

**Monica Haines**

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**From:** Nichols, Foster  
**Sent:** Friday, April 24, 2009 7:35 PM  
**To:** comments@baltometro.org  
**Subject:** Comments on UPWP2010  
**Attachments:** UPWP2010Comment-FNichols.doc

**Comments on the Baltimore Region FY2010 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for Transportation Planning**

**Baltimore Region Transportation Board (BRTB)**

By:  
 Foster Nichols  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Towson, MD  
 410-xxx-xxxx  
 nichols@---com

I am a member of the Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) for the BRTB, however, I offer the following comments as a private citizen of Baltimore County and the greater Baltimore region.

Thank you for soliciting public comments on the draft Baltimore Region Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which provides the agenda for regional transportation planning for coming fiscal year. Twice within the past year, the CAC on which I serve has approved resolutions recommending that the BRTB update the process by which the regional long-range transportation plan is developed, to better reflect regional needs based on a comprehensive regional vision, and to be more inclusive of the public, specifically,

- o "That work begin immediately on a... long range plan, [including] a comprehensive community planning process to develop a vision, framework and priorities" (CAC-08-01, April, 2008); and
- o "Establish a vision-driven and need-based comprehensive long-range plan and planning process" (CAC-08-06, September, 2008); and

I was gratified when the BRTB decided at its December, 2008 meeting to develop a comprehensive regional transportation vision for the Baltimore region, and I very much look forward to participating in and hopefully contributing to the visioning process and the establishment of a clear and comprehensive vision for the region's transportation system.

I noticed in my review of the proposed UPWP language that the proposed budget for the Long-Range Planning task for FY2010 is only \$75,000 greater than the corresponding budget for FY2009, which represents approximately the same percentage (6.2%) of the total proposed annual budget – despite the addition of the regional visioning activity in next year's work program. This strikes me as too lean a level of effort, given the importance of the task and hand and the urgency with which the comprehensive Vision is needed. Significant changes in the way surface transportation projects are evaluated and funded by the Federal government and at the State level are likely to be made during FY2010, thereby increasing the importance and urgency of having a regional transportation plan and planning process that can respond to such changes.

I therefore request that the BRTB proceed expeditiously and without delay to prepare the Regional Transportation Vision and update the process by which the long-range transportation plan is developed. I have suggested modified language for the long-range planning task description in the FY2010 Unified Planning Work Program, which follows as Attachment A. I request that the BRTB seriously consider adopting this revised language, which I believe captures the spirit of the process that was envisioned by the BRTB in December. I also request that the BRTB increase the FY2010 budget for the Long-Range & Vision Planning task, to enable the regional visioning process and the development of an updated regional transportation planning process to be progressed as expeditiously as possible, without resource constraints and with an appropriate level of public participation.

Best regards,  
 Foster Nichols

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4/27/2009

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**ATTACHMENT A**  
**Baltimore Region FY2010 Unified Planning Work Program**  
**for Transportation Planning**

**Long-Range Transportation Planning – System Level**

**PROJECT:** LONG-RANGE STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

This project is divided into two task activities:

- Long-Range & Vision Planning
- Congestion Management Process

**TASK:** LONG-RANGE & VISION PLANNING

**PURPOSE:** To establish a regional planning process that is based on a comprehensive vision for regional transportation and which satisfies the requirements of the Metropolitan Planning Regulations.

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The next long-range transportation plan will begin to be updated in this timeframe. A key task will be the development of a regional transportation “Vision.” The Vision will be comprehensive, multi-modal and responsive to the region’s needs and aspirations. It will address concerns within the region about protection of the environment, the availability and cost of energy resources, future land use and development patterns, regional economic competitiveness and the quality of life. Specific goals, objectives and strategies will be developed to guide implementation of the Vision. While the list of capital projects included in the next long-range transportation plan will be resource-constrained according to the applicable Federal regulations, the Visioning process will not be initially constrained by the current scarcity of funds available for transportation system investments. A second, related key task will be the refinement of the process by which the long-range regional transportation plan is developed.

