

A Publication of the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board, the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Baltimore Region

Looking to the Future

Planning Underway for Next Long-Range Plan

A key function of any metropolitan planning organization is the development of a regional, long-range transportation plan. As the process unfolds to update the existing plan, Transportation 2030, we find that there have been some changes that need to be taken into consideration.

The most significant is new federal transportation legislation called the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). This \$286.4 billion transportation bill provides funding for federal surface transportation programs over five years (fiscal year 2005 through 2009).

Since Congress passed and the President signed SAFETEA-LU into law in August 2005, federal agencies have been busy developing rules and regulations to guide organizations like the BRTB.

Although the federal rulemaking process is still



TRANSPORTATION OUTLOOK

2035

Creating a Blueprint for the Baltimore Region's Future

ongoing, the new requirements under SAFETEA-LU are binding as of July 1, 2007. This has spurred the BRTB to move aggressively in addressing SAFETEA-LU requirements to keep the region in compliance and allow projects and programs to move forward.

continued on page 4

Web site now available in thirteen languages

In an effort to make the wealth of information available on the BMC web site accessible to as many people as possible, the Baltimore Metropolitan Council is proud to announce that its web site, is now available in 13 languages.

The free service, powered by AltaVista's Babelfish program, allows users to choose from Spanish, Russian, Portuguese, Korean, Japanese, Italian, Greek, German, French, Dutch, and two Chinese translations.

The translation service is available by clicking the link at the bottom left on each page of the BMC website. Learn more about the translation tool by visiting www.baltometro.org and clicking on "What's New."



Zoom in on the Baltimore Region with Google Earth

In an effort to make information more accessible to the public, the BMC is using the power of Google Earth to display important regional information.

Whether you are interested in new development, traffic congestion or many other types of information, BMC's Google Earth enabled web site allows you to access this information in an easy-to-read interactive format.

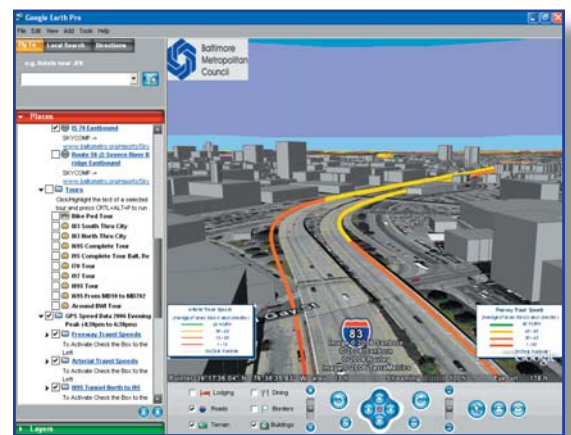
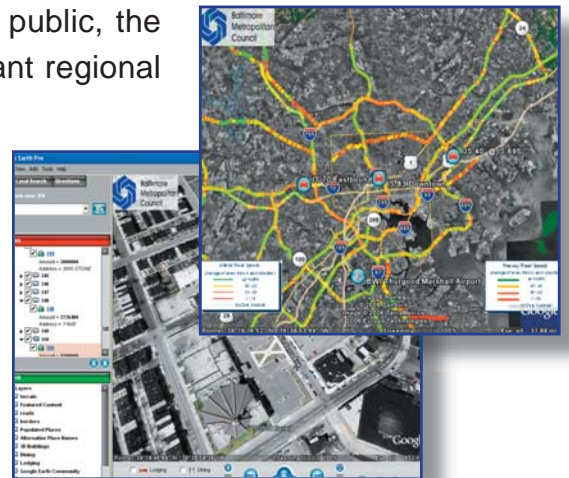
Google Earth also allows users to focus on a specific area by zooming in on a local road or neighborhood or, zoom out to get a regional snapshot.

BMC has added important details about transportation projects, building permits, congestion, bicycle level of service, and more.

Currently, visitors to the BMC web site can download and view information such as:

- Travel speeds on highways
- Aerial photos of congested areas
- Major building permits
- Long range transportation plan projects
- Bicycle level of service on selected roads

Visit www.baltometro.org to take a tour of our region using Google Earth.



