

Alan Doran (00:00)

Good evening, everybody. Thank you for attending this evening. Appreciate having you part of tonight's session. Welcome to the Small Area Plan study session two. And again, thank you for joining us this evening. I would like to introduce our Hartford Transit LINK team that we have with us this evening, Gary Blazinsky, our administrator, Jody Glock, our administrative supervisor. Ken Weldon, our transit operations supervisor, and of course, myself, community development coordinator and ride share program manager. And I see we have a couple of other folks from Hartford Transit with us also. Hartford Transit has been providing transportation services for nearly 50 years and came into its present form in the early 90s. Hartford Transit Link operates both fixed route and demand response paratransit services to our citizens and is continuing to grow. As tonight's session is going to demonstrate, Link has reshaped its routes, added buses to fixed routes, as well as purchased new buses, added mobile apps to make riding the bus easier, added WiFi to select buses, and added bus shelters, the newest of which is located on Pulaski Highway, Route 40 in front of Edgewater Village Shopping Center, Harbor Freight. And we're very pleased to have had that new shelter open.

Alan Doran (01:24)

And we're actually partnering now with a new program, Adopt a Stop with the 755 Alliance. So it's a great program that we have there. We've added external and internal video cameras to our buses. Also, Link, of course, is making every effort with the ongoing situation to ensure the health, safety and well being of our riders, which includes daily sanitizing of our buses as well as bimonthly sanitizing of our bus shelters. Public transportation is vital to our citizens and the economic wellbeing of our county. Our Small Area plan study meeting was held previously in September, Foursquare presented. And they're also going to be presenting more information, more detailed information this evening about the transit and mobility needs for the Northwest Bel Air study area. And I'll hand it over to Boris Palchik with Foursquare. Thank you.

Boris Palchik (02:20)

Great. Thank you so much. Can everybody hear me? Pretty well. Okay, excellent. So, yeah, as Alan said, this is the second outreach session that we're having for this study. The first one was back in September where we focused mostly on the market for transit service in the study area. Today we'll be talking more about the service that exists today, sort of the strengths and weaknesses of that service, as well as sharing some concepts for how a service may be redesigned in the future. And then we'd like to get everybody's feedback on those concepts. So what I'll start out with first is a little bit of background in case anybody was not on the first round of meetings just to get everybody caught up to speed. So this study that we're doing now, the Small Area study, is kind of a spin off of a previous study, a larger study called Regional Transit Plan, that study wrapped up in 2020 and as part of that study, that study identified a few specific areas in the region that needed some additional, more localized analysis to identify mobility issues and opportunities. So those five areas are the ones shown here.

Boris Palchik [\(03:39\)](#)

So in Harford County, the Northwest Bel Air Forest Hill area was identified as an area that would need to have a small area study. That's how we got to the study that we're working on now. So the area that we're talking about is shown here in this pink outline. It has three link routes that are currently operating within this study area. So we have route one, route two and route six. So this is primarily the Northwest Bel Air Forest Hill area and that's the boundaries of our study area. So for each of these small area studies, what we set out to do, what the goals are are to identify the strengths and the weaknesses of the existing service and to identify opportunities to fill service gaps and compliment regional services and just generally to improve the overall transit user experience. That's what we're setting out to do. So we're going to go through tonight route by route and discuss what's happening today with the three routes in the study area and then what some opportunities may be to improve on. So starting with route one, route one is an hourly service. It operates from approximately 5:30 p.m. to

Boris Palchik [\(05:00\)](#)

8:50 p.m. Weekdays only. Within the study area, There are quite a few key destinations that are served by Route One. These include the Greenbriar Shopping Center, downtown, Bel Air, Harford Community College and Harford Mall. This route also facilitates transit connections both within the study area and outside of the study area.