The goal of this UPWP task is to achieve consensus on a Comprehensive Regional Transportation Vision, and a refined long-range planning process, by the end of FY2010. This would enable the preferred long-range transportation plan to be developed in 2011. Recognizing the collaborative nature of this effort, involving all of the BRTB member jurisdictions, state agencies, public and private stakeholder groups and the general public, consensus may not be easily achieved. However, the regional Vision and updated long-range plan will be important to have in hand in order for the State and region to be able to respond most efficiently and productively to new requirements and opportunities that may emerge from the pending Federal surface transportation authorization, potential new Federal and/or state and local infrastructure funding mechanisms, prospective new environmental regulations, and continuing population and employment growth in the region.

The various inter-related work elements within this task are illustrated in the accompanying flow diagram. A research and data compilation effort will be undertaken in the first quarter of FY2010 to assemble information from available existing sources on regional trends and forecasts (including demographics, land use, travel demand, goods movement, and environmental conditions), relevant programs and initiatives of the BRTB member jurisdictions and Maryland state agencies, and best practices and examples from other regions with respect to regional visioning, long-range transportation planning, analytic methods and tools, performance measures, and funding sources and mechanisms. A set of working papers will be developed during the second quarter of FY2010, summarizing regional trends and forecasts, identifying regional transportation-related strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and comparing national and international best practices.

Critical to the success of the work effort will be an ongoing process of reaching out to and engaging with public and private stakeholders, including the BRTB member jurisdictions (including but not limited to departments of planning, transportation, public works, environment and economic development), state agencies, various public and private stakeholder groups with an interest in regional transportation, and the general public. Issues and concerns will be obtained from these groups at the outset. Brainstorming sessions will be held to solicit ideas and identify priorities. The interim work papers will be circulated for review, discussion and feedback by stakeholder groups. Visioning workshops will be held to facilitate the evaluation of alternatives – including alternative regional transportation visions, strategic directions, investment levels, performance measures, and evaluation frameworks. BRTB will seek to achieve a broad regional consensus around a comprehensive regional vision – and a refined long-range planning process.

The visioning activity will compare proposed goals with state conservation plans, the Maryland Strategic Highway Safety Plan, land use plans, climate change plans, and other relevant plans. Following efforts started as a result of current metropolitan planning regulations, this task will also compare proposed goals with natural and historic resource inventories, integrate safety into all aspects of goal development and will consider a range of special groups, including consideration of environmental justice communities, aging population, labor force, goods movement, and pedestrian and bicycle communities.

Objectives will be developed based on the goals that are specific and measurable. The objectives will be measurable so that progress toward the achievement of the goals is clear. The objectives will also be realistic with clear target dates.

The revised long-range planning process will update the process by which candidate capital projects are formulated, evaluated, prioritized and selected for inclusion in the long-range plan and TIP. The sequence of steps to be followed and the timeline for those steps will be identified, along with the quantitative performance measures to be used to evaluate projects, and the analytic tools and data required to perform the measurements. As a byproduct of this task, the input forms used to describe and document candidate projects will be updated.

Consultant assistance will be obtained as necessary to update various components of the planning process, such as development of multi-modal measures, expanded analysis years and more detailed project costs and financial analysis. This review will include additional research that builds on previous efforts and input to further update the plan's policies, strategies, and performance measures. Based on a recent Baltimore-specific freight profile, more consideration of the growth in regional freight activity, goods movements, and the related infrastructure are needed to improve multi-modal mobility in this region. Efforts will continue to integrate many overarching issues into the project selection process and performance criteria such as safety, congestion management, security, and management and operations. Also maximizing tools such as GIS layers and visualization techniques will allow technical information to be displayed in a user-friendly manner. All of the tools and techniques will build on, or be compatible with the regional travel demand model.

For the consideration of additional revenue as well as updating tools used in the planning process, ample documentation of issues and discussions will take place. This task will integrate the technical work of other UPWP tasks as appropriate, particularly with respect to data collection, modeling and analysis, policy-making, and project identification.

Public input and feedback will be sought, and opportunities for public participation will be provided as described in the BRTