 of the recommendations are related to transportation and include transit-oriented development, increasing capacity, providing incentives, finance, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, etc.*** MDOT is working on implementing the recommendations. Outcomes have included the following: 1) Tax increment financing and transit-oriented development legislation passed, which is making development easier at station locations, specifically at Savage. 2) The eight planning visions (which represent Maryland’s land use and growth policy goals) have been increased to 12, to include housing, transportation, and citizen participation. (**Mr. Laria** explained that the visions drive local reporting and are subtly changing the conversation.) 3) Specific smart growth indicators have been adopted by the General Assembly with the more general ones undergoing revision and refinement. (**Mr. Laria** noted that there is not a specific VMT indicator yet, but nothing is ruled out.) With respect to Phase II tasks, **Mr. Laria** explained that some are mandated by the General Assembly and some are tasks the Task Force gave to

itself. The Task Force has created subgroups on 14 tasks, including land preservation, transfer of development rights, smart growth education in schools, conflicts and efficiencies, revitalization, and Priority Funding Areas. **Mr. Laria** noted that nothing is more important than how well the PFAs work or don't work because they are the linchpins of smart growth. In conclusion, **Mr. Laria** remarked that transportation is part of the entire agenda, including addressing how the network works and working to change state land use policy is a first step.

Rich Hall (Secretary, Maryland Department of Planning) spoke next. He referred to the *Plan Maryland* document in the Symposium packet and described how creating a statewide plan has been a requirement since 1973, but that no previous MDP secretary has wanted to do it. He teased that it just proves that "previous secretaries were smarter than I am." **Secretary Hall** continued by explaining that fewer than ten states have a statewide plan. He said that Maryland continues to grow, we need to figure out how to fit those people here, and that it's not going to get any easier. He concluded that the statewide plan isn't a silver bullet, and it's not going to "wow" people right away but it is a step forward. He described that there will be a "soft launch" of the plan in early 2010 and that the Department is working closely with the Task Force on the Future of Growth and Development in Maryland, sister agencies, and stakeholders to promote and advocate the plan.

Don Halligan (MDOT) concluded the Symposium. He noted that transportation, growth, and the economy are intertwined in complex ways and highlighted the need to create programs that can address multiple objectives. **Mr. Halligan** commented that we need to create a balanced transportation network and that transit needs to be a part of it. He explained that in order to address VMT, congestion, and climate change, we need to grow transit ridership by increasing reliability, making it more efficient, and making it easier to use. He then offered a number of recent examples of State action. The State Highway Administration recently saw a \$30 million savings and half of the proceeds went to transit. Last year, MDOT deferred \$2 billion in projects overall, but MTA was left relatively intact. He noted that he is optimistic that both the Red Line and Purple Line will be competitive in the New Starts process. On the land use side, he described how MDOT is supporting local land use planning through transit-oriented development, which is a key part of the Governor's smart, green, and growing initiative. He also discussed how making intelligent transportation system and technology improvements is important – many of the MTA buses have GPS installed and will be rolling out the Charm Card – an electronic fare card – in Fall 2010. The goal is to get 500 hybrid buses, which are quieter, more fuel efficient, and require less maintenance, on the streets by 2014. **Mr. Halligan** described how the Department is doing more with Complete Streets through neighborhood conservation, sidewalk retrofits, streetscaping, sidewalks along state highways, and bicycle and pedestrian accommodations as part of street reconstructions. He explained that the Department is on the verge of releasing a transportation trails plan, which is an inventory of missing pieces, not just for recreation, but also a network that will connect people and places. **Mr. Halligan** concluded that we need to be careful about our decisions as they have direct and indirect impact on how we look and grow. He noted that the path forward is complicated and in order to make good decisions about which tradeoffs should be made, we need to have good research and an open dialogue. That is why, in his words, "It is important to hold this Symposium. Hopefully it has shed some light on the issues and starts the discussion."