Boris Palchik [\(05:22\)](#)

So connections are possible throughout two and six within the study area and to MARC service in Aberdeen along the Penn line. So some of the issues that we identified as we assess this route. The first one is that the route includes a number of strong anchors. As I mentioned, the community college downtown, some retail destinations. There's quite a few key destinations that are served, but there's also a few destinations that are not served, namely the Walmart, which is on Belair Road and right here, if you can see that little icon, the Walmart is not served.

Boris Palchik [\(06:07\)](#)

If it were served, we believe it would be quite a strong ridership generator. It's an important regional destination and extending this route to that Walmart would be an opportunity to increase ridership. We believe the other issue is the schedules themselves. So generally this route operates hourly, but during a couple of times in the day, as you can see in this graphic, there's a couple of times during the day when the service gap is more than hour and that has to do with driver brakes. So that's an issue for some riders.

Boris Palchik [\(06:42\)](#)

You can even see that when we see ridership kind of spike like this sometimes what that means there's a pent up demand for ridership and if the service was a little bit more consistent in terms of hourly without

those gaps, then you wouldn't see quite the jump in ridership. Sometimes it happens after the gap, sometimes it happens before as people sort of clamor to get on the service because they know there's going to be a gap. So that's another thing that we noticed in analysis as we can go through this. If anybody has any questions or comments, please feel free to speak up. You don't have to wait until the end because that's Route one - we'll now move on to Route Two unless there's any questions or comments.

Boris Palchik (07:24)

Okay, so moving on to Route two. This is also an hourly service. For the most part, it operates from 5:30 to a little bit after 8:30 from the Edgewood MARC station to Bel Air via Abington. It's a weekday only service within the study area. It serves, again several key destinations like Harford Mall, the Upper Chesapeake Medical Center, Shoprite, and a few other destinations.

Boris Palchik (07:53)

It also facilitates transfers to both Route one and six within the study area and to MARC service in Edgewood along the Penn line. So with this route, some of the issues that we noticed. First of all, there was fairly poor on-time performance. From the data that we saw, approximately 38% of time points were served late. So that could be improved upon the service similar to route one there are a number of key destinations that are served but also some opportunities potentially to extend service.

Boris Palchik (08:28)

For example, there's no coverage north of downtown Bel Air and there are quite a few destinations along the Rock Spring corridor that, if they were served probably would be fairly strong ridership generators and there's also the issue with service brakes on some trips and again, that's due to driver brakes so those are the key issues that we saw on route two so next we will move on to route six. Route six is a little bit different than the others. It's a circulator route that operates just within the downtown Bel Air area. There are five trips a day that are available on this trip. I mean, on this route the service operates approximately every 90 minutes from 9:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Boris Palchik (09:21)

It serves Harford Mall, it serves the court, the district courts, Bel Air high school, Harford senior housing and then the Hickory Hill neighborhood. It serves all those destinations. It also does facilitate connections to link routes one and two within the study area but as you can see, there's a very limited number of trips so it's very limited service compared to the other routes. So the key issues we saw on this route is that the alignment is fairly circuitous meaning people in some cases.

Boris Palchik (10:00)

Are forced to ride out of direction as they're trying to reach their destination. So if, for example, somebody picks up the bus and some of the apartments up here, you can see these little icons. These are apartments as they ride toward downtown, they have a fairly direct route, but then on the way back home, they may have to travel out of direction to reach their final destination because of the one way design of the route. The other issue here is that there's just sort of infrequent service, 90 minutes frequency, as well as a limited span of service. So those are limiting factors in maybe the appeal of this service and the ability to attract additional riders. So that's Route six. So I'll move on if there are no other questions, but I just want to see make sure there's not. So we'll move on now to talk about the overall assessment and then opportunities to address the issues that we've identified. So the overall assessment of the network within the study area is that there are some unserved opportunities, some missed opportunities that if served, could increase ridership and increase the appeal of the service. Number one is the Walmart that I mentioned on Bel Air Belair Road.

