



Kick-Off Workshop

Baltimore Region Vision and Long Range Transportation Plan
March 2, 2010 - University of Maryland BioPark Life Sciences

On March 2, 2010, the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB) kicked off work to create a regional transportation vision with a peer workshop. The event was held at the University of Maryland BioPark Life Sciences Conference Center in Baltimore and provided more than 50 peers with a chance to understand the vision planning process and schedule, learn of innovative vision planning practices from across the nation, and participate in a discussion on the vision plan values.

WELCOME

Mr. Frank Johnson, Empowered Representative Chair, BRTB, called the event to order to provide an overview and to explain the purpose and desired outcomes of the workshop. Mr. Johnson offered a brief historical context for the planning process, starting with the November 2008 call from the BRTB to create a regional transportation vision, beginning with the work of Board representatives and Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC) staff to determine the scope of work and select a consultant team, and ending with the Board's objectives for the vision planning process.

VISION AND LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN PROCESS

Mr. Todd Lang, Transportation Director, BMC, presented an overview of the vision and its relationship to the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). To create a transportation vision, the Board will engage community leaders and other regional stakeholders in developing general consensus on our region's goals and values for a balanced 21st century transportation system. The vision plan will be developed in seven phases:

1. Identify values
2. Identify trends
3. Refine modeling tools
4. Conduct scenario planning workshops
5. Analyze and formulate draft scenarios
6. Evaluate scenarios
7. Implement the regional vision

The values will guide the federally mandated, financially constrained LRTP process. Mr. Lang provided further detail on the purpose of the LRTP, and its role in the metropolitan planning process. The BRTB is expected to consider both the vision and the LRTP for approval in late 2011.

INNOVATIVE PLANNING PRACTICE

Mr. Tom Weyandt, Comprehensive Planning Director, Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), shared examples from the Atlanta, Georgia, metropolitan area of innovative planning practices, including both a vision process and a long range transportation plan. After offering a wealth of background to frame the ARC planning process, Mr. Weyandt detailed the development of Envision 6 (E6), a vision of land use and transportation development and predecessor to the ARC LRTP. E6 includes three components:

1. Regional development plan land use policies,
2. Regional unified growth policy and strategic transportation system map, and
3. Regional place and development matrix.



These components are used to implement E6 via transportation project evaluation and local plan review as well as regional forecast development. Implementation is also accomplished via the Livable Communities Initiative (LCI) program — which uses planning grants to encourage local planners to link transportation infrastructure improvements with land development strategies. ARC has committed, in the 13 years since the inception of the LCI, \$13 million to LCI planning studies.

IMPORTANCE

The Honorable Ken Ulman, Howard County Executive, noted the importance of a regional transportation vision. He recognized the challenge associated with current and projected funding limitations; but he also recognized now as a perfect time to undertake an unconstrained vision planning process. Through the process, he noted, the transportation wants and needs of the region could be determined and applied at all levels of federal transportation funding. And, as an optimist, he hoped for the highest level in the future.



COLLABORATION

Mr. Rich Josephson, Director of Planning Services, Maryland Department of Planning, presented general information on the development of PlanMaryland, the state's first comprehensive plan for sustainable growth and development. Mr. Josephson detailed the purpose and need for PlanMaryland, and the process for developing the plan. The first step in planning for almost 1,000,000 more people, over 400,000 more households and over 600,000 new jobs in the next 20 years in Maryland will be public involvement. Mr. Josephson shared the dates/times for PlanMaryland public meetings, and encouraged attendees to both participate and get the word out.

FEDERAL PERSPECTIVE

Due to the last-minute, budget-related furlough of non-essential Federal Highway Administration staff, the speaker from FHWA could not attend. BMC staffers presented an overview of FHWA's perspective on the state of the practice of scenario planning, including an overview of the benefits of using scenario planning to gain a better understanding of the potential impact of scenarios. In particular, the presentation detailed the technical tools most applicable to engaging the public on scenarios in the vision planning process.

