

31 January 2023

Delegate Kumar P. Barve
Chair of the Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Letter of Support for HB 0012
Equitable and Inclusive Transit-Oriented Development Enhancement Act

Dear Chairman Barve and members of the Environment and Transportation Committees:

On behalf of AIA Maryland and the nearly 2,000 Architects we represent, we ask for your support of this bill that provides financial assistance to local jurisdictions within a transit-oriented development. AIA Maryland agrees and supports development that incentivizes smart and equitable growth for all communities as defined under HB 0012.

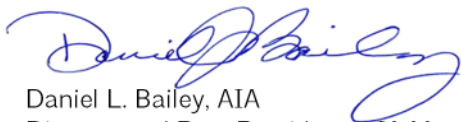
AIA Maryland recognizes the importance of State supported efforts that assists communities that wish to strategically pursue Transit-Oriented Development (TOD's) through grants and loans that HB 0012's legislation offers. This legislation offers the one key element that could spur the multi-modal development market type!

Many communities wish to reduce roadway congestion, improve air quality, and offer better economic equity to residents. To obtain these goals, communities must lean into this type of development assistance to provide the positive encouragement that a grant could offer. Such a grant would assist communities in the land use planning process to make strategic investments in properties surrounding transit stations. For example, shopping malls that have now fallen into market disfavor may offer valuable space for buses within their existing available parking area. In addition, such areas could serve as transit hubs linking to rail centers and offering multi-modal, easy connections for patrons.

However, planning and implementation for these projects and developments are expensive. The feasibility studies to strategically "set the table" for this type of development could be added to the land use process by local communities and reduce the risk typically associated with TOD's. HB 0012 could make a significant difference by offering financial encouragement to communities to think beyond typical land uses, toward TOD's and the many benefits realized by combining both good transportation and good land polices!

Architects care deeply about the quality of Maryland's growth, and the positive, yet reasonable integration of equitable transit and the built environment in which we work, play and live. AIA Maryland also cares deeply about the health, safety, and welfare of Maryland residents. We therefore respectfully ask your committee to vote in favor of HB 0012.

Sincerely



Daniel L. Bailey, AIA
Director and Past President, AIA Maryland