Boris Palchik (11:28)

The other area is the Rock Springs Road corridor north of downtown, as well as the Conowingo Road area where there's a Redner's fresh market up here. These are all areas. These are all the types of land uses that tend to generate transit ridership. So multifamily housing, in other words, apartment complexes, condominiums and the like, retail destinations, medical facilities, educational facilities, those are the types of places we look for that typically generate ridership if they are served. So we do see some gaps there. The other thing we see is on route six specifically, it's a very circuitous route. So with transit service, kind of the rule of thumb is the simpler it is, the better, the more appealing. And so a more direct route is typically more attractive to riders than one that's kind of circuitous and requires out of direction travel. And then the last piece is those service gaps that I mentioned, the longer than usual interruptions in service due to driver breaks. Okay, so we'll move on now to some concepts for service improvement. And at this point, these are all only concepts. None of the things that we're discussing here today are things that will be implemented right away or in the near future.

Boris Palchik (12:48)

We're at the point now of developing concepts, and we just hope to get people's feedback on these concepts. So the first one is to extend route one from its current end of the line at the mall down to the Walmart along Belair Road. That's the first concept. So this would add approximately 6 miles of trip length round trip to the route. With that additional trip length, the service still could be provided with hourly service with three vehicles. So that's the same as are currently assigned to this service. This extension would improve access not only to the Walmart, but also to additional destinations like the Goodwill Superstore, the Harford Crisis Center. And it would also add service to a couple of fairly large apartment complexes, parks at Winter's Run and the Fallston Commons Apartments. So you have quite a few benefits of extending the service down to Walmart. And so that's this first concept. So any thoughts on that from anybody? We can move on to route two to the next concept. If anyone has any thoughts at any point about any of these, please feel free to speak up. Okay, the next idea here to improve service is an extension of route two.

Boris Palchik (14:18)

And this extension would be north past the current end of the line of route Two, up the Rock Springs corridor, all the way up to the Shoprite on East West Highway. So this would add 11 miles round trip to the route. So with that amount of service being added, this route would require one additional bus to provide hourly service. So the reason I bring that up is because there is a cost impact of having an additional bus as Link plans its service every year. It has a finite budget that has to work with, and so any service expansion would require some consideration of how is it funded. Would some other route needs to be cut or service hours be cut in order to afford an expansion? But that's why I bring up that this service would require one additional bus for it to work. So the benefits of this concept is that it improves access to the Shoprite on Main Street, the Oak Court and Hartford Village Apartments, which are here. You have the Shoprite here, and then you have the apartments in through here. It also adds service to several destinations, including the Giant Foods, Harford Village Apartments, the Village of Emerald Woods Apartments, and the Shoprite on East West Highway.

Boris Palchik (15:45)

Those are all of these locations here that are currently not served, but would be with this extension. So any thoughts on that concept? So moving right along, then the next idea is to restructure route six, and route six is shown here. The current route six is shown in this light Orange color, and this red is the concept that we're discussing here. So restructure it so that it's no longer a one way circulator, but rather a bi directional service that operates from the Walmart on Belair Road up to the Shoprite on East West Highway. And in the process, it would expand service very similar to what we just discussed previously with extension of route one and route Two, respectively. But instead of extending those routes, those would essentially stay as is. And instead, this new route would be an overlay, and it would cover the Rock Springs extension area and the Bel Air Road extension area. So that's the concept here.

Boris Palchik (16:56)

Okay.

Boris Palchik (16:59)

So this service would be an 18 miles round trip route, so hourly service could be provided with one vehicle compared to the current one vehicle that is assigned to the current Route Six. Circulator this service, as I mentioned, it provides a good mix of origins and destinations. So multifamily housing, groceries, some medical destinations and the like. So any thoughts on this concept or any preferences on if there was a fixed route extension? Is it better to do it as an extension of an existing route like Route One and Route Two? Or is it preferable to just keep those as is and overlay a new route calling it Route Six here to serve these new destinations? Any thoughts on that force?

Alan Doran (17:59)

If I could mention there is a comment in the chat from Gary.