PANEL SESSION

Ms. Marsha McLaughlin, Planning Director, Howard County, facilitated a panel that discussed the vision planning process, schedule and milestones, as well as gathering input from participants to make the vision process most effective. Questions and comments from attendees concerned all components of the vision planning process, including scope development and implementation. With the conclusion of the panel discussion, the workshop was adjourned.

BREAK OUT SESSIONS

Participants were asked to break out into work groups. A facilitator led each small group in a discussion on the need for a vision as well as the strategies needed to develop and evaluate the vision. The proceedings were recorded on flip charts, and will be used to further develop the vision planning process. In particular, the exercise will guide the stakeholder and public involvement work needed to determine the values for the vision. A summary of the work group discussions follows.



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BREAK OUT SESSIONS FINDINGS

I. The Fundamental Purpose of the Visioning Project

A. Why is this project needed?

Participants had a variety of reasons for why this project was needed. The most frequently recurring themes pointed to the idea that any new development needs to exhibit positive economic and environmental change for the area. Another recurring theme was that the plan would get more of the public involved and increase communication among both the public and state and local government.

B. Who does this project need to serve?

Participants almost all said that the project needs to serve everyone. More specifically they listed: students, aging population, employers, single-occupant drivers, low-income population, public transit skeptics, and people who don't depend on transit.

C. How should this project be carried out?

One theme among participant comments for how the project should be carried out was to strengthen regional collaboration while taking into account regional differences. Another important theme was that the information should be made clear and easy to understand for all.

II. Regional Values

The BRTB has identified four goals for the Visioning Project (reduction of vehicle miles traveled, livable communities, economic prosperity, and mobility/accessibility). Of these, "livable communities" was considered the most important. Participants felt that this goal encompassed the others and that it was most important to the public. Some wondered, however, if the public would understand what the phrase "livable community" means.

III. Strategy for the Visioning Project

A. How will we know if this project has been successful?

Participants felt the vision project would be successful if it reflected serious public participation and was adopted. Other aspects of success would be achievement of initiatives and periodic review. Still others thought that if some sort of measuring tool or goals to be met was put in place, success could be measured empirically.

B. What do we need to do to achieve this?

Participants felt that outreach and the involvement of elected officials would be key to achieving the plan. It was also noted that the plan should be specific and written in a way that anyone could understand.

C. What can you do to help make this project successful?

Participants felt the best way to help make the project successful was for them to stay engaged and to try to reach out to as many people as possible in any way possible.

BREAK OUT SESSIONS EASEL PAD NOTES

I. The Fundamental Purpose of the Visioning Project

A. Why is this project needed?

1. Plan is for looking forward
2. Build upon what already exists
3. Move away from each jurisdiction planning separately
4. Tools for LRTP is insufficient and overly constraining
5. Need to look at big picture beyond short form constraints
6. Create vision, implement components over time.
7. Easier to get broad “buy-in” because it is a vision (rallying cry)
8. Bring diverse groups together to get general consensus
9. Relate vision to a “real life” theme (branding)
10. Aging of population – access & mobility
11. Pedestrian infrastructure
12. ADA & complete streets – the right streets – purpose
13. Health implications
14. Building consensus – shared vision serving multiple purposes
15. Economic changes – plan for changes
16. Improved communications (regional)
17. Different solutions for different areas
18. Economic cooperation across boundaries
19. Recognize hesitancy to regional plan
20. Focus on efficiencies
21. Develop leverage due to regional nature
22. Mechanism to ensure implementation
23. Get buy in at all levels
24. New opportunities
25. Plan now – be ready
26. Development and transportation drive each other
27. Respond to trends – be ready before
28. Many challenges – big to specific – different set of strategies
29. New approaches to address the future
30. Education – federal requirements implications, fiscal constraint, priorities, air quality
31. Purpose of vision process: sustainable transportation system, serve public, made choices
32. Transparency
33. Healthier lifestyle guaranteed ride home – bike and walk – car share
34. Freight-safety near rail zoning protecting business from encroachment, grade crossings safety
35. Environment – Responsible choices – Chesapeake Bay – preservation
36. Economic development – environmental sustainability as our economic driver
37. MARC – service important – link Baltimore and Washington
38. Regional not just at the project (piecemeal)
39. Certainty for business investment
40. The Region
41. Envision a larger “pie”
42. Create support to grow the money pot
43. Strategic allocation of money
44. Include new considerations
45. Long-term trends (50-year view)
46. Climate impact on land, assets, goods, services

