



A NEW AGENDA FOR AMERICAN CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

America’s cities are places of opportunity—with the greatest potential to save and change lives.

Our metropolitan areas are engines of innovation and leaders in sustainability. They foster competition, inclusiveness, and creativity that allow communities to flourish. As a result, American cities from Pittsburgh to Los Angeles are building strong, resilient local economies—breaking down cycles of poverty, laying the foundations of a clean energy future, and restoring investments in our common good.

As president, Governor O’Malley will take actions to harness the potential of America’s cities and towns to build a stronger American economy with opportunity for all. Today, our cities’ biggest challenge is ensuring that everyone—in every neighborhood—can enjoy the benefits of the good things happening in our metro areas. Our country needs new leadership that is eager to empower mayors and local officials, giving them the tools and flexibility they need to make nation-leading progress.

As President, Governor O’Malley will empower American cities to:

- Rebuild our nation’s urban infrastructure;
- Spur investments in economic development and our clean energy economy; and
- Ensure safe, healthy, and equitable communities for all.

REBUILD URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE

Provide Mobility And Choice In Transportation For All Americans

Mobility is central to the American Dream. But today, an over-reliance on one mode of transportation—the car—and an underinvestment basic infrastructure have eroded our freedom and ability to move, to get to work and to connect.

The next president must empower Americans to choose the mode of transportation that meets their needs and preferences. By building safe, modern, and integrated transportation systems, we can provide better access to economic opportunities, create jobs, lay the groundwork for a clean energy economy, and improve the quality of life for all Americans.

As president, Governor O'Malley will:

- **Restore The Highway Trust Fund—And Support For Transportation Choices.** We know how to overhaul our crumbling infrastructure—but because of Republican obstruction, we just stopped doing it. More than 20 years have passed since Congress adjusted the gas and diesel taxes that support the Highway Trust Fund, which pays for the vast majority of our transportation investments. And today, the trust fund is [nearly insolvent](#).

As president, O'Malley will fight to make sure that the Highway Trust Fund and its [dedicated Mass Transit Account](#) are fully able to meet our future transportation needs—while prioritizing investments in projects that reduce traffic and congestion, improve sustainability, and otherwise help to build a more mobile, clean energy economy. To do so, he supports [modernizing user fees](#) in the short term; while moving to a [more sustainable funding source](#), such as mileage-based fees, within eight years in office.

- **Overhaul Funding Formulas to Expand Transit Investment.** Throughout our history, infrastructure development has underpinned every wave of economic growth—and transit should come next. But we have [dramatically underinvested](#) in transit, while allocating [95 percent of transportation funds](#) based on political formulas instead of national priorities or local needs.

O'Malley will overhaul federal funding formulas in order to greatly expand transit investment: prioritizing funding for projects that connect areas of poverty to areas of opportunity, reduce emissions and energy consumption, lower transit costs and increase transit access, or create the most jobs. He will double competitive programs like [TIGER grants](#) and [New Starts and Small Starts program](#) that support regional and locally-directed transit projects. And he will provide more local choices by making it easier to flex highway formula funds to meet urgent transit needs.

- **Expand Public-Private Partnerships.** Just like your home mortgage, long-term financing for infrastructure—bridges, roads, and other structures that last for decades—is a prudent investment. That's why private investors are ready to step up and partner with the public sector to restore our crumbling transportation infrastructure, helping share risk and reduce long-term cost. O'Malley will leverage private investment by doubling the [Transportation Infrastructure and Innovation Act program](#), a proven federal credit assistance program that supports complex or large-scale regional projects through low-cost and flexible loans. He will also reinstate, improve, and make permanent [Build America Bonds](#) to lower borrowing costs for state and local governments.

Whenever private dollars are used to build public projects, O'Malley will set transparent performance measures that protect public investments, set strong labor standards, and ensure sustainability is considered in every lending decision.