Boris Palchik (18:05)

Okay, so Route Two would also have a potential stop at the detention center. Okay, alright, so no strong preference for one or the other then? Okay, so then I'll present next another concept. It's kind of related to Route Six, but a different approach to serving these corridors that currently don't have service. So there is a service type, a new type of service that has been emerged in the last few years called Microtransit. And Microtransit is an app based demand response service. Some people may be familiar with demand response service because it currently does exist in your community for people with disabilities, elderly residents and the like. But the difference between that type of service and what we're talking about here is that microtransit is a technology driven approach to demand response service. What that means is that it uses people can dispatch the service themselves without having to call anybody up. They can dispatch it from an app on their own personal device. So it's very similar to the interface that one would see with Uber and Lyft, but it's using transit vehicles rather than Uber and Lyft sedans. So the benefits of a microtransit service and really demand response service overall is that it can provide more coverage than fixed route service because it's not limited to specific streets.

Boris Palchik (19:42)

It's designed to operate within a designated zone instead, and it provides shorter wait times compared to low frequency fixed route service. So if microtransit, for example, were considered instead of the current Route Six, the overall wait times average wait times would likely be lower than the 90 minutes that are currently required on Route Six. And the reason for that is because Route Six has to serve all the destinations along its route compared to microtransit, which is more sort of point to point as needed. So it doesn't need to run through the entire route. If it picks somebody up, it can take them directly directly to where they're going, drop them off, be ready for the next trip. It also can kind of commingle trips. So it's not a one person, one trip model, it's a shared ride concept. So you can have one person get on, then another person gets on, and then a couple of people get off. Maybe three people get on. So it's a more shared ride concept than what you would see, for example, with Uber and Lyft. So microtransit is a pretty effective approach for auto oriented environments.

Boris Palchik (20:53)

And the reason for that is because when you have a kind of suburban or rural or generally auto oriented environment, sometimes pedestrians have a tough time getting to bus stops because there aren't always sidewalks. Sometimes there are sidewalks, but the streets are fairly wide. Traffic flow may be pretty fast, and it's just not a comfortable environment for pedestrians necessarily. So that's the challenge of providing fixed route service in a suburban or rural environment. Since micro transit and Demand Response Service in general can get to where passengers are, it helps alleviate some of the issues with fixed route service in an auto oriented environment because people can be picked up at the destination,

at the store, or at their home or wherever it is that they're requesting service. The microtransit service could also allow for some streamlining of the fixed route service. What I mean by that is the fixed route service, in some cases deviates off of the main arterial streets to pick up people in certain destinations. With microtransit as kind of an overlay, it could allow for fixed route service to operate more streamlined, more direct service to key destinations, bypassing some of the smaller streets, some of the smaller deviations.

Boris Palchik (22:15)

So this is the microtransit concept. Does anybody have any questions on this? There's generally two ways the micro transit can operate. It can either operate what's called a turnkey model. So turnkey means that a transit agency would contract with a private operator to provide all aspects of micro transit service, from the vehicles to the drivers to the app, all of that. So that's what turnkey means. It's also known as transportation as a service. The other approach is called software as a service, or it's a technology deployment model. So what that means is since Link does already have vehicles, and since Link has kind of appropriately sized vehicles, they could overlay this technology onto those vehicles to essentially transform them into microtransit service. And in that case, the vehicles and the drivers would be Link vehicles, Link drivers. And the software is the only part that's being contracted for. So any questions on any of that? Okay, so what I'm going to do now is this map here, which we can Zoom in to Zoom in and out as we discuss. It shows everything that we discussed on one map. If anybody wants to discuss, we also have information on existing ridership, things like that.

Boris Palchik (23:49)

So I'll turn that off for now. But there is additional information that we can talk about. But does anybody have I'm going to start calling on people if we have no volunteers, but I'm really curious people's thoughts on any of these concepts. So anybody want to weigh in at all? Amber, can I ask you, since you got your camera on, do you have any thoughts on any of these concepts, on what you think you're muted? So you may not be.

