
From: david haines
Sent: Friday, April 15, 2011 12:33 PM
To: comments@baltometro.org
Subject: Howard County Bridge Repairs / Deck Replacements
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Red

I am in favor of the bridge repair on both

- Daisy Road over Cattail Creek; and
- Daisy Road B3849;

I am David E. Haines, the property owner of 3230 Daisy Road

From: Marcus Dulin
Sent: Wednesday, May 04, 2011 11:50 AM
To: comments@baltometro.org
Subject: Bike lanes in Howard County
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hi – I was reading about bridge improvements being made in Howard county and thought I would suggest painting more bike lanes for us bicycle commuters. There are plenty of roads which are wide enough, all you would need to do is paint the lines. For example, Old Columbia Rd. is a very wide, 1 lane road where there are many businesses.

If there is someone else who I should be sending this to kindly advise their contact info.

Thanks!

/.md

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From: Gus Williamson
Sent: Friday, April 29, 2011 6:45 PM
To: 'Steve Lauria'; 'BRTB CAC'
Cc: 'Monica Haines Benkhedda'
Subject: RE: [BRTB CAC] comments due today on TIP amendments

Dear Steve,

I am still learning about my role. I would like to contribute constructively to the process of providing input to the BRTB, and not complaining voice directed at the officials that have the challenging job of managing our transportation system. I don't feel knowledgeable enough to have very strong position on any issue yet.

However, on these TIP amendments, I have the following intuitive reactions:

Howard County moving forward:

1. The bridge funds are probably needed. In general we spend too little on basic bridge and highway infrastructure in the US, and we need to stay ahead of the aging of our fixed transportation infrastructure. However, there is no clear engineering data or justification for the expenditure.

2. The bus project may be a good project, and certainly has wide support, from public organizations and the Regional Public/Private bus company. However is very poorly justified, compared to what I am used to in the private sector for a capital expenditure. It is apparently a demonstration or R&D project, but what it is testing or demonstrating is not clear. In general I would like to see the justification summary improved, to show what payback, in reduced CO2 emissions, or lower fuel costs, or maintenance costs, or lower life-cycle cost, is gained from an investment. Sometimes it is just a necessary replacement, but in this case there is clear an investment in novel technology, but to what end is not clear, beyond ostensibly reducing greenhouse gases and so it is hard to opine on the value of the investment.

To give you the contrarian argument, the buses cost \$850,000 apiece vs. \$500,000-600,000 for a hybrid diesel or \$350,000 for a diesel bus. So they are significantly more expensive, but supposedly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Since more than 40% of our electricity comes from coal, and I would guess that the fuel to tire efficiency ratio for pure electric bus would be lower than for a diesel or hybrid bus I am not sure we would be reducing CO2 emissions or other emissions, just moving them out of Howard County.

Regardless the cost is twice the cheapest alternative or 1.5x the

hybrid diesel, which means we are giving up 1 -3 buses for what might little or no net gain in CO2. Perhaps there are other angles that I have missed, or perhaps my estimates are wrong, but on the face of it, this looks like a very expensive solution, for an unquantified "green" gain. I want to be clear I am not against green technology, or this particular project, but I am concerned about getting value for expenditures, and the justification on this one, is not apparent to me from the information presented.

Again, I would like to see the justification summary improved, to show what payback, in reduced CO2 emissions, or lower fuel costs, or maintenance costs, or lower life-cycle cost, is gained from an investment. Sometimes it is just a necessary replacement, but in this case there is clear an investment in novel technology, but to what end is not clear, and so it is hard to opine on the value of the investment. (1)

Regarding the Baltimore and Potomac Rail Study, I believe that updating and expanding the tunnel is critically needed, for both passenger and freight service, and this study is a key first step. The bigger question is where and how to fund the billions in upgrade costs.

Sincerely yours,

Gus Williamson

(1) The source of my data is very nice response to my queries from Mr. John Powell at Central Maryland Regional Transit.

The cost of each electric bus will be around \$850,000. This is the estimated amount currently budgeted for, though there is also some contingency funding in case that amount is not enough. First, it is important to note that this will be a 12-year heavy-duty bus. Secondly, a hybrid-electric bus of the same size typically costs \$500,000 to \$600,000 (again, a 12-years heavy bus).