SPUR CLEAN ENERGY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Provide Flexible Tools For Economic Development

While many American cities are thriving, some communities are still in need of additional support. The best federal programs give mayors the flexibility they need to invest in the communities that need help the most—creating jobs and opportunities for hard working Americans that are striving to fully participate in their local economy.

As president, Governor O'Malley will:

- **Double Community Development Block Grants.** One of the biggest and most flexible economic development tools is the [Community Development Block Grant](#), or CDBG. The block grants empower mayors in communities of all sizes to meet their own unique development needs—from building affordable housing and infrastructure, to expanding social services, to fostering economic opportunity. Yet funding for the program has been cut substantially—by nearly [a third since 2010](#), and down to [only 22 percent](#) of the program's peak. O'Malley will double funding for CDBG to at least \$6 billion annually, supporting [\\$4 in public and private investment](#) for each additional dollar. He will also sign an Executive Order requiring project-level coordination with federal transit-oriented and brownfield remediation programs, leveraging CDBG funding to support cleaner and more interconnected cities.
- **Restore And Double The New Markets Tax Credit.** Many low-income neighborhoods can have a hard time attracting the new businesses and jobs they need to make their economies stronger. The New Markets Tax Credit program addresses this problem by encouraging businesses to invest billions in areas with high unemployment and poverty, helping create [750,000 much-needed jobs](#) over 10 years. Unfortunately, Congress recently let the tax credits expire. O'Malley will urge Congress to make New Market Tax Credits permanent, and to double this critically important program.
- **Preserve And Upgrade Affordable Housing.** Our existing affordable housing faces a precarious future: after decades of underinvestment, [roughly 10,000 public housing units](#) are lost entirely each year. O'Malley will work with Congress to preserve affordable housing for current residents, especially developments that are close to transit or jobs, while encouraging private investment to create mixed-income communities. As a first step, he will expand a [successful demonstration program](#) that uses private investment dollars to preserve at-risk public housing—leveraging \$19 in outside capital for every federal dollar, while creating jobs and better homes across the country.
- **Support Local Financial Institutions.** Credit unions, community banks, and community development financial institutions are crucial sources of investment in low-income communities. They [encourage saving and promote asset building](#) for low-income families, while providing mortgages and small business loans in areas that are not typically well served by big banks. O'Malley will support and strengthen these institutions, while taking steps to expand financial services to the [17 million unbanked Americans](#)—like [allowing the Postal Service](#) to offer bill payments, prepaid cards, and small-dollar loans.

Unleash Clean Energy Innovation

Cities will be the center of new American clean energy economy, from energy-efficient housing to renewable electricity. Local leaders, communities, and businesses are leading the way: through investments in clean power and infrastructure, they are creating jobs and wealth in communities across the country. They are also making our nation healthier and more energy independent. By supporting local efforts—and getting rid of outdated regulations that restrict energy innovation—the federal government can help cities forge our clean energy future.

As president, Governor O’Malley will:

- **Offer Customers More Choices In The Energy They Use.** Americans deserve affordable, clean, and reliable power. Yet electric utilities enjoy a monopoly that allows them to get paid regardless of how well they keep the lights on or how clean their power is. O’Malley will advocate for and implement [pay-for-performance reforms](#) that encourage consumer choice, improved reliability, and cleaner electricity—a fundamental step to building a clean energy electric grid.
- **Allow Households And Businesses To Buy The Power They Want.** In many parts of the country, power companies and the fossil fuel lobby [have made it illegal](#) for homeowners or businesses to generate their own power or contract with their own power producer. With new energy sources like solar becoming increasingly cost-competitive, it is time to eliminate antiquated restrictions that prevent customers from purchasing the type of power they want. O’Malley will push for regulatory reforms to allow households and businesses to generate, or purchase, their preferred kind of energy—driving competition and fostering clean energy generation in communities across the country.
- **Spur Community Investment In Clean Energy Infrastructure.** Several states have created their own public-private “green banks” to finance their transition to clean energy. However, most still need funding to seed or expand them. O’Malley will support these state-led investments by using his [executive authority](#) to unlock federal “green dollars” that currently reside in federal loan guarantee programs. Under an O’Malley Administration, any state or local government that creates a fund to meet urban infrastructure and clean energy needs could receive millions of dollars in federal funding to capitalize it.