I. The Fundamental Purpose of the Visioning Project (continued)

B. Who does this project need to serve?

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| 1. Should serve everyone | 17. Students |
| 2. Focus on “car drivers” and non-car drivers | 18. Land owners/farmers |
| 3. Provide choice for commuters | 19. Social service providers |
| 4. Increase mobility | 20. Single-occupant drivers |
| 5. Transit-captive population (access efficiency) | 21. 16-25 year old demographic |
| 6. Aging population | 22. 40-50 year old generations |
| 7. Ability to cross subdivision lines | 23. Public transit skeptics |
| 8. Low-income population not at the table | 24. Elected officials (one on one) |
| 9. Employers | 25. Major employers (Public/Private) – school systems (buses); Federal Government; MDOT |
| 10. College students/Gen X/Gen Y | 26. Econ development directions |
| 11. Bicycle Users | 27. Everybody |
| 12. Where there are geographic disparities | 28. Specific – those often overlooked |
| 13. Small business owners | 29. Non-transit dependent folk |
| 14. Existing transit coalitions | 30. Business community; development community; financial community; college students |
| 15. Low income interests | |
| 16. At risk & “strong” communities | |

C. How should this project be carried out?

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| 1. Why do we need to have a regional and state plan? | 14. Inclusive vision |
| 2. Baltimore region has unique interests that necessitate a separate plan | 15. Equity |
| 3. Need a regional authority beyond the power of the current BRTB | 16. Vision everyone can participate in |
| 4. Create an agency that can raise revenues and implement | 17. Language as important – get away from government speak |
| 5. Jurisdictions can work together on common land use/transportation parameters | 18. Importance of debate – Flesh out – brings out real life issues |
| 6. What is good economically and a better transportation system is good for Maryland | 19. Talking the local language |
| 7. Vision must serve a regional and local purpose | 20. How do “other issues” fit into conversation? |
| 8. Multiple plans, confusion? | 21. How visualize – language isn’t enough |
| 9. 100 year plan backdrop – multiple areas of focus | 22. Consensus of working groups |
| 10. How collaborate | 23. Communicate between state/local/citizen levels |
| 11. Measuring tools | 24. Articulate the message |
| 12. Develop list of stakeholders Broad based | 25. Explain how the pieces fit together |
| 13. Explain what plans do/don’t do – manage expectations | 26. Don’t duplicate planning efforts |
| | 27. Know planning deadlines |
| | 28. Manage time effectively |
| | 29. Let participants see their concerns in the plan share what heard in outreach sessions |

II. Regional Values

(The BMC has identified four goals for the Visioning Project: reduction of vehicle miles traveled; livable communities; economic prosperity; and mobility/accessibility).

- Livable communities: Encompasses the other 3 goals; broad goal, adaptable goal, has an economic base.
- Livable considers all other goals; this matters to people, but is not prioritized; does the public know what livable means? Market can help us understand what people want; “Livable” is broad & needs to be explained before the public embraces it

A. Obstacles:

1. People tend to consider small scale, livable start at a large scale;
2. People are busy, so it will be hard to engage them on a SOTR Plan (not like a bulldozer would);
3. Need to focus engagement effort on a variety of ways and means;
4. People w/ kids are valuable but tough to engage. How can we get them to bring the kids?
5. Get Pizza! Could charge a little somethin', somethin'; could include vendors.
6. Use kids – engage them w/crayons, give prizes, post pictures
7. Getting the word out: Hard to penetrate without door to door
8. Neighborhood associations, schools, churches
9. Still hard to get people to meetings
10. Social network
11. Ask the people who we want to engage and how to engage them