- o The additional cost is the batteries. Until the project starts, we are not clear on what the chemistry nor amount of batteries will be needed. Like all new products, the cost for the first-of's is typically high.*
- o A diesel bus of the same size is about \$350,000 - \$400,000. A natural gas bus is just slightly higher. HOWEVER, the infrastructure cost for a natural gas bus (using compressed natural gas) is significant. Additionally, the range on a CNG bus is not the same as a diesel and could be problematic on the Green Route.*

**A RESOLUTION REGARDING
AMENDMENTS TO THE BALTIMORE REGION FY 2011-2014 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) BY
THE CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) OF THE BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD (BRTB)**

WHEREAS, the BRTB, the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Baltimore region responsible for transportation planning and policy making for the Baltimore region, has prepared the proposed amendments to the 2011 – 2014 TIP and requested comment on its content from the CAC; and

WHEREAS, the CAC Serves as an advisory body to the BRTB, charged with providing independent, region-oriented citizen advice to the BRTB on issues related to the development of the Baltimore Regional Transportation Plan (BRTP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and amendments that affect the region's conformity with federal air quality requirements, the public involvement process, regionally significant land use issues, and other regional transportation-related issues, as appropriate, promotes public awareness and participation in the regional transportation planning process and promotes equity in the regional transportation planning process; and

WHEREAS, the CAC has reviewed and discussed the FY 2011-2014 TIP Amendments;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the following advisory comments pertaining to the amendments to the 2011 – 2014 TIP are hereby submitted by the CAC to the BRTB for consideration of incorporation into the projects:

TIP # 16-0436-13: 'Moving Howard County Forward'; Bridge Repairs / Deck Replacements

The CAC endorses the proposed TIP amendment conditional on the following provisions:

1. Bridge improvements shall incorporate the safe accommodation of pedestrians with the addition of ADA compliant walkways and associated lighting.
2. Bridge improvements shall incorporate the safe accommodation of bicyclists with the addition of bicycle lanes and associated pavement markings.
3. Bridge improvements shall incorporate signage directed to motor vehicle operators of the potential presence of bicyclists and pedestrians on roadways.
4. Where bridges span natural waterways, accommodations shall be made for the safe, grade separated passage of wildlife below the roadways.
5. Bridge improvements shall incorporate best management practices for management of storm water and erosion control.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the advice and recommendations regarding these TIP Amendments are approved by the Policy and Legislation Subcommittee and the BRTB Citizen Advisory Committee.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the CAC thanks the BRTB for this opportunity to participate through this opportunity to comment on the BRTB TIP Amendments. The CAC thanks the BRTB staff for facilitating our participation.

Submitted by;

Stephen Lauria
Vice-Chair, BRTB Citizen Advisory Committee
Chair, Policy and Legislation Subcommittee

Comments from CAC members during e-vote:

- I suggest combining points about safe pedestrian and bicycle use of bridge. In some cases bicycles should use roadway, and in some cases bicycles and pedestrians should share same space. In either case, signage warning vehicles is necessary.
- I approve on the condition that the cost impact, of the recommended added features is not large (<10% of the total). If it is large, I would say an assessment of the pedestrian, bicycle and animal traffic numbers vs. the cost is needed, with a presumption in favor of not adding the cost, except in the case of compelling need.

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WHEREAS, the CAC has reviewed and discussed the FY 2011-2014 TIP Amendments;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the following advisory comments pertaining to the amendments to the 2011 – 2014 TIP are hereby submitted by the CAC to the BRTB for consideration of incorporation into the projects:

Tip # 46-1101-05 ‘Moving Howard County Forward’; Howard County Electric Bus Project

The CAC endorses the proposed TIP amendment conditional on the following provisions:

1. Cost benefit analysis of first and life cycle costs of electric versus natural gas powered buses and their required support infrastructure shall be conducted.
2. Equipment considered for purchase and operation shall become the standard for equipment of this type for future purchases.
3. The CAC is concerned about the first and life-cycle costs associated with this project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the advice and recommendations regarding these TIP Amendments are approved by the Policy and Legislation Subcommittee and the BRTB Citizen Advisory Committee.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the CAC thanks the BRTB for this opportunity to participate through this opportunity to comment on the BRTB TIP Amendments. The CAC thanks the BRTB staff for facilitating our participation.

Submitted by:

Stephen Lauria
Vice-Chair, BRTB Citizen Advisory Committee
Chair, Policy and Legislation Subcommittee

Comments from CAC members during e-vote:

- As this is a pilot or prototype project, the vehicle costs are expected to be higher than if vehicles are mass produced, so life-cycle costs of this single project should not be sole factor.
- I would have preferred to have the cost analysis expanded to include hybrid and adiesel (or clean diesel) buses as well.