FOSTER HEALTHY, AFFORDABLE, AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES
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Use Investments In Housing To Build Clean Energy Economies

Every family deserves to live in high-quality housing, including those who live in affordable housing. What’s more, building and retrofitting housing to be highly efficient and powered by renewable energy reduces costs—while helping our nation meet ambitious climate and clean energy goals. And as we move toward a clean energy economy, affordable housing that prioritizes energy efficiency and transit access will strengthen our communities, improve our children’s health, and create jobs in every zip code.

In his [Clean Energy Future Plan](#), O’Malley committed to retrofit federal buildings to the highest efficiency standards, while requiring new federal buildings to be net-zero and setting strict “MPG” standards for all other new building construction. In addition to those efforts, as president, Governor O’Malley will:

- **Spur Investments In Energy Efficient Retrofits.** Retrofits to improve energy efficiency and reduce water use can produce [enormous savings](#) while making housing developments safer and healthier for residents. O’Malley will expand investment in affordable housing upgrades—including through [“pay for success” programs](#) that use private capital to fund retrofits, then pay the investor returns based on the amount of energy saved.
- **Set Green And Resilient Standards For All Developments.** O’Malley will require that all federally-subsidized housing and government-supported residential developments meet high energy efficiency, sustainability, and resiliency [standards](#), for both new construction and retrofits. The standards will ensure that federal investments in housing support a clean energy economy—while [generating substantial operations and maintenance savings](#), and creating safer and healthier housing opportunities for families.
- **Make Affordable Housing “Solar Powered Housing”.** O’Malley will set a national goal of deploying solar energy technology to every viable [affordable housing](#) development. He will partner with mayors to meet this ambitious target: expanding and extending Renewable Energy Investment Tax Credits, which are a powerful tool for bringing solar to affordable housing; and dramatically expanding President Obama’s [“Solar for All” Initiative](#) to bring solar energy infrastructure and workforce training to low-income communities in every state.

Help All Families Access Quality, Affordable Housing

More Americans are moving back to cities, creating dynamic, walkable, and vibrant neighborhoods that attract new residents, drive investment, and foster economic growth. These trends are revitalizing cities, but they can also make them less affordable for long-time residents and families—while exacerbating racial and economic segregation. A new level of federal investment is needed to foster diverse, sustainable neighborhoods—and ensure that every American family has the opportunity to live in a safe, healthy, and affordable home.

As president, Governor O’Malley will:

- **Create Inclusive Communities Through Housing Investments.** O’Malley will target federal investment in affordable housing to encourage developments in the vibrant and transit-connected areas where they are most needed. He will fight to [fulfill the promise of the Fair Housing Act](#), including by enforcing President Obama’s [recent fair housing rules](#); issue new rules and guidance; and work with Congress if necessary to ensure that all federal housing programs truly foster strong and inclusive communities.
- **Double The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit.** The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit successfully finances [virtually all](#) affordable housing construction, through [effective public-](#)

[private partnerships](#). However, because developers' demand for credits far outstrips public supply, viable and much-needed projects to serve low-income families are routinely turned down. O'Malley will call on Congress to spur greater investment in affordable housing by gradually doubling annual Housing Credit allocations, providing gap financing, and [locking in minimum credit rates](#) that increase housing availability. These steps will help build or preserve up to 80,000 additional, affordable rental homes each year, while supporting tens of thousands of good-paying jobs in communities across the country.

