

Feedback Loops and the Need to be Heard

Michael Helta

*Deputy Director of Planning and Programming
Maryland Transit Administration
Baltimore, MD*

Overview

- MTA 101
- BaltimoreLink 101
- Obstacles
- External/Internal Efforts
- Next Steps
- Lessons Learned

- ***11th largest public transit system in the nation***
- **Service Profile:**
 - Local Bus
 - Commuter Bus/Rail
 - Light Rail
 - Metro
 - Mobility
- **Annual Ridership: 111 million**
- **Employees: 3,300**
- **Operating/Capital Budget: \$820M/\$3.1B**

BALTIMORE



In the Beginning...



10/26/2015:

“A transformative \$135 million plan to improve Baltimore's bus system”

“The bottom line is that Baltimore's current transit system is a mess. It is poorly integrated and simply doesn't make any sense.”

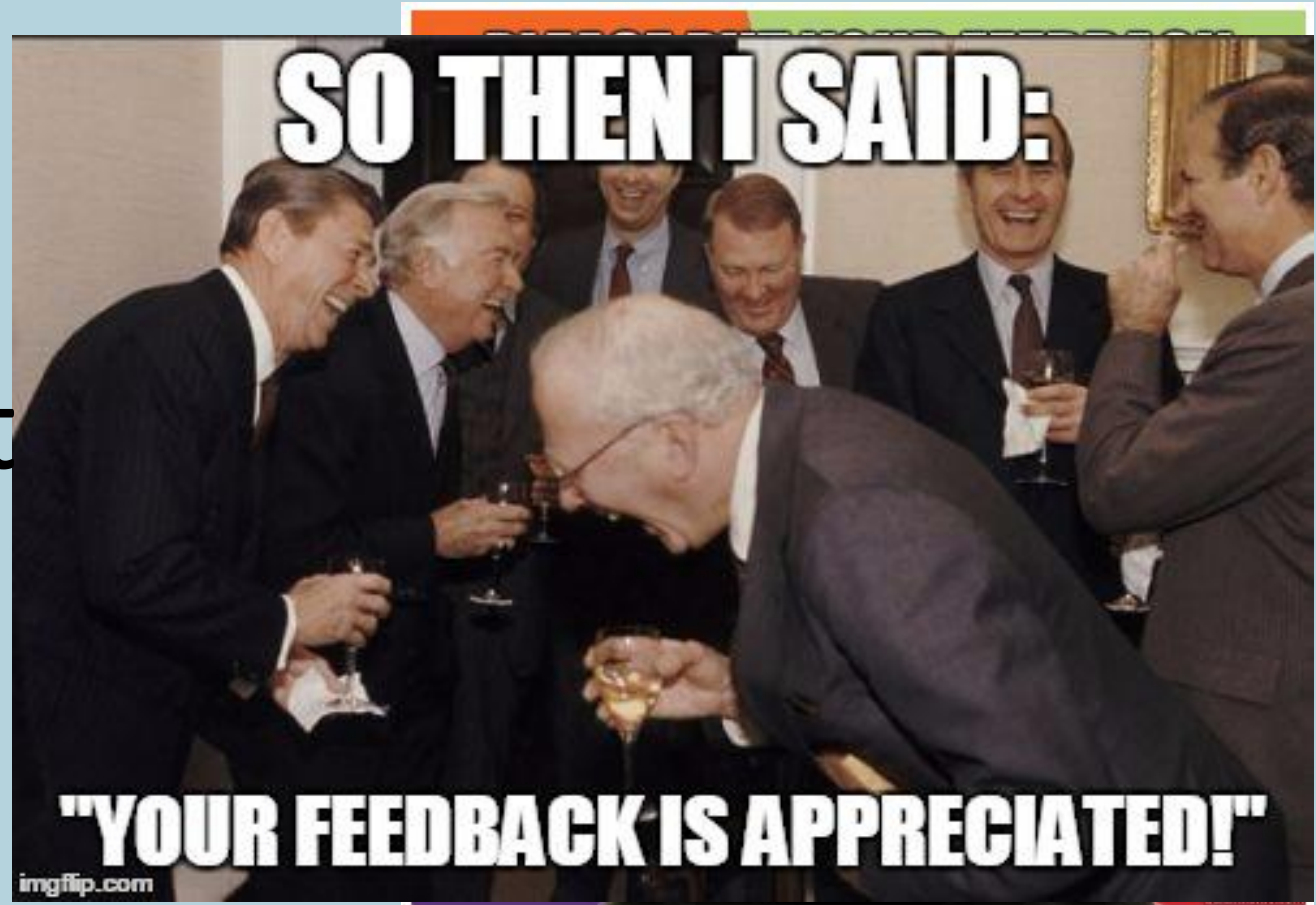


The Mission

- Redesign the core bus network
- Design and construct infrastructure
- Educate the public
- Educate the agency
- Be ready for roll-out in 18 months....