III. Strategy for the Visioning Project

A. How will we know if this project has been successful?

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopted – Incorporated 2. Used – referred to 3. Measuring tool – yardstick 4. Alive and updated 5. How much participation/diverse 6. Value of education 7. Outgrowth of initiatives 8. Understand issues & feel like planners 9. What we want to and not do 10. Reality checks 11. Ability to deliver 12. Levels of goals (easy, medium, hard) 13. Evolves 14. Ability to react to tech/workforce changes 15. Coalitions of neighborhood groups | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. Don't depend on meetings 17. Tools to implement 18. When goals/objectives are reflected in local plans 19. Broader participation/new stakeholders 20. Funding and zoning follows the vision 21. Forgo local for the regional good 22. Political support for increased transit money 23. Dropping programs that don't support vision 24. Role of MDP, BMC, EPA, MDOT? Implementation, improved targeting of funding collaboration between state/local governances 25. Regional and seamless 26. Participation from a broad cross section 27. Goals are believed to be true 28. When people chose to live in them |
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III. Strategy for the Visioning Project (continued)

B. What do we need to do to achieve this?

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More use of regional media 2. Need “hot button issues” 3. Will ideas be seriously considered? 4. Need top down acceptance from elected officials 5. Will this be Baltimore Centered? – How do you bring others to the table? 6. Need a major geographic outreach 7. Fiscal constraints kill vision plans. – Make this vision unconstrained 8. Include a larger region from southern PA to the Potomac (and south) 9. Use listservs and the web more effectively 10. Bring councils commissions and other elected officials into this process – aggressively! 11. Develop key regional ideas for the vision. This will involve the public and pull public officials into the vision. 12. Tie vision to specific benefits! 13. Outside box thinking 14. Can't do alone 15. Comprehensive approach 16. Applicable to local and state efforts 17. Don't feel constrained by regulations and politics 18. State/regional collaboration 19. Stress economic benefits of regional thinking | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 20. Coordination 21. Focus on transportation 22. Possible barriers: Ambiguous messages; losing focus; “just checking the boxes” 23. Keep the plan general (e.g. Service for Baltimore to Columbia but not along this route w/ this mode) 24. Increments, 10 years for example 25. Like a business plan, so it needs some detail 26. Goals should be visionary but not too vague 27. Devil is in the details 28. Elected officials will be responsible in the end 29. Which plans anticipate the future, those are the good ones (Portland, SAW light rail) 30. Message: Times are changing and we need to be prepared to embrace change 31. Plan for ideas more than projects 32. Avoid the word “force” as in “people out of cars.” 33. Make sure we can explain it. Drop the jargon! 34. Not for everyone, not one size fits all 35. Define livable community (note on multiple occasions) 36. Ask the public what they want (We don't know yet) do some research 37. Visual prep survey? 38. Keypad polling keeps individuals from stealing meeting |
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C. What can you do to help make this project successful?

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stay engaged 2. Include other folks, teams, organizations 3. Coordinate with other businesses 4. Advocate for the process 5. Keep planning directors actively involved 6. Keep ULT in the “mix” 7. Leverage local media outlets or at least invite them 8. Use local celebs (CAL) 9. Engage large institutions (JHU) 10. Locals connect CIP process to vision implementation | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Don't think of what we can't do, think of what we want to do and then figure it out 12. Elected officials do PSAs 13. Tie it to real money to drive interest 14. Have high school class/college class to participate 15. Media: it is not all about the Sun; more and more outlets 16. Google pop-ups? Other news outlets? 17. Get kids (& parents) into the process 18. Define livable for everyone |
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III. Strategy for the Visioning Project (continued)

D. What problems to solve:

1. Regional lifestyle in country environment; example – tiger dollars, region was shut out. Partnerships elsewhere were funded
2. Partnerships, partnerships (or we will miss out)
3. Public doesn't have faith in process
4. Need to engage all elected officials, like ARC, have a retreat
5. Legislative breakfast, perhaps as part of retreat (get them in at the beginning)
6. Agencies are @ odds w/ each other and w/ the public. Multi-organizational team building
7. Need to make sure something happens – got to be small like LCI (ARC) support w/ funds and awards