

SCMaglev Opposition in the United States

January 26, 2022

Thank You

Thank you for inviting the Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit (MCRT) to present today.

We are honored by your invitation.

Today we will highlight the major issues in the four topics areas requested for this presentation.

And a special thank you to Mayuko Yanai, Friends of the Earth Japan, and the Nashinoki Peace Academy for the invitation to make this presentation.

Introductions

Today, the presenters will be:

Kyle Hart

Serves as the Mid-Atlantic Field Representative for the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA).



Takisha James

Mayor, Town of Bladensburg, Maryland, and President of the Maryland Mayors Association.



Dan Woomer

Senior Executive Board Member, and Past President of the MCRT. Retired Senior Business Operations Officer for the U.S. Department of Energy, and adjunct faculty for the University of Maryland.



Presentation Topics

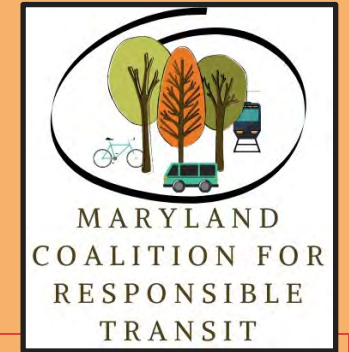
Major points in four topic areas:

- ❖ Overview of the SCMaglev project in the United States.
- ❖ Environmental and Social Impacts of the SCMaglev.
- ❖ Problems the SCMaglev could bring to our communities and residents.
- ❖ Growing the opposition to building and operating the SCMaglev.

Two important U.S. federal government acronyms you will hear throughout the presentation:

FRA – Federal Railroad Administration

NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act of 1969



Topic 1:

Overview of the SCMaglev in the United States

Early History of SCMaglev Project in the United States

1960: SCMaglev concept and design is created in the United States (U.S.) at Brookhaven National Laboratory by PhDs Powell & Danby. The technology is shared with Germany and Japan.

2011 - 2012: The Northeast Maglev (TNEM) starts lobbying effort. TNEM starts making campaign contributions to political candidates.

2013: Prime Minister Shinzo Abe offers to provide the U.S. the maglev guideway and propulsion system free for the first portion of the line, linking Washington and Baltimore via Baltimore-Washington International Airport, a distance of about 64 kilometers (40 miles).

2015: Maryland Governor Larry Hogan takes trip to Japan with the CEO of Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR)/the Northeast Maglev (TNEM) to ride the SCMaglev.

2016: BWRR obtains an idle railroad franchise from State of Maryland with power of eminent domain. Governor Hogan authorizes the Maryland Department of Transportation to proceed with the study and preliminary design of SCMaglev system, obtaining a \$28 million (U.S.) federal grant to develop the Environmental Impact Study (EIS).

2017-2018: The Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR)² identifies multiple paths for SCMaglev between two cities. Local opposition grows as Maryland communities fight to stop the construction of the SCMaglev.

2018: Final selection of two alternative paths that run through many communities where Environmental Justice (EJ) populations live, and large swathes of federal and protected land.

1. Source: Pfanner, Eric. "Japan Pitches Its High-Speed Train With an Offer to Finance" New York Times. www.nytimes.com/2013/11/19/business/international/japan-pitches-americans-on-its-maglev-train.html.