Speaker 3 (24:32)

I've been riding with you guys since I was little. Okay? I've been riding it to and from Redners, which I live across from.

Boris Palchik (24:44)

Okay.

Speaker 3 (24:46)

2007. Okay. And I work at APG since 2010. And I worked at Redners four days a week.

Boris Palchik ([25:00](#))

Okay.

Speaker 3 ([25:01](#))

Before I went to Charms full time.

Boris Palchik ([25:04](#))

Okay.

Speaker 3 ([25:05](#))

So I've been riding you guys for a long time now.

Boris Palchik ([25:09](#))

Okay. Got it.

Boris Palchik ([25:13](#))

All right.

Boris Palchik ([25:16](#))

Allen, who was the other guest that you mentioned?

Alan Doran ([25:22](#))

I believe we have Crystal.

Boris Palchik ([25:24](#))

Okay. Hi, Crystal. Do you have any thoughts?

Speaker 3 ([25:27](#))

You also have my mom on board.

Boris Palchik ([25:30](#))

Okay. That's good to know, too.

Speaker 3 (25:34)

Crystal is smart on the line with you.

Boris Palchik (25:36)

Oh, is that Crystal? Is Crystal your mom?

Speaker 3 (25:39)

No, that's Sunny Kyle.

Boris Palchik (25:41)

Okay.

Speaker 3 (25:42)

My mom.

Boris Palchik (25:43)

Okay. Well, welcome Sunny. You're muted right now, so if you have the ability to.

Speaker 4 (25:53)

Can you hear me now?

Boris Palchik (25:54)

Yes.

Alan Doran (25:55)

Crystal had her hand up. I see that.

Speaker 4 (25:59)

So I write the one line. I like the addition to Walmart Fallston and those stops along the way. I frequently ride the two and I like the additions you're talking about there. The detention center especially is something that I hear from individuals I advocate for that the visitation issues for individuals there, as well as reaching the commissioners after the courthouse closes for things like protective orders.

Speaker 4 (26:31)

That kind of thing.

Boris Palchik (26:32)

Okay.

Speaker 4 (26:33)

So I like hearing about the detention center. I like hearing that the expansion up into the Forest Hill shop, right. All of that area as well. I definitely like the frequency increases the question I have about the Orange line. I agree with you with the Circulator. I frequently will get on that route at Harford Mall to want to go to the courthouse downtown, and I have to go to the senior living community and then all the way through the other apartments and Target and all these things to get down to the courthouse. So I'm liking what you're saying there. I just want to clarify. It wouldn't be eliminating the downtown stops, correct?

Boris Palchik (27:27)

Well, not the downtown stops. So let me, for example, bring up just a couple. Let me simplify this so we can discuss a simpler version. Okay. So we'll turn off route six. So if route one and route two were extended okay, then they would both. So the downtown would be served by both routes. If the concept of a simplified we'll call it a route six, or maybe it'll be a different route number, but a simplified route six, there would be a few stops that are eliminated, but not exactly downtown. I'm not sure exactly what is considered the boundaries of downtown, but the stops that will be eliminated. And I'm going to turn on the ridership so you can see. So over here, for example, there's along Idlewild Road, there's a stop here and has really low ridership, less than one passenger a day, so that it would not be served by this proposed redesign of the route six. So you can kind of see where the red and the Orange do not overlap. Those are areas where service is dropped. So this is one example right here. Another example is the stop on Atwood, although potentially you could reroute route two a little bit to make that stop, but you can kind of see which areas we continue to have service and which ones would not.

Speaker 4 (29:11)

Can you hear me?

Boris Palchik (29:12)

Yes.

Speaker 4 (29:13)

Okay.