Phase 1: Initial Obstacles

DistDostbt



Solution: Hire Morpheus



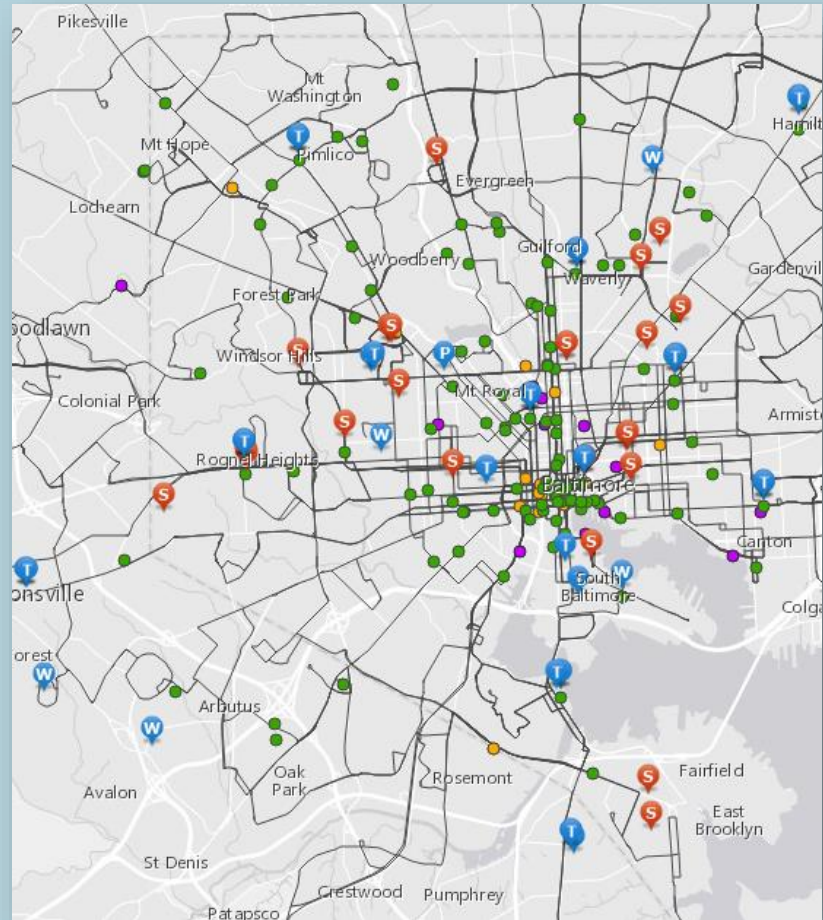
Solution: Creating a Feedback Loop

- Inform passionately
 - Listen intently
 - Modify considerately
-

- Inform contextually

Phase 2: “You Spoke – We Listened.”

Show up...again



Phase 2: “You Spoke. We Listened”

- Customize to your audience

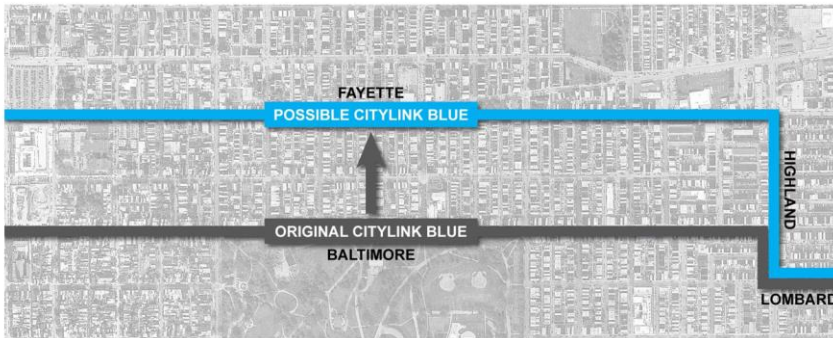
MTA is currently developing solutions to these concerns:

- Baltimore Street
 - Possibly moving service from Baltimore back to Fayette
 - Possibly moving service from Orleans back to Fayette
- Milton Avenue
 - Possibly moving service from Milton back to Linwood
- Eastern Avenue
 - Possibly moving service from Boston to Eastern to reintroduce frequent downtown access
 - Possibly removing service from Fleet

Customize to your audience

BALTIMORE Possible Solutions

- Issue 1: Service on Baltimore



BALTIMORE Possible Solutions

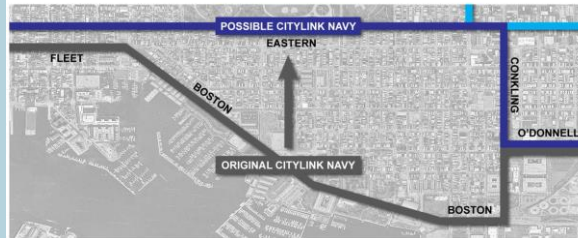
- Issue 2: Service on Orleans



- Issue 3: Service on Milton



- Issue 4: Lack of Frequent Downtown Service on Eastern



- Issue 5: Service on Fleet



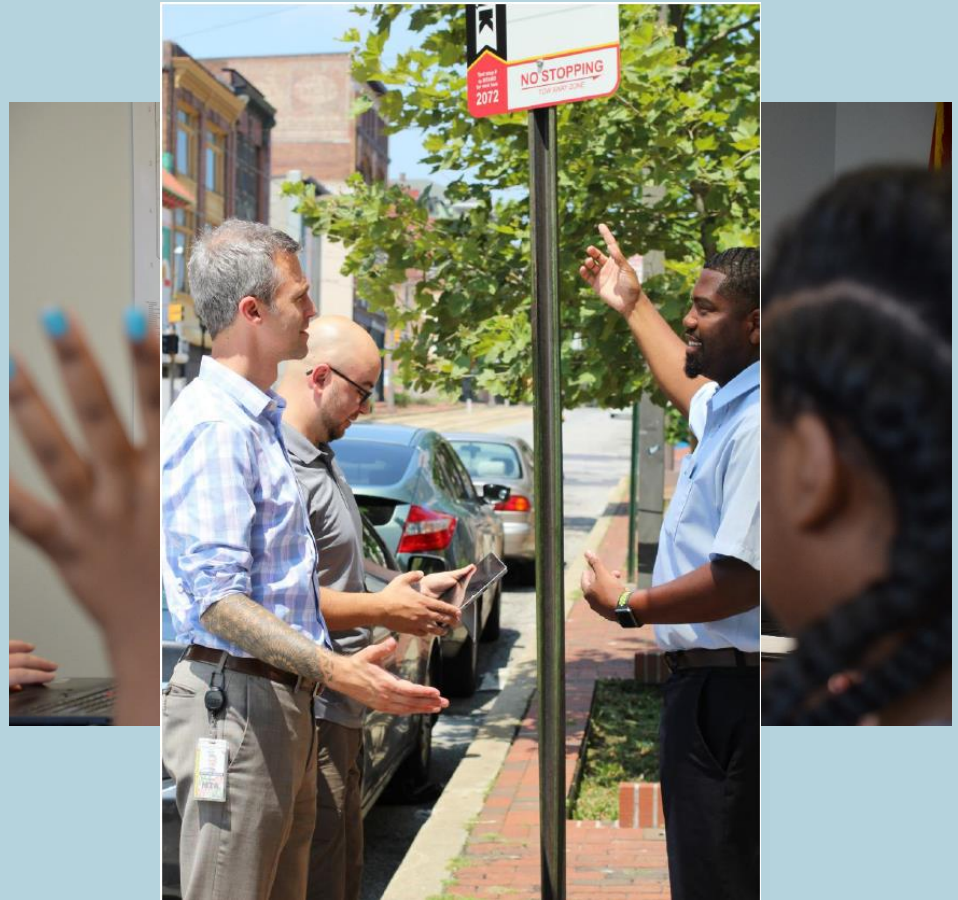
Your Employees Matter

Operator Inreach

- Go to their office
- Give them the tools
- Get answers
- Report back

Next Steps: Continuing the Conversation

Expand your circle
Become the student



Lessons Learned

- Responsibility is on us
- Stop being defensive
- Respect people's feelings...
 - Even if you completely disagree with their POV
- Customize
- Speak their language...not yours
- Be fallible, be responsive
- Come to the table with your hands full



Keep Talking. Keep Listening.

Thank you for your time

Michael Helta

Deputy Director of Planning and Programming

Maryland Transit Administration

Baltimore, MD

mhelta@mta.Maryland.gov

410-767-3795