Let BMC and Google Earth Help You Display Important Information

Could you use a map or interactive display to demonstrate an important concept, or to show the location of your customers or service points? BMC offers a full range of geospatial services to fit your business and planning needs.

Why Google Earth?

- Google Earth's functionality allows BMC to overlay data on its high-tech landscaped interface for a cutting edge presentation.
- Data files are quite small and can be quickly downloaded.
- Tours can be exported to video and played using Windows Media Player.
- Customized tours can be designed to meet client's needs.



For more information, contact Brad Spittel at bspittel@baltometro.org or 410-732-0500 x1024.

New Citizens Advisory Committee

Wednesday, October 4th, marked the start of a new Citizens Advisory Committee. The new group of nearly 30 members represents a diverse cross-spectrum of community leaders, advocates, business representatives, and non-profit organizations from around the region. Areas of interest are also varied. Some members bring to the group experience in bicycle and pedestrian issues, transit advocacy, or freight movement. Others are focused on the needs of low-income and minority populations or the disabled. Whatever their primary interest, all members bring to the table a passion and commitment to public involvement in the regional planning process.

This passion was put to good use this fall as members provided extensive feedback on the draft public participation plan, as well as the goals for the long-range transportation plan.

The CAC will meet the first Wednesday of every month at 5:30 p.m. at BMC. Meetings are open to the public and agendas are available on the BMC web site.

Baltimore - Washington Regional Traffic Signal Forum

The Baltimore Regional Transportation Board and the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board invite federal, state, local, and private sector employees to attend a special, joint Baltimore – Washington Regional Traffic Signal Forum on March 14, 2007 at the Maritime Institute to exchange information and ideas on the latest developments in the traffic signal field.



This forum will provide several sessions on local studies to improve signal timing, new technologies, and issues and challenges faced by state and local operators. The 2007 forum follows two similar workshops conducted in the Baltimore region in 2004 and 2005 to promote sharing of knowledge, experience, and expertise in the traffic signal field.

Topics slated for the program include signal timing, latest technology and equipment, standards, system integration, resources/training, maintenance and major regional projects.

Download a preliminary program or register online at www.baltometro.org or contact Bala Akundi at bakundi@baltometro.org or 410-732-0500 x 1019.

Clean Air Partners Celebrates Tenth Anniversary

Believe it or not, air pollution throughout the combined Baltimore/Washington region was much worse in 1997 than it is today. The last ten years have seen dramatic improvements to our air quality, and the activities of Clean Air Partners have, no doubt, played an important role in clearing the air.



The non-profit organization, co-chartered by the Baltimore Metropolitan Council and the Metropolitan Council of Governments in 1997, promotes public education about air quality issues, as well as voluntary actions all people can take to reduce emissions. For information on how to become involved in the partnership's programs or to learn about its plans to commemorate its 10th anniversary, visit www.cleanairpartners.net.



New Long-Range Plan Underway

continued from page 1

Below are the major tasks currently being worked on for Transportation Outlook 2035:

- **Goals:** BRTB committees and staff recently completed a review of the goals, policies and strategies from the previous plan. First, BMC staff compared existing goals with other MPO plans, as well as reviewed the goals to ensure they meet new SAFETEA-LU standards. New goals were then crafted, reviewed by several BRTB committees, and finally endorsed by the BRTB on January 23, 2007. See page 5 for the new goals. Completing this milestone provides a foundation for the direction of further work on the Plan.
- **Funding and Costs:** With assistance from the Maryland Department of Transportation and BRTB members, staff will complete a full review of all funding available through the year 2035 for system preservation, operations, and new projects. This review is key because the plan may not go over the amount of funding that is reasonably available.
- **Prioritization Methodology:** The prioritization process allows for an in-depth look at both the policy and technical aspects of projects. First, policy scores are provided by the local jurisdictions and represents 60 points out of 100. The remaining 40 points result from a series of technical requirements. This process helps the BRTB make tough decisions about which projects can or should be funded. BMC staff and a BRTB subcommittee reviewed the technical methodology for changes to be recommended. The BRTB endorsed the methodology on January 23, 2007.
- **Coordination Meetings:** Meetings between the jurisdictions, transportation agencies, and BMC are currently being held to discuss which projects should move forward for submission as candidate projects.
- **Public Involvement:** As part of public involvement for the plan, the BRTB appointed a new and larger Citizens' Advisory Committee. A main focus of the CAC will be to provide advice to the BRTB on how to generate interest in the plan, as well as to assist with outreach and gathering input. In addition, a consultant has been selected to create a logo and title for the Plan as well as recommend additional ways to involve the public. A special newsletter will be created for the plan process to provide the public with updates on activities and outreach events.

