

Baltimore County Passes Leadership Reins to Harford County

In July, the BRTB Chairmanship passed from Baltimore County to Harford County. Mr. J. Craig Forrest, empowered to represent Baltimore County by Baltimore County Executive C.A. Dutch Ruppensberger, had acted as Chair for almost three years. With over 40 years of transportation planning experience, and having lived in the region his entire life, Mr. Forrest brought his wealth of knowledge to the metropolitan planning process, seeing his time in the position as his “crowning experience” professionally. He expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to be involved in the process. “I can’t express how grateful I am to

County Executive Ruppensberger. His trust and confidence in me allowed me to lead the Board through some difficult issues. I will always be grateful for the empowerment.”

Over his term, Mr. Forrest has noted rapid changes in the planning process, most notably in environmental justice, long-term visioning, and air quality. He sees a future that moves regional planning away from capital planning with more involvement in operations and transportation control measures. Mr. Forrest also perceives the integration of land use planning with the transportation process as a critical issue for the region.

Under his leadership, the MPO accomplished many tasks, including a new 2001 long-range transportation plan, several TIPs and conformity determinations, and federal certification, to name a few. His personal leadership style had a direct effect on the progress of the MPO. “His professional commitment to the metropolitan planning process was evident from day one,” says Harvey S. Bloom, Transportation Planning Director. “His astute knowledge of the political process and strong leadership allowed the initiation, development, and ultimate implementation of many ideas and projects.” Mr. Forrest will continue on the Board as representative from Baltimore County.

Management & Operations: Working to Improve System Performance

“Management and Operations” (M&O) is the coordination of plans, policies, projects, and performance measures to create a continuous cycle of transportation system improvements promoting greater customer satisfaction and safety within the existing system.

M&O Partnership

- Provides oversight for committees and activities
- Develops recommendations for upcoming projects
- Prepared final report for ITS Early Deployment Plan
- Initiated feasibility study for a wireless integrated network
- Completed Request for Proposals (RFP) for traveler information system

Baltimore Regional Operations Coordination Committee

- Coordinating incident response plans
- Preparing list of equipment and contacts for incidents
- Developing training materials and opportunities

Traffic Signal Subcommittee

- Compiling list of signal maintenance personnel
- Studying coordination of signals in multi-jurisdictional corridor

Transportation Emergency Preparedness Task Force

- Initiates, coordinates & oversees regional transportation emergency preparedness activities
- Developing *Transportation Emergency Preparedness Plan*



BRTB Meets

In attendance at the June 11 meeting of the BRTB were the designated members as well as their empowered representatives. At the meeting, the BRTB accepted the Nominating Committee’s recommendation that Harford County serve as Chair and Howard County serve as Vice-Chair for FY 2003. A proclamation of appreciation was presented to Baltimore County Executive Ruppensberger, the outgoing Chairman, for his service to the Board. MDOT presented a briefing on federal TEA-21 reauthorization issues. A status report on Vision 2030 was given and it was noted that a final report to the BRTB will be forthcoming by January 2003.

At the July 23 meeting, three resolutions were presented for approval. Resolution #03-1, which will amend the FY 2003 Unified Planning Work Program and will provide funds for MTA to conduct an assessment and evaluation of system preservation needs for Light Rail facilities and equipment, passed. Resolution #03-2 was also approved. It supports the statewide coalition to promote and increase opportunities that encourage walking. Last, Resolution #03-3, dealing with guidelines for sensitive security information, was tabled for additional public review and consideration of legal sufficiency.