



Sheila Dixon

Mayor,
Baltimore

250 City Hall • Baltimore Maryland 21202
410-396-3835 • Fax: 410-576-9425

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 28, 2008

CONTACT:
Sterling Clifford
(443) 452-9063

Mayor Dixon Announces New Downtown Shuttle Bus

*New Bus Network to Ease Congestion, Pollution;
Improve Travel in Area Dense with Employees, Residents & Visitors*

Baltimore, MD (May 28, 2008) – Mayor Sheila Dixon was joined by business, community and tourism industry leaders to unveil plans for a new Downtown transit bus network that will be operated by the City.

The Downtown Shuttle Bus system would serve the needs of residents, employees, and visitors by providing a fast, convenient, and energy-efficient way to move about Baltimore’s densely populated Downtown area where, according to Downtown Partnership of Baltimore, there are approximately 160,000 people on an average day.

The Downtown Shuttle Bus would connect with existing transit hubs such as Pennsylvania Station, and light rail, MARC, subway, and water taxi stops. Similar systems are in use in other cities around the country where they have contributed to a net decrease in congestion and improvements in air quality.

“The new bus service will reduce car traffic, air pollution and increase the appeal of living, working and visiting Downtown Baltimore,” said Mayor Dixon. “People need to be able to get around downtown quickly and efficiently, and these busses will do just that.”

Plans call for approximately 20, clean-energy busses operating on three routes in-and-around Downtown Baltimore. The Department of Transportation will designate bus lanes and create other transit priority mechanisms in the bus service area to maintain a 10 minute wait between busses. If successful, routes would be expanded, or additional routes would be added, to better connect the Downtown Shuttle Bus to additional residential neighborhoods.

The Mayor's plan has been embraced by business and community leaders.

"The Downtown Shuttle Bus will provide an invaluable new transit option for people traveling within Downtown Baltimore, and better connect the business and hotel district with existing mass transit," said Kirby Fowler, president of Downtown Partnership of Baltimore. "It makes sense that if you reduce the need to have a car in Downtown, then you will ultimately reduce the number of cars on the road."

"Moving tourists around the city and into our neighborhoods is a top priority for the destination," said Tom Noonan, president and CEO of the Baltimore Area Convention and Visitors Association. "The more convenient we make it for our visitors, the longer they will stay and the more they will do while they are here."

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