Transportation Outlook 2035

Creating a Blueprint For Our Region's Future

Goal 1: Improve Safety

Improve safety for users of each mode of transportation.

Goal 2: Maximize Transportation System Management and Operations

Integrate management and operations strategies that improve the performance and reliability of existing transportation infrastructure to relieve congestion and reduce delay.

Goal 3: Increase Accessibility and Mobility

Plan for an integrated transportation system that is accessible, equitable, and reliable for all system users and that provides for enhanced connectivity between modes and destinations.

Goal 4: Preserve the Environment

Promote a sustainable environment by establishing policies that abate emissions from mobile sources, reduce energy consumption, reduce single occupant vehicles and the use of gasoline, and conserve and protect natural and cultural resources.

Goal 5: Improve Transportation System Security

Support transportation improvements and programs that enhance the transportation system's capability to plan for and respond to natural and man-made security and emergency challenges.

Goal 6: Link Transportation Investment to Land Use and Economic Development

Serve the region's development needs by promoting a balanced transportation system that provides links between the region's economic core, major regional growth and activity centers, communities and neighborhoods, and key national and international commerce locations.

Goal 7: Foster Inter-jurisdictional Participation and Cooperation

Recognize the inter-dependence of the region's jurisdictions and foster inter-jurisdictional cooperation and cohesion for the benefit of the region's residents.

Get Involved!



TRANSPORTATION
OUTLOOK
2035
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Throughout the year there will be opportunities for the public to provide their input and feedback on the next long-range transportation plan. To stay up-to-date about upcoming meetings and public review periods, join our mailing list. To sign up, visit www.baltometro.org and click on "Contact Us" or call Monica Haines at 410-732-0500 x1047.

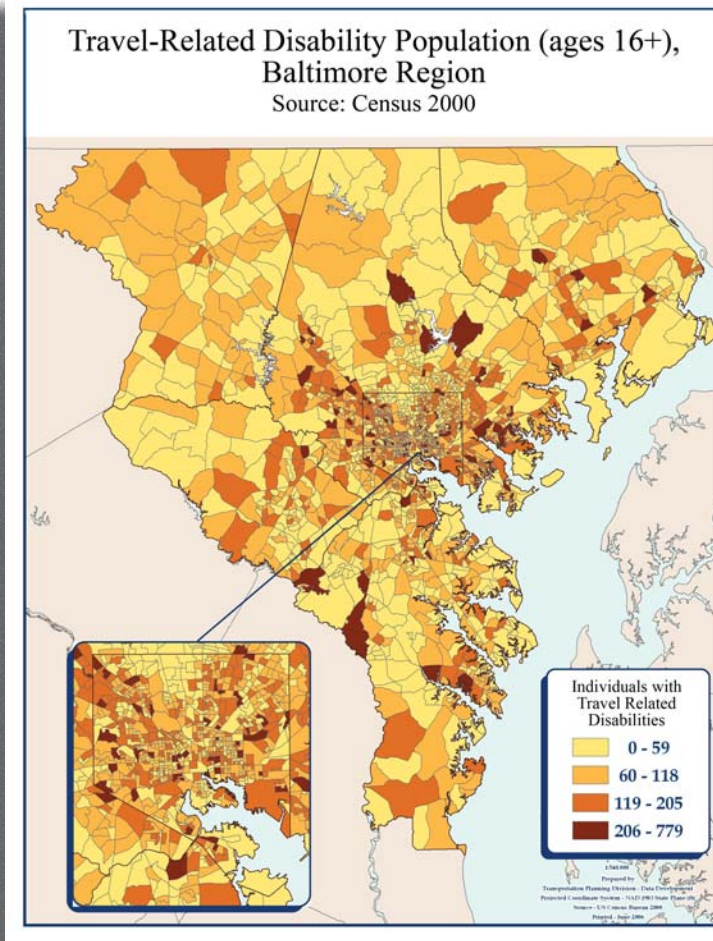
Study Examines Access For People With Disabilities

Nationwide, six million people with disabilities have difficulties obtaining the transportation they need.¹ But, how many people in the Baltimore region have a disability that affects their ability to get around? Where do individuals with travel related disabilities live in the Baltimore region? Do they have local access to paratransit, public transit, or other alternatives to driving?

