



# citybizlist

## MDOT Secretary Pete Rahn Addresses NAIOP Maryland Developers Council

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Pete Rahn, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Transportation (pictured second from left) with Thomas Fahs and Carl Nelson of Corporate Office Properties Trust and Danielle Beyrodt of Hill Management Services, addressed a wide variety of topics from fighting traffic congestion on Interstate 270 to driverless cars, at a luncheon speech before approximately thirty members of the NAIOP Maryland Developers Council. The event, open to leaders of the commercial real estate trade organization, was held at the Capital Grille in Baltimore City.



### His comments included:

- We recognize that MDOT has a lot to do, but we have to accomplish it much faster. I have a sign in my office that reads "Speed Limit – Warp 7." Our department understands that we must invest money for the benefit of the taxpayers, not us. We have made real progress regarding the highway access permit process, but we understand the need for further streamlining. Our goal is to remain a good partner with businesses operating within the State.

- The Baltimore public transportation system is abysmal. We have heard stories about employees losing their jobs because of the inconsistency of this system. That is why we have formed BaltimoreLink, a \$135 million plan designed to totally transform the system by taking an Etch-A-Sketch approach to the problem by shaking things up and re-drawing things and re-formulating things. We are integrating data to accomplish this by including information concerning where people live and work.

- We are working with a yearly budget of \$5 billion but everything is expensive. Nearly every proposal brought into our office starts at \$1 billion. The development of the Purple Line represents a \$5.6 billion investment. We have started the process to help alleviate traffic congestion on Interstate 270, recognized as the most congested highway in the State – and are accepting submissions to our request for information. We are attracting international attention to develop a solution and hope to initiate work next year.

- We are making progress and speeding things up. I was told that the completion of the doubling of MD Route 404 was expected to occur in 2019. This was unacceptable. We gathered the decision-makers together, re-configured the plan, and now expect this to be finished by Thanksgiving 2017.



*Liz Tarran-Jones, Merritt Properties; Jim Lighthizer, Chesapeake Real Estate Group; Terry Anne Hearn, Residential Title & Escrow and Edward McDonald, Maryland Department of Transportation*