Speaker 4 (29:13)

So my experience in writing that route is I think one of those that you highlighted is Country Village Apartments, where I see the biggest group get on if they're going to get on is it Hartford Hall, the senior living community that's behind the Goodwill. And then those individuals will ride to Target, they'll ride to the courthouses and get off with me. They'll ride to Bel Air Library, the shopping centers. I think it goes through like where Bed, Bath and beyond is those individuals and sometimes myself will utilize those shopping centers. But I agree with you. Some of the apartment complexes, nobody ever gets on or off, and a lot of times like six to eight people will get on at the senior community and ride to either Target or the bank or the other shopping centers. They tend to get on altogether and get off altogether if it's a community outing. My biggest concern when I reference downtown or things like the Sheriff's office, the library, those kinds of things got you. Originally route two used to go to that area, and then a year ago, two years ago, they detoured from going to the courthouse and instead going a different route to get to the mall.

Speaker 4 (30:35)

So I just don't want to see that courthouse disappear with the populations you serve for things like eviction court and things like that.

Boris Palchik (30:42)

Understood. So do you have any thoughts on the concept of serving the area with an extension or an overlay of fixed route service versus serving the area with more of a demand response model?

Speaker 4 (31:04)

We definitely need demand response across this county, but I definitely would use it. I'm on the route, too, in the Walmart Target area of Constant Friendship. The majority of my travel is from there up into the Bel Air zones, and I would go further up into Forest Hill if I had microtransit. That's what I would use when I don't get on the bus. I'm paying Uber like \$60. So for me personally, on demand would be the better choice. But I also see the benefit of expanding and changing that circuit. If I could get the two up to the mall and get a circuit on the 6th that took me directly to the courthouse instead of this roundabout way. I probably would still utilize that unless the demand would get me there sooner for a reasonable price.

Boris Palchik (32:03)

Okay. I think the courthouse, for example, would always be served by fixed route. Regardless, that's not going to go away, even if there was a scenario where you had one and two. But then not that concept, the fixed route concept and not route six, you still would have a fixed out option to get to the courthouse where I take the blue to the mall and take the green to the courthouse instead of the Orange. Right. That's a possibility.

Speaker 4 (32:46)

And sometimes is what I do, depending on the timing. Sometimes as you identify it's, those breaks that it's better to take one or the other.

Boris Palchik (33:03)

I'll show you. This is the current one and two. So the green is route one and the blue is route two. So that's how they currently are. And then the extensions that we talked about would bring them to look like this. So either way, the downtown core, the courthouse will be covered. But then the other option is this overlay, the Orange overlay, which could be an on demand type service that could allow people to travel not only along these key corridors, but really anywhere within the zone. And it's intended for the general public. So it wouldn't be limited to people with disabilities. It wouldn't be limited to people over 60. It would be available for anybody as long as their trip is within the zone in this concept.

Speaker 4 (33:59)

Yeah. If I had to pick between an on demand or the expanded Circulator one, I would go on demand.

Boris Palchik (34:07)

Okay.

Speaker 3 (34:11)

I work at the Redners in Belair, but the only Redners you have listed is the one in Joppatowne, the one in Hickory you don't have listed as a stop the Joppa Farm Road one. I'm at the 2126 Northbound Green one. It should become a stop.

Boris Palchik (34:37)

Okay, so serving the Redners.

Speaker 3 (34:43)

Up in Hickory.

Boris Palchik (34:44)

Hickory? Yup. That's not the one you're referring to, is it.

Alan Doran (35:08)

Boris? There's a Redners in Hickory, which is near. I'm trying to read the map. That's the one we talked about earlier. That would be, I guess, a potential for the microtransit.

Boris Palchik (35:23)

Right.

Speaker 3 (35:23)

It's over by the Burger King.

Alan Doran (35:25)

Yeah.

Speaker 3 (35:29)

In the Lodge.

Alan Doran (35:31)

It's near that 543. It's right in that area.

Boris Palchik (35:34)

Yeah, I think this is it right here. This is the Redners. This Redners could be served with a demand response type of service. Are you familiar with this concept, Amber, with calling up to request a trip?

Speaker 3 (35:56)

Yeah.

Boris Palchik (35:57)

Okay. Are you comfortable with that concept? With that model?