These are some of the issues that BMC recently researched in an effort to as-

assist transportation policy makers, human service providers, and the general public in understanding the travel needs of the region's dispersed disabled population. This information can then be used to identify areas where additional transportation services for the disabled are needed.

Using U.S. Census data, BMC staff were able to map the locations of individuals with self-reported travel-related disabilities (TRD). In addition, staff looked at the locations of these populations in relation to current ADA (Americans With Disabilities Act) paratransit service. Under the ADA, only qualified travel-impaired individuals that live within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of regularly scheduled, fixed transit routes are eligible to use ADA paratransit service. Travel



options to those that live outside of these areas are currently limited.

What do the results of the study show?

The study documented that the region's TRD population is distributed in a highly dispersed and fragmented residential pattern (see map). Specifically, the study found:

- Baltimore City has the highest TRD population of any jurisdiction in the region at 43%.
- Thirty-seven percent of the TRD population that live in the suburbs do not have

access to ADA paratransit service.

- Region-wide, 21% of the TRD population lives outside existing ADA service areas.

Similar to the findings of the regional 2004 Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities study, this study concluded that the initial challenge is to develop ways to provide more service to people with disabilities who live in areas not served by ADA paratransit services.

The longer term challenge is to provide more travel options for the rapidly growing disabled population that is expected to increasingly live in dispersed, lower intensity areas in the suburbs.

View the full report at www.baltometro.org.

¹ U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Putting the Brakes on Fatalities

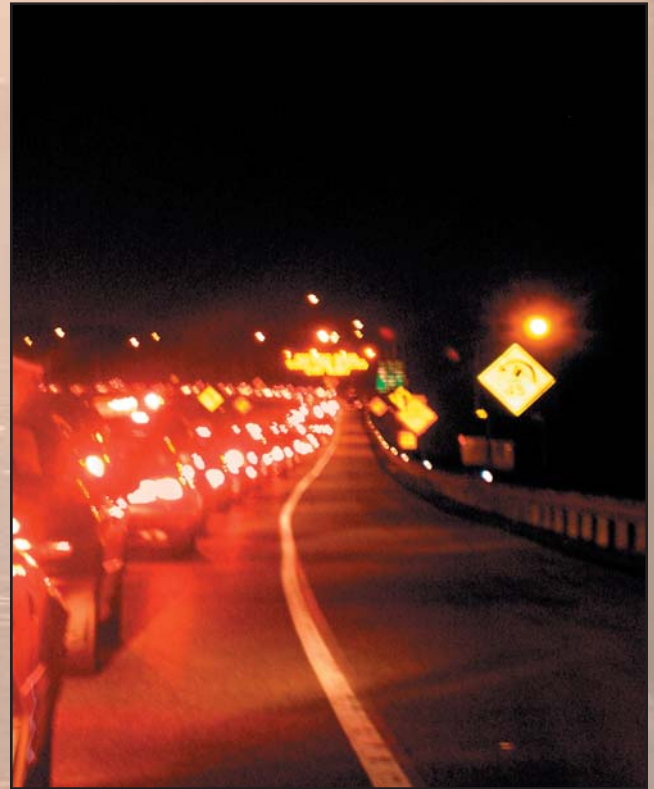
Reducing Deaths and Injuries on Maryland Roads

In 2004 alone, over 53,500 motor vehicle crashes occurred in the Baltimore region. This resulted in 248 deaths and 25,537 injuries. The human and economic consequences of these crashes are unacceptable and unaffordable.

Responding to new federal transportation legislation (SAFETEA-LU), the State Highway Administration initiated an update to their 1999 Highway Safety Plan. The purpose of the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) is to develop a five-year, statewide coordinated safety plan with a comprehensive framework for reducing highway fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads.