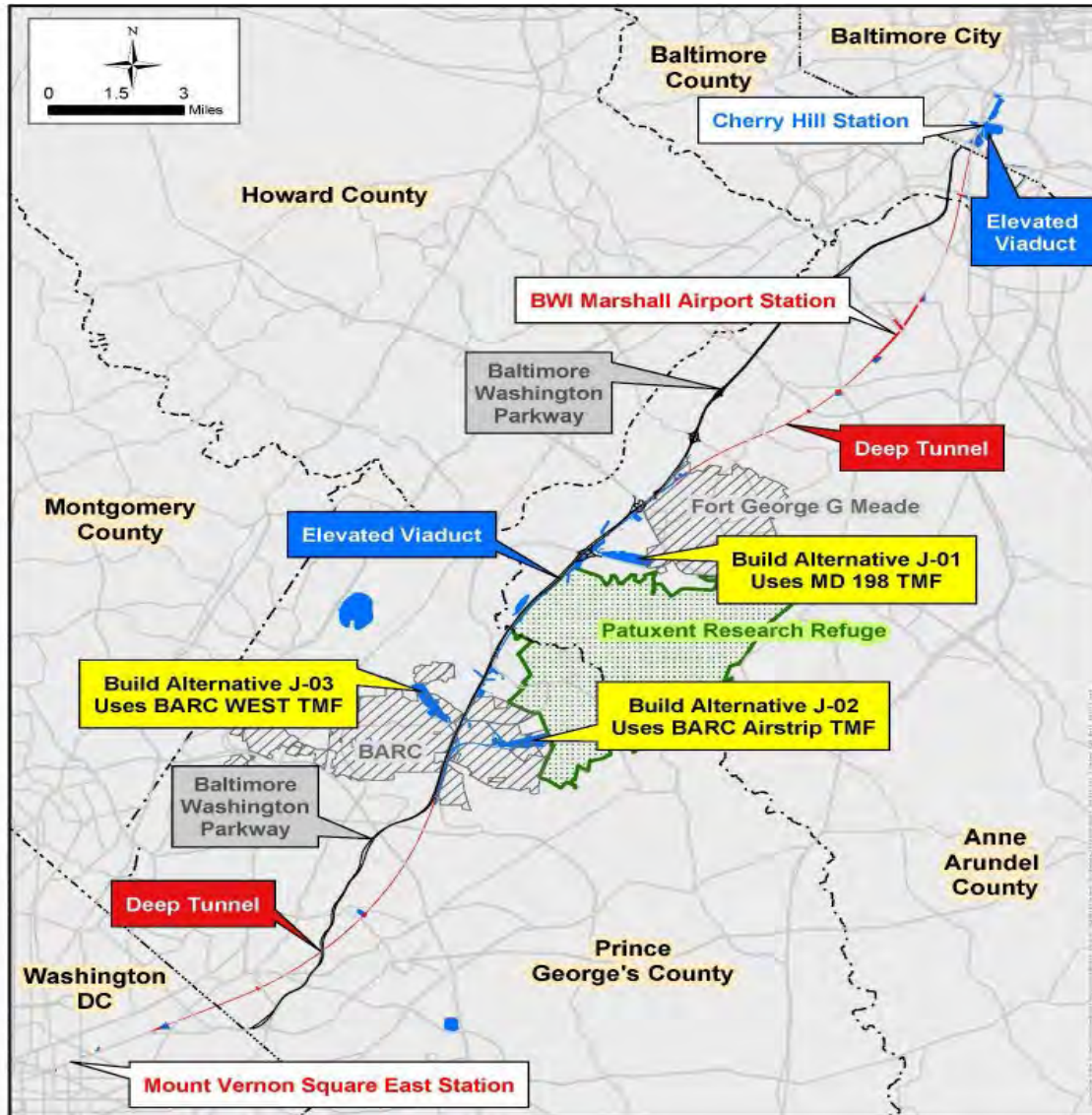
2. The Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) is the project coordinator for building the SCMaglev segment between Baltimore and Washington, D.C.

Where is Maryland?

The state of Maryland is located on the east coast of the United States, in the Mid-Atlantic region of the country, adjacent to Washington, D.C.



State Flag of Maryland

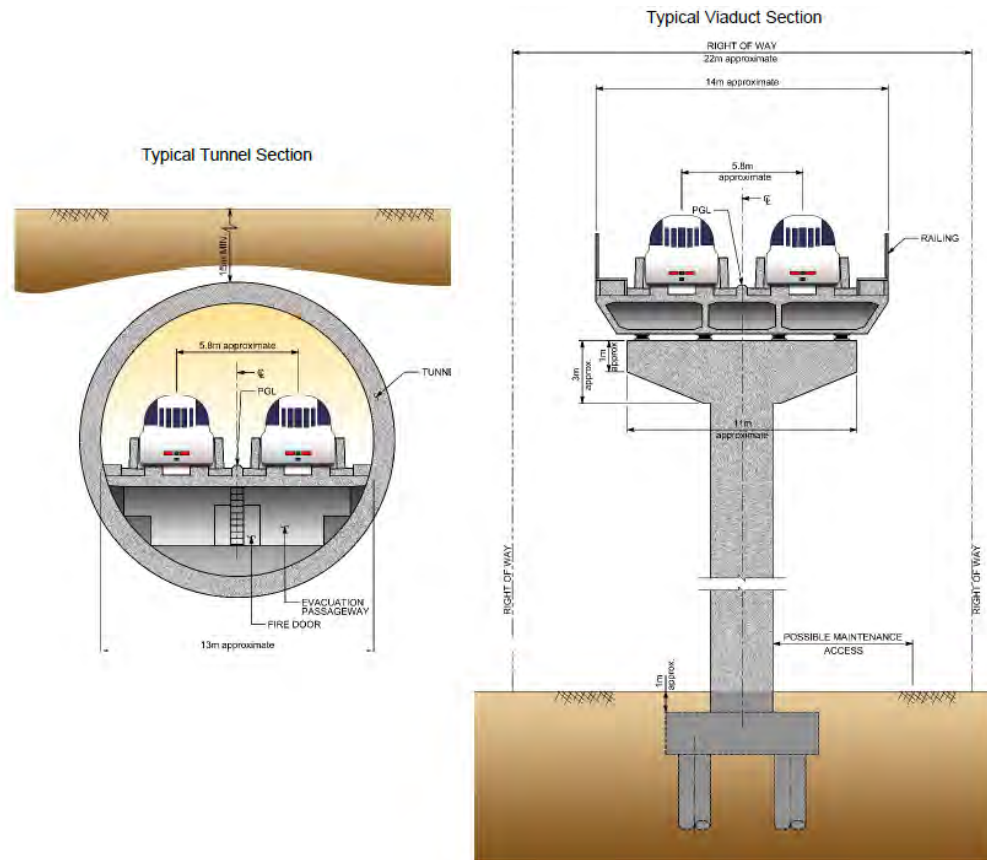


The Proposed SCMaglev Route

- To implement the system would include construction of power substations, ventilation facilities, one rolling stock depot (RSD), and other maintenance and/or ancillary facilities.
- Two alternative routes on either side of the Baltimore-Washington (BW) Parkway between Washington, D.C. and Baltimore.
- Cuts through two counties, Prince George's and Anne Arundel, with only one stop south of Baltimore at Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) airport.
- Underground through Washington, D.C. and underground to BWI and Baltimore (red-south).
- Above ground in the Greenbelt Forest Preserve and again at Baltimore terminal station (blue-north).
- Above ground portion runs through several major preserves and a refuge.

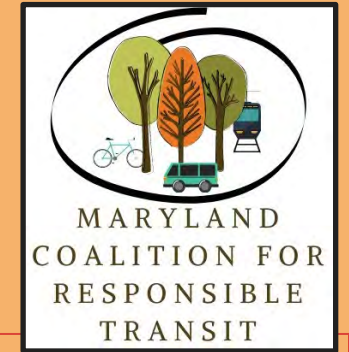
◀ Build Alternatives J-01 through J-03 Projected Study Area Map source: Source: DEIS Appendix D.06: Aesthetics, Visuals, etc.

SCMaglev Tunneled and Above Ground Segment



Source: DEIS Appendix D.06: Aesthetics, Visuals, etc.

- Tunneled section would run between 24 meters to 46 meters (80 to 150 feet) underground, as measures from the top of the guideway.
- Tunneled section will run through Washington, D.C., under the Anacostia River and into Maryland.
- SCMaglev will come above ground north of City of Greenbelt in a Forest Preserve.
- Elevated sections would be up to 46 meters (150 feet) above the travel lanes of the Baltimore-Washington Parkway. ***That's 15 meters (50 feet) above tree-top level.***
- A second tunneled section will travel from Fort Meade under the Patapsco River and into the terminal station in Baltimore.



Topic 2:

Environmental and Social Impacts of the SCMaglev

Potential Environmental Impacts to Natural Resources

- Tunneling under two major rivers - the Anacostia River on the Washington, D.C. and Maryland border, and the Patapsco River on the Anne Arundel County and Baltimore City border.
- Large increase in impervious surfaces and possible impact to watersheds, including the Arundel Aquifer, which provides the drinking water to much of Anne Arundel County.
- Significant concerns about cumulative impacts to the Chesapeake Bay, the largest estuary in the world, receiving millions of taxpayer dollars (U.S.) to clean up.
- Taking over tracts of protected and preserved public land:
 - *Beltsville Agricultural Research Center*
 - *Patuxent Research Refuge*
 - *Greenbelt and Greenbelt Forest Preserve*
 - *Baltimore-Washington Parkway*

Significance of the Environmental Impact Study

- The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) required SCMaglev's Draft EIS (DEIS) provide a chance to start assessing the cumulative effects to cities and towns along the 64 kilometer (40-mile) path. Below is a list of some of the most important issues residents and opposition leaders identified in their review of the U.S. Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA's) 4,100 page NEPA submission.
 - Location of an 809,371-square-meter (200-acre) train depot in protected natural lands.
 - Locations of ventilation stations that will also serve as tunnel boring sites in neighborhoods and towns, each taking 6,070 to over 12,141 square meters (1.5 to over 3.0 acres).
 - Definition of easement (the ability to take property) when construction encroaches on a resident's property. How easement is defined in the DEIS and what it will mean if BWRR is allowed to exercise eminent domain angered many citizens and moved them to express their dissent through many forms of opposition.

Significance of the Environmental Impact Study

Building the SCMaglev would:

Take an area like this:



Patuxent Research Refuge – North Tract
Courtesy of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



Turn it into this:



**809,371-square-meter Train Maintenance Facility and
Accompanying Chemical, Light and Noise Pollution**

Significance of the Environmental Impact Study

Building the SCMaglev would:

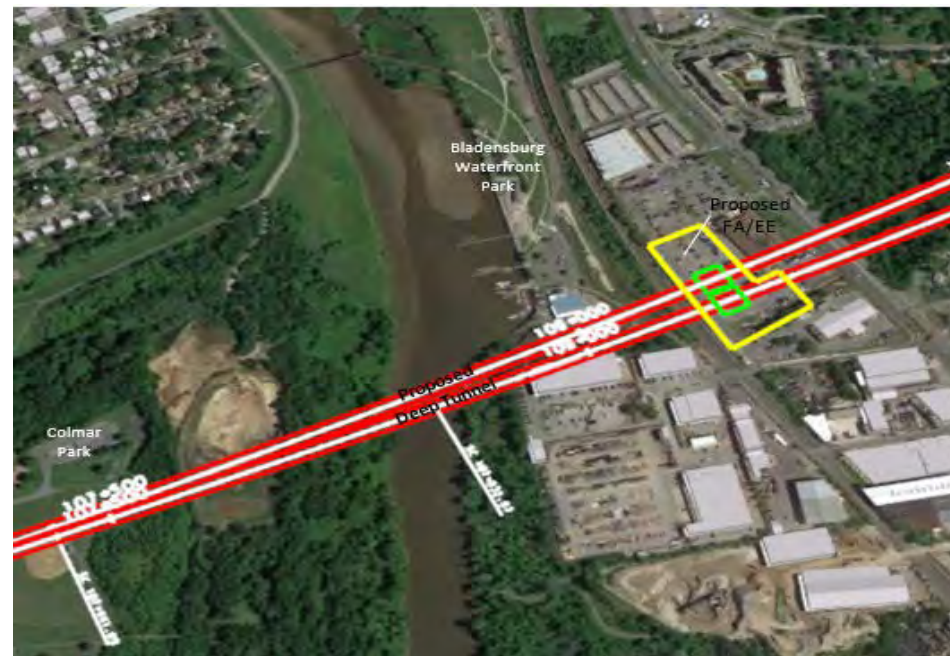
Take an area like this:



Town of Bladensburg Waterfront Park



And build:



12,141-square-meter Tunnel Boring Site and Ventilation Shaft

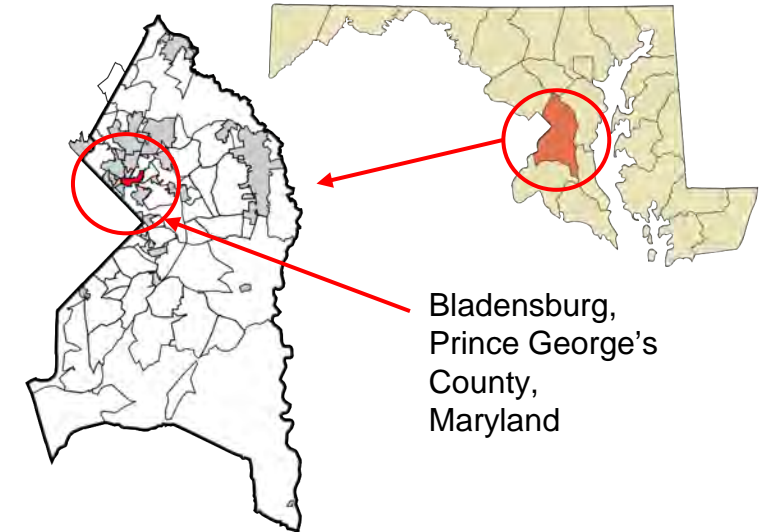
Impacts on Communities and Residents

Bladensburg, Maryland:

- Town in Prince George's County, Maryland, with a population of about 10,000 people.
- 13.8 kilometers (8.6 miles) from central Washington.

Municipal Concerns:

- Environmental impacts to our local communities are of major concern include:
 - Concerns around environmental impacts to local ecosystems.
 - Constructing tunnels in a flood plain.
 - Proximity to a local landfill in a neighboring municipality, Colmar Manor.
 - Ventilation station proposed to be at the Bladensburg Waterfront Park along the bike trail.



For additional information about historic Bladensburg, Maryland, see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bladensburg,_Maryland.

Impacts on Communities and Residents

Bladensburg, Maryland

Municipal Concerns (continued):

- The train will bypass Prince George's County.
 - There will not be any stops in Prince George's County offering residents direct access.
- Economic benefits to impacted communities are not proven.
 - There are no guarantees residents from local municipalities will benefit from jobs during the construction phase or the SCMaglev's daily operation.
 - The train will not bring visitors or workers to support our local economy.

Bladensburg Waterfront Park



Impacts on Communities and Residents

Bladensburg, Maryland

Better Options for Municipalities:

- Residents prefer efforts to reduce the number of commuter trips and encourage smart growth.
 - Residents are transitioning away from long commutes. They want retail, housing, entertainment, and artistic resources offerings closer to their local communities. The trends are toward walkable and bikeable access to these to reduce our carbon footprint.
 - According to American Association of Retired Persons (www.aarp.com): “We believe that communities should provide safe, walkable streets; age-friendly housing and transportation options; access to needed services; and opportunities for residents of all ages to participate in community life.”
- We strongly advocate for increased investments for improving existing rail options, as well as increasing the number of bikeable and walkable communities.



Bladensburg Bike Trail

Impacts on Communities and Residents

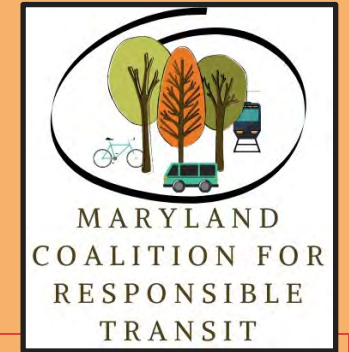
Bladensburg, Maryland

Better Options for Municipalities:

- Supporting the Washington Council of Governments Regional Goals (called Region Forward) are best for local municipalities. Some goals include:
 - A broad range of public and private transportation choices for our region that maximizes accessibility and affordability. (The SCMaglev offers neither of those options.)
 - A transportation system that maximizes community connectivity and walkability, while minimizing ecological harm to the region and surrounding areas.

Bladensburg Waterfront Park





Topic 3:

Problems the SCMaglev Could Bring to Our Communities and Residents

Deficiencies with the SCMaglev of Concern to Residents and Communities

The SCMaglev project does not fit the goals of U.S. President Biden.

- Non-compliance with several state and federal environmental laws and guidelines.
- Safety of the SCMaglev needs independent assessment from the Federal Railroad Administration.
- List of environmental impacts that cannot be mitigated is extensive.
- Finance and ridership discussions are not well-supported - key facts are hidden from the public.
- Impacts on communities and residents require additional analyses and a deeper, broader scope.
- Impacts on Environmental Justice communities is significant. Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.
- The operation and value of the SCMaglev is not compared with existing systems, as required by the U.S. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Key MCRT Findings

- There are obvious financial uncertainties of the SCMaglev project and operation.
- There was and continues to be a failure to provide the full scope of information required for independent analyses to ascertain the viability of the Project (for example, projected ridership data).
- The environmental impact of the disruption, destruction, and fragmentation of hundreds of square meters of protected and fragile environment areas needs to be fully researched and publicly reported.
- The industrial levels of pollution released in our watersheds and communities needs to be fully researched and publicly reported.
- No NEPA-required side-by-side comparison to existing ground-based high-speed transportation systems, such as Amtrak, Amtrak Acela, and MARC¹ were included. Enhancing the existing rail systems is a far better alternative than building an expensive, likely tax-dollars subsidized, transportation system only the wealthy can afford to use on a regular basis.
- An independent assessment and evaluation of the train, structures, and systems against U.S. safety standards on a system currently running on a test and development track is required prior to any decision to move forward.

1. MARC - Maryland Area Regional Commuter

Crashworthiness and Other Safety Concerns



Photos of the September 22, 2006 German Transrapid International maglev crash in Lathen, Germany.



Justifications for the ongoing building of their SCMaglev are being questioned in Japan itself. The planned 2027 date for starting the first operation of the Tokyo to Nagoya is unlikely to be met. This would make the United States the first place where the safety of SCMaglev technology would be tested in high-frequency commercial operation.

MCRT Recommendations

(1) Best Option: FRA to select the No Build option.

Over \$28 million (U.S.) of taxpayer dollars have already been spent studying the cost and benefit of building the SCMaglev. The financial, environmental, and community impact costs far outweigh any benefit. Stop the Project now and invest the saved tax dollars into repairing and upgrading existing transportation infrastructure (roads, bridges, tunnels) including Amtrak and regional rail systems such as MARC and VRE¹.

(2) Alternative Option Part 1 of 2: FRA to establish Rules of Particular Applicability.

If the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) decides to continue the consideration of building the SCMaglev, the FRA must establish U.S. Safety Standards (Rules of Particular Applicability - RPA) and allow for public comment. The RPA must independently assess, evaluate, and test support structures, and support and operating systems, especially the cyber security strength, the crashworthiness, and survivability of the train.

BEFORE any deliberation by the FRA on a decision to begin construction of the SCMaglev is considered, the FRA must provide these analyses and findings to the public with a 180-day review and comment period.

(continued)

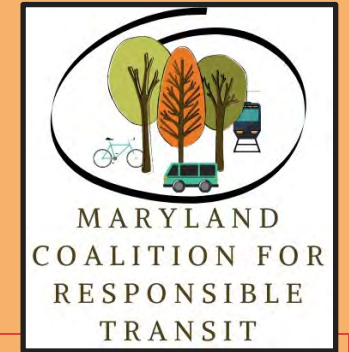
1. MARC - Maryland Area Regional Commuter, and VRE - Virginia Rail Express

MCRT Recommendations

(3) **Alternative Option Part 2 of 2: FRA to prepare a supplemental DEIS.**

A team of experts, as well as local city and county governments, community, civic, and environmental organizations, identified many deficiencies, missing and obfuscated information, and missing analyses and data during the review and analysis of the SCMaglev DEIS.

Therefore, a supplemental DEIS should be assembled to address the comments, concerns, and questions identified and provided to the FRA. Before any deliberation by the FRA on a decision to begin construction of the SCMaglev is considered, this supplemental DEIS needs to be provided to the public with a 180-day review and comment period.



Topic 4:

Growing Opposition to the

SCMaglev

Growing Opposition

- From 2016 – 2019:
 - Our communities first became aware of the proposal to build the SCMaglev.
 - While several different paths for the SCMaglev were under consideration, groups of concerned residents shared information on social media.
 - Questions about financial stability, the potential health impacts, and potential environmental damage were being identified and discussed among the locations along the alternate paths.
 - Concerned residents came together and formed the *Citizens Against the SCMaglev* (CATS). They started contacting elected officials and testifying at local, county, and state government hearings.
 - CATS created a website and Facebook page to collect and share their and others research. (Links to those sites are available in the Appendix.)
- Through 2020, CATS members and leadership have shared information with state and congressional elected officials. CATS members testified before the Maryland legislature raising their concerns about building and operating the SCMaglev.

Consolidation of Opposition Under the MCRT

- In January 2021, the nonprofit *Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit* (MCRT) was formed to mobilize opposition to respond to the federal SCMaglev Draft Environmental Impact Study (DEIS) and to sustain opposition beyond the DEIS phase.
- MCRT goals include:
 - Build on the work CATS has achieved.
 - Bring other concerned organizations together to grow the opposition to building the SCMaglev.
 - Raise funds to fuel opposition efforts.
 - Educate the public through community presentations, social media, information tables at local events, and information release to news media, such as local newspapers, radio, and television news reporters.

Growing Opposition Beyond the MCRT

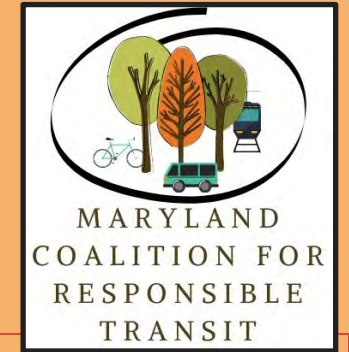
- Several federal agencies, like the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the U.S. Department of Interior, have expressed serious concerns with building and operating the SCMaglev.
- While opposition will be a long and hard struggle against a wealthy and influential opponent, the MCRT will continue coordinate and consolidate its opposition and continue our efforts to stop the building of the SCMaglev.
- The MCRT has received and posted opposition comments from federal agencies, and elected officials, as well as community, civic, and environmental organizations on our website. To see and read these go to www.mcrt-action.org, and click on the “SCMaglev Opposition” tab.
- Currently, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has paused the review schedule for the building the SCMaglev for a second time because of receiving so many opposition comments. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has also paused their permitting review. The MCRT has met with the FRA review team and the White House’s Council on Environmental Quality office leadership to discuss the reasons and justifications to oppose construction of the SCMaglev.

This concludes our presentation and video.

The copy of our slide presentation includes supplemental material providing links to the Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit website and Facebook page, as well as our email address.

Also included are brief biographies for each of the speakers and two short descriptions of the Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit and the Citizens Against the SCMaglev.





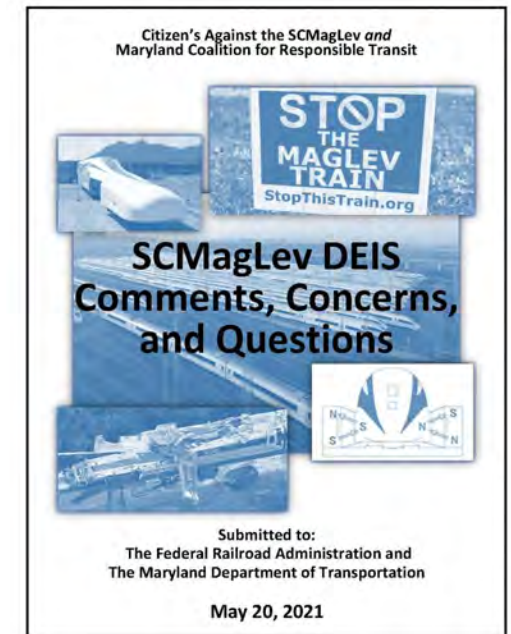
Appendix: Supplementary Material

For More Information and How to Help Stop the SCMaglev

A copy of the MCRT submission can be downloaded from www.mcrt-action.org.
Go to the SCMaglev Opposition tab and click on:

“MCRT SCMaglev DEIS Comments”

CATS and MCRT have also produced a series of short position papers on various issues, concerns, and questions about the SCMaglev and the real cost to Anne Arundel County, Prince George’s County, and the state of Maryland. These informative research papers can also be found at www.mcrt-action.org under the “SCMaglev Opposition” tab.



- Support the NO BUILD option -

Biographies of the MCRT Presenters



Kyle Hart – Serves as the Mid-Atlantic Field Representative for the National Parks Conservation Association, where he has worked for the past two years. He graduated from Hampden-Sydney College in 2016 with a degree in political science and biology. Kyle has worked for environmental nonprofits for the past five years. In his free time, he can be found hiking, camping, and fishing in America's National Parks.



Biographies of the MCRT Presenters

Mayor Takisha James – The Honorable Takisha James is the two-term mayor of Bladensburg, Maryland, first elected in October 2, 2017, and reelected October 4, 2021. She also serves as President of the Maryland Mayors Association, an organization that represents mayors from across the state of Maryland. She continues to work with grassroots advocates to protect our community by actively engaging with them and our elected municipal, county, state, and national leaders to oppose the Superconducting Magnetic Levitation train project. Mayor James is married to Walter Lee James Jr. former mayor of Bladensburg, for 21 years. Together they have one daughter who is a high school senior and is preparing for college in the fall of 2022. Mayor James studied psychology at Howard University.



Biographies of the MCRT Presenters

Daniel “Dan” Woomer, PhD (ABD) – Is a community activist and technical expert. He retired after a long career, including positions with Westinghouse Defense Center, Johns Hopkins University’s Applied Physics Laboratory, and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). During his career with the DOE, he worked in various positions with the Energy Information Administration, and the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs. Dan also helped set up DOE’s Office of Technology Transitions. He also served as an adjunct faculty member with the University of Maryland University College, where he developed and taught mathematics, supervisory, and leadership classes. Dan is a MCRT senior board member and the past president. He lives in Linthicum Heights, Anne Arundel County, Maryland, and is married to his college sweetheart, Patti Filaseta. For additional information, see: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/daniel-woomer-11829613>.



Who is the MCRT?

The Maryland Coalition for Responsible Transit (MCRT) formed in 2020, as more and more communities and organizations joined forces to oppose the building and operation of the SCMaglev. The MCRT's mission is to evaluate transit projects for social equity, environmental justice, environmental impact, economic viability, and community accessibility. The MCRT believes the Baltimore-Washington SCMaglev must be stopped in order to implement future transit projects that meet these criteria at a much lower price, and much less risk and impact to communities and the environment.

Thus, we support the No Build option and are working to stop this project through the National Environmental Policy Act process, specifically by building public capacity to respond to the Federal Railroad Administration's Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The MCRT is actively gathering and sharing information on the environmental, ecological, community, and financial impacts that building and operating the SCMaglev will have on communities, counties, and Maryland. For more information about the MCRT and to make a donation to support opposition to building the SCMaglev, go to: www.mcrt-action.org.

Who is CATS?

Citizens Against the SCMaglev (CATS) formed in 2016 to address the initial Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR) and the Northeast MagLev (TNEM) proposal to build the first phase of Japan's Superconducting Magnetic Levitation (SCMaglev) train between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. BWRR's long-term goal is to build the SCMaglev systems to New York City by way of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. As community residents and activists attended BWRR presentations describing their construction plans and the operation of the SCMaglev, many questions and concerns were raised that BWRR could not, or would not, answer. Residents came together to represent the interests of their communities and form CATS.

CATS has evolved into a confederation of scientists, engineers, experts, community organizations, and citizens in support of mass transportation infrastructure improvements that benefit our communities and region. CATS opposes the construction of an expensive transportation system serving a small minority of the wealthy people at the cost of taxpayer funds. CATS leadership have written numerous articles and provided testimony on legislation in Annapolis, the seat of Maryland government, and have met with elected officials in Washington, D.C. to share information challenging the promises and claims made by BWRR. CATS has presented analyses on the extreme environmental, ecological, community, and financial costs and impacts building and operating of the SCMaglev will have on communities, counties, and the state of Maryland. Importantly, CATS has identified better high-speed rail and commuter rail alternatives to better serve all residents, businesses, and commercial entities. For more information, go to the CATS Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/citizensagainstSCMaglev, and the Stop This Train website at: www.stopthistrain.org.