Speaker 3 (36:01)

Yes.

Boris Palchik (36:03)

Have you ever used Uber or Lyft?

Speaker 3 (36:06)

Yes.

Boris Palchik (36:07)

Okay. So if there was a way that you could request a trip with your phone, you'd be comfortable with that approach?

Speaker 3 (36:14)

Yes.

Boris Palchik (36:15)

Okay. I think we have another hand up. Sonny.

Speaker 5 (36:22)

Sandy. Sorry.

Boris Palchik (36:23)

Oh, Sandy.

Speaker 5 (36:24)

Okay. With the microtransit that you're talking about, what kind of cost would that be, since you're talking about share rides and all.

Boris Palchik (36:44)

So the fares haven't been set or discussed because this is all in the concept phase. But generally speaking, microtransit fares are very much in line with transit fares. Sometimes they're slightly higher. So somewhere in the range of \$2 to \$4. That's kind of typically how microtransit operates in different properties around the country. It is a publicly funded service. So one of the benefits it has is that the fares are much more predictable than, let's say, Uber and Lyft, because with Uber and Lyft, you don't quite know what you're going to pay until the trip is completed. Because there's distance based pricing, there's surge pricing, all those things that typically does not apply to microtransit. Whatever the fare is set at is what the fare is. There are, in some cases, different prices by, let's say, time of day. If you're using it during late night hours, maybe there's a slightly higher fare than if you're using it during the day.

Sometimes there's difference in price depending on how far you are from fixed route service that's designed to not pull ridership away from fixed route service. So, for example, if you're within, let's say, a quarter mile of a fixed route, then maybe using the microtransit would cost you \$4.

Boris Palchik (38:06)

But if you're in an area that's not served by fixed route service, then maybe the fare would be \$2. So there's a lot of different concepts. There's a lot of different ways that this is done around the country, but we haven't yet gotten to the point of considering the fare structure yet.

Speaker 5 (38:23)

Okay.

Speaker 5 (38:24)

I really like the idea of you bringing the and if I understand this correctly, I'm sorry, you keep breaking up. So I'm only getting parts of this conversation, but. So we're talking eventually that the Redners could be a stop on a fixed route, is that correct?

Boris Palchik (38:46)

Not under the concept we've discussed tonight. None of the fixed routes that we've discussed tonight would serve that Redners. The Redners would be within the proposed microtransit zone, however.

Speaker 5 (39:00)

Okay. So the I can't tell what color that is. It looks kind of pinky to me. That's got Redners there. That's not a fixed route.

Boris Palchik (39:10)

That's the outline of the study area.

Speaker 5 (39:12)

Okay. Because with the Fountain Green apartments right there, and they've started putting up, we've got the Taco Bell and they're building something else at the corner and the crossover right there at the bypass. They've had a lot of accidents there. So I see a lot of people trying to cross the roads there, and I just think transportation in that area would certainly help before we have any fatalities.

Boris Palchik (39:52)

And it was Sandy, right? Your name is Sandy? Yes, Sandy. Do you have any preference or any opinions about the two service concepts of whether the area would be served by fixed route or Demand Response or microtransit? I know we haven't talked about a fixed rate option here, but let's say there was a fixed rate option. Do you prefer that over the microtransit model?

Speaker 5 (40:23)

I tend to like the microtransit only because I think, well, I've seen the time variances that Amber's had to wait with the link bus going back and forth to APG. And I know that's a whole different situation, but I see where more people would use that than waiting for a fixed route. But I also know that when Amber got into the apartments at Fountain Green, that was one of the first things that the people there at the apartment asked, is this going to be a fixed route? They were really anxious to have a bus route near the apartment.

Boris Palchik (41:14)

Yeah, that makes sense. And I can tell you the reason that we did not propose a fixed route out here is because there is a kind of a cluster of activity right there by the bypass. You've described it very well. But getting there requires going through areas that are fairly low density and don't have the potential to generate a lot of ridership. And that's as opposed to the concept that we talked about along 24, where you kind of constantly have activity, you have concentrations of housing, you have retail, you have a couple of even medical facilities. So that's why this was recommended for a fixed route service. And then the area up here was not it was based on land use, based on densities, based on concentration of activity and ridership generators. And that being said, the micro transit model or the demand response model, if there isn't demand for service, it wouldn't have to operate in this area because it's just on demand. So whereas fixed route service, once you commit it, once you commit to it, once you put it down, it has to operate back and forth, back and forth, whether there's ridership or not.

Boris Palchik (42:40)

And so one of the benefits of serving a new area that doesn't have any service today with the demand model is that it's less speculative. If there's ridership, great. If there's not, then those vehicles can be busy at work somewhere else. They don't have to go there. There's not demand.

Speaker 5 (42:58)

That makes sense. And I would think with gas prices getting so high that the more people are seeing the buses, the more they'll be in use in the future. But what you're saying makes total sense to look at the microtransit use more than a fixed route.

Boris Palchik (43:20)

And if the area continues to develop as it's developing now, you could always then switch over when the time is right to a fixed route service once ridership is high enough that it probably makes more sense to do that.

Speaker 5 [\(43:37\)](#)

Right.

Speaker 5 [\(43:38\)](#)

Okay.

Boris Palchik [\(43:44\)](#)

Any other questions or comments? No.

Boris Palchik [\(43:51\)](#)

Okay.

Boris Palchik [\(43:52\)](#)

If not, then that is the presentation for this evening. The next steps now are to go back and refine these concepts, to take into account what we've heard tonight and we had a stakeholder meeting earlier, earlier today as well. So take those comments into consideration and develop final recommendations that are sort of priced out, that have vehicles assigned to them, number of vehicles which then allows us to estimate costs and so on. And then in a couple of months we'll come back and have another sort of final set of public meetings with those details. And then the next step after that is to present our report for the small area study to Harford Link as well as MTA and MDOT and they will take the recommendations and do the next steps with them if they choose to implement them. But those are the next couple of steps in this process. Any other questions or comments from anybody?

Speaker 5 [\(45:06\)](#)

I do have one. This is Sandy. The flyer that was posted for this meeting with the phone number to call in. It did not work.

Boris Palchik [\(45:19\)](#)

The phone number didn't work?

Speaker 5 [\(45:21\)](#)

No. So that's why I missed the beginning of this meeting was we were trying to download the app and get online this way. But yeah, I tried several times to pull the phone number and put in the code.

Boris Palchik [\(45:37\)](#)

That's strange. I'll have to look into that. I'm glad you made it on. We'll have to look into what happened there. But this meeting is being recorded and we can post it for anybody. If you think that anybody missed this meeting, they can view the meeting after the fact online. Where will it be posted?

Alan Doran [\(46:01\)](#)

It will be on our website, harfordtransitlink.org.

Boris Palchik [\(46:03\)](#)

Okay, so the meeting will be posted in its entirety, right?

Alan Doran [\(46:09\)](#)

And whenever we hold sessions like this, you can always go to the website and join in that way also. Okay.

Speaker 5 [\(46:18\)](#)

Thank you.

Boris Palchik [\(46:20\)](#)

Thank you.

Speaker 3 [\(46:22\)](#)

That's how I had to get into it, mom. I had to go into the main website.

Boris Palchik [\(46:33\)](#)

Again. Glad everybody was able to join us. So last call for any questions or comments. All right, well, then, thank you all very much for all the feedback and we'll have the meeting posted online with the next couple of days. So let all your friends who couldn't make it know that it's available there. Alright. Thanks so much. Have a good night. Okay.

Gary Blazinsky [\(46:59\)](#)

Thank you, Boris. Nice job.

Gary Blazinsky [\(47:01\)](#)

Appreciate it. Bye bye.

Speaker 5 [\(47:03\)](#)

Thank you.

Alan Doran [\(47:04\)](#)

Thank you, everyone for attending this evening.