The effort, led by SHA, began in February 2006 with a management team, an executive committee and a steering committee. BMC is an active member of the steering committee. These groups have been meeting since then to identify the priority emphasis areas from which the goals of the SHSP are developed. Two overall objectives were adopted by the committees. One is to reduce annual motor vehicle fatalities to fewer than 550 by 2010 and the other is to reduce annual motor vehicle injuries to fewer than 50,000 by 2010. After considerable effort over the summer, the SHSP was sent to federal agencies in September.

The BRTB has been actively engaged in the SHSP process, fully endorses the goals and strategies of the SHSP, and is incorporating them into the next regional long range plan. In addition, BMC staff will stay actively involved in development of strategies and implementation of action plans for several areas of focus in the SHSP.



Saving Lives: Key Emphasis Areas in the SHSP

The Strategic Highway Safety Plan Focuses on the following areas:

- Reduce impaired driving
- Eliminate hazardous locations
- Increase occupant protection
- Improve driver competency
- Curb aggressive driving
- Improve emergency response system
- Improve information and decision support systems

Customer Satisfaction Survey

How satisfied are you with the transportation system in the Baltimore region? How has your travel time changed in the past 5 years? Do you think that congestion is a major problem in the Baltimore region?

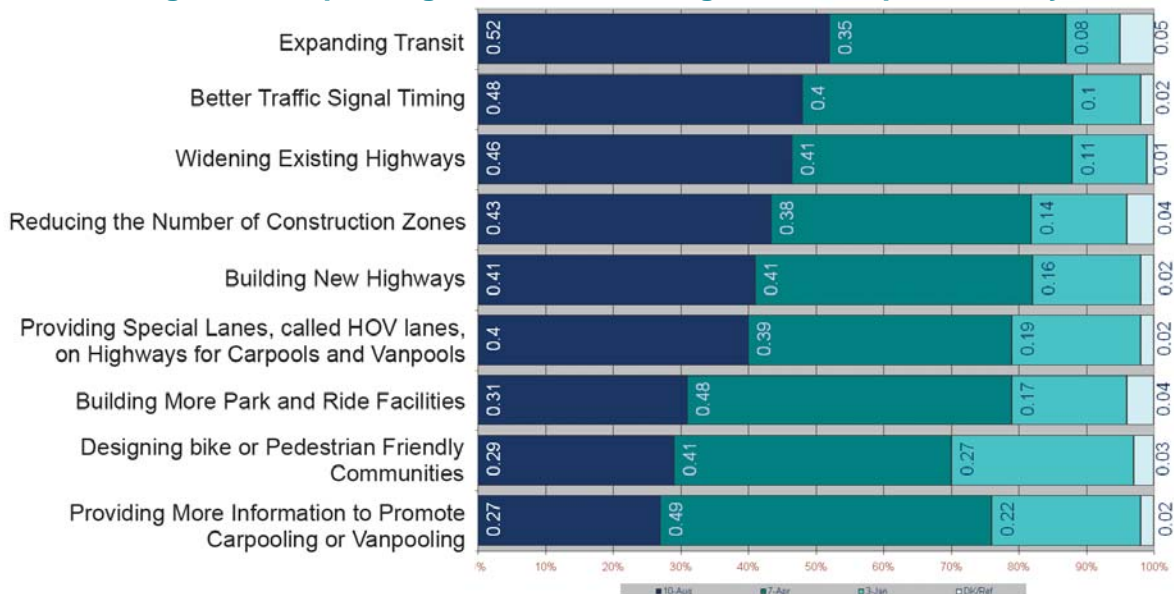
These are the kinds of questions asked in a recent customer satisfaction survey conducted on behalf of the BRTB. Over 1,000 people from throughout of the region participated in the telephone survey, conducted earlier this year. Here are some highlights of what the study found:

- Forty percent of those that responded are somewhat or very satisfied with the transportation system in the region and 33% are somewhat or very dissatisfied with the system. The reasons for dissatisfaction range from congestion on roads (33%) to not enough public transportation (20%).
- About three-fourths of the respondents (76%) said the time it takes to commute to work or school in the Baltimore region is reasonable.
- About one-half of the respondents (47%) reported an increase in their travel time over the last five years.
- In response to a question on what strategies will help the region's transportation system, more than one-half of the respondents (52%) chose expanded transit. Also rated highly were better signal timing (48%), widening existing highways (46%), reducing the number of construction zones (40%) and building new highways (41%). (See chart below.)
- The vast majority of respondents (84%) agree that congestion is a major problem in the Baltimore region.

The results from the survey will serve as a benchmark for system performance in the region and to identify potential projects in the next long range plan.

More information about the study can be found on the BMC web site at www.baltometro.org.

Strategies for Improving the Baltimore Region's Transportation System



Mid-Atlantic Regional Roundtable at BMC

On December 8, 2006, BMC hosted the 3rd Mid-Atlantic Regional Roundtable — a forum to facilitate the sharing of information between planning agencies in Virginia, West Virginia, DC, Maryland, Delaware and Pennsylvania. Sponsored by the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, the National Association of Regional Councils, and the National Association of Development Organizations, the event featured presentations on issues common to agencies in the “super-region” such as air quality considerations. Representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency District 3 and the Maryland Department of the Environment presented perspectives on air pollution transport, the Clean Air Interstate Rule and the Healthy Air Act.

Additional presentations included: Rich Bickel, Director of the Transportation Division, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, discussing bus rapid transit and transit oriented development planning; Dr. Mary Lynn Tischer, Director of the Commonwealth of Virginia’s Multi-modal Transportation Planning Office, discussing statewide freight movement planning initiatives; and George Schoener, Executive Director of the I-95 Corridor Coalition, discussing the integrated corridor analysis tool for combining and investigating road and travel data for I-95 in all states. The entire agenda and all presentations can be found on the Events page at www.baltometro.org.

Participants agreed the forum provided a valuable chance to share information and ideas, as well as began planning for a 4th Mid-Atlantic Regional Roundtable.

Open For Public Review: Amendment to BRTB Bylaws

The BRTB is proposing to amend its bylaws to reflect a change in meeting policy. The changes, if implemented, would increase meetings with empowered representatives to a minimum of eleven per year and reduce the number of meetings with elected officials to at least one per year.

The public is invited to review and comment on proposed changes to the BRTB bylaws through April 5, 2007.

Visit www.baltometro.org or call Monica Haines at 410-732-0500 x1047 to learn more about the proposed changes and how to submit a comment.

Stay Up-to-Date with the MD General Assembly

Each year, the Maryland General Assembly meets for 90 days in Annapolis to act on a variety of bills, including the State’s annual budget.



During the session, which began on January 10, 2007, BMC publishes a weekly report on the status of transportation, air quality and community development related legislation introduced in the General Assembly. This report is available on the BMC web site or by joining the Legislative Weekly Report e-mail list.

In addition, the 2007 Legislative Directory is now available online. This reference guide offers the public a quick and easy way to identify their representatives in the Maryland Senate and House of Delegates. A full list of members of the delegations for the Baltimore region, as well as each jurisdiction, is also listed.

Download a copy of the 2007 legislative directory at www.baltometro.org.

Sign up today to receive the Weekly Legislative Reports!

Visit www.baltometro.org and click on publications to join our e-news mailing list.

Out & About Travel Guide Now Available



As part of its ongoing commitment to meeting the specialized travel needs of the region's elderly and individuals with disabilities, the BRTB has published the 2006 - 2007 edition of the "Out and About Travel Guide."

This new guide provides easy-to-use information for individuals with special travel needs and their caregivers. The guide will assist those with travel-related disabilities to locate and use transportation services that are adapted to meeting their specialized travel needs on a regular or occasional basis.

The Guide is available online at www.baltometro.org. It is also available in hard copy for a small charge from the Regional Information Center. Call 410-732-9570 or e-mail ric@baltometro.org to order a print copy.

Regional Travel Model Updated

BMC recently worked with the Maryland Transit Administration on the development of a new travel demand model for the Baltimore region. The goal was to develop one regional model to be used in long and short range regional planning, regional air quality evaluations, and Federal Transit Administration's New Starts Program Analysis.

The new model is designed to be more user-friendly, allowing more calculations to be performed with fewer inputs. The new model takes longer to run, 9-10 hours instead of 6-7 hours per scenario, but this can be done overnight, providing next day results for any scenario tested.

What's new in the new travel model?

New data from the 2001 National Household Travel Survey were added to revamp the model for trip generation, trip distribution, mode choice, and assignment steps. In addition, several issues raised as part of a peer review process were also addressed in this new model. For example, an evaluation using FTA's Summit software found a number of concerns. As a result, the mode choice model is more technically sound and better results are achieved throughout the model run.

Added features create more precision, including:

- An additional trip purpose for non-home-based trips better accounts for this type of travel;
- Nine area types based on household and employment density instead of four based only on households;
- Composite time used in trip distribution adds factors other than highway time. It now combines highway, transit, and toll time; and
- New feedback loop and fixed weights utilized for trip assignment provide more stable results.

For additional information contact Gene Bandy at gbandy@baltometro.org or 410-732-9573.



BRTB Highlights

Highlights of recent BRTB meetings include the following topics.

- **FY 2007-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Air Quality Conformity Determination of the TIP and the 2004 Plan** – The BRTB voted for approval of both of these documents. Final versions are available on the BMC web site.
- **Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)** – BMC served as a sub-consultant to the State and looked at transportation issues. Further analysis will be done by BMC staff and local jurisdictions in the current fiscal year. In addition, BRTB members discussed work tasks and time frames for future fiscal years.
- **2005 Annual Report of the Regional Development Monitoring Program** – The report includes information on new residential and non-residential construction as well as information for residential and non-residential additions, alterations and repairs.
- **Regional Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan** – This plan seeks to ensure that the region is making a coordinated effort to address the transportation needs of the disabled, elderly and low income residents of the region. BMC staff will be working in coordination with the Maryland Transit Administration to develop this plan.
- **Customer Satisfaction Survey** – This survey is the result of a National Transportation Operations Coalition recommendation and will be used as a baseline for management and operations issues in the upcoming long-range transportation plan. The survey goes beyond traditional data such as capacity and travel times to capture customer perspectives about our regional transportation system.
- **Public Participation Plan and new Citizens Advisory Committee** – After two months of public review and significant input from the CAC, the BRTB endorsed the 2007 Participation Plan in January. A new CAC was appointed in October. Members have been busy learning about the planning process and providing input.
- **Regional Transportation Redundancy Study** – This study will use computer modeling to determine what might happen if a major piece of transportation infrastructure were to be severely damaged or destroyed. The study is part of a homeland security initiative for the Baltimore region.
- **Regional Traffic Count Database** – BMC staff are in the final stages of completing a Traffic Count Database for the Baltimore region. This database will enable BMC to attach 2005 traffic counts to the Travel Demand Model and to provide local jurisdictions and the public with traffic count data through a new web page. The webpage is located on BMC's web site at: <http://bmc.baltometro.org/traffic>. The BMC will be working with the State Highway Administration and member jurisdictions to further populate the database in the coming months.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

FEBRUARY 2007

Freight Movement Task Force	2/22	9:00 A.M.
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board	2/27	9:00 A.M.

MARCH 2007

Technical Committee	3/6	9:30 A.M.
Interagency Consultation Group	3/7	8:30 A.M.
Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Group	3/7	1:00 P.M.
Citizens Advisory Committee	3/7	5:30 P.M.
Cooperative Forecasting Group	3/21	10:00 A.M.
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board	3/27	9:00 A.M.



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Let's Hear From You!
 Send your comments to
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We're on the Web! Visit www.baltometro.org

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Baltimore Regional Transportation Board

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in this issue . . .

- Long Range Plan Under way .. 1
- Web site now in
Thirteen Languages 1
- Zoom in with Google Earth ... 2
- Transportation Outlook 2035... 5
- Study Looks at Access to
Transportation for
the disabled..... 6
- MD Strategic Highway
Safety Plan..... 7
- Customer Satisfaction 8
- Mid-Atlantic Roundtable 9
- MD General Assembly 9
- Out & About Travel Guide ... 10
- Regional Travel Model
Updated 11