- **Help Communities Meet Their Unique Housing Needs.** Sequestration budget cuts have hit housing and community development programs particularly hard, slashing programs like the [Home Investment Partnerships Program](#), or HOME, that provide flexible affordable housing funding to states and local governments. O'Malley will fight to restore and grow the HOME Program—which has been [cut in half since 2010](#)—increasing states and cities' ability to finance new affordable housing construction, rehabilitation, down payment and rental assistance, and other innovative local projects.
- **Assure Support For The Families Who Need It Most.** With rents skyrocketing and homeownership increasingly out of reach, America's lowest-income families are having a harder time than ever finding a decent place to rent. At the same time, years of cuts to rental assistance programs mean that [only a quarter of American households](#) who need help now receive it. O'Malley will lead a transition to a more humane housing assistance system, where all families with extremely low incomes—at or below 30 percent of an area's median income—will be able to access rental assistance. By [significantly expanding Housing Choice Vouchers](#), then targeting families who need support the most, O'Malley will provide greater economic stability to the [more than 3 million households](#) struggling to remain in safe and secure housing today.

BUILD URBAN ECONOMIES THAT WORK FOR EVERYONE

Upgrade Service Jobs To Create Middle Class Prosperity

American cities are engines of growth. They create thousands of high-pay, high-skill jobs in technology, knowledge, and professional industries. However, they also produce a high number of less desirable, low-pay, low-skill service jobs, contributing to America's growing income inequality.

Americans believe in free and fair competition, but growing chasms of inequality are not reflective of American values. Nearly a century ago, the United States came together to turn dangerous, low-paying manufacturing and industrial jobs into good-paying, blue-collar work—driving consumer demand and creating the largest and most prosperous middle class economy the world had ever known. Today, our nation must do the same for the [60 million Americans](#) stuck in low-paying service jobs, so that everyone has the opportunity to succeed and earn a living for themselves and their family.

As President, Governor O'Malley will:

- **Raise The Minimum Wage.** O’Malley has called for raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour, indexed to inflation. In addition, he supports efforts to ensure that local minimum wages are “living wages”. That means a full-time worker should make at least double the annual fair-market rent of a one-bedroom apartment in the area in which she works. When minimum-wage workers earn more, they rely [less on rental assistance](#) and other supportive programs, while spending more money at local businesses that create local jobs.
- **Double The EITC.** By encouraging and rewarding work, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) helps lift millions out of poverty. O’Malley will double the EITC, and improve it so that it helps more people—including by lowering the eligibility age to 21 and [paying out benefits throughout the year](#)—helping increase the earning power of [13.5 million low-income workers](#).
- **Fight For Stronger Labor Laws—While Supporting New Organizing Models.** It has been 80 years since we’ve passed major legislation strengthening workers’ fundamental right to organize. O’Malley will champion legislation to make it easier for workers to gain union representation by modernizing the organizing process, bolstering the enforcement power of the NLRB, and creating tougher penalties for employers who violate the law and stand in the way of democracy in their workplace. To fight wage theft and unfair labor practices, he will partner with workers’ centers and alt-labor organizations to enforce our workplace standards to the fullest extent of the law.
- **Ensure Access To Safe And Affordable Child Care.** Child care costs more than public university tuition in [a majority of states](#)—putting quality care out of reach for many families, and forcing some parents who’d like to work to stay home. O’Malley will set a goal of guaranteeing that no family, especially low- and middle-income families, has to pay more than 10 percent of their income on safe, affordable childcare in a given year. He will [dramatically expand federal child care tax credits](#)—on a sliding scale based on need, while making the credits refundable and paid out throughout the year—in order to begin to meet that ambitious goal.
- **Provide All Workers Access To Paid Family Leave.** Only [12 percent of American workers](#) have access to paid leave, and [40 percent](#) can lose their jobs for taking even unpaid leave to care for a newborn child. O’Malley will fight for the [FAMILY Act](#) to ensure that all parents—both men and women, gay and straight, married and single—are able to take at least 12 weeks of leave, with pay, in order to care for newborn children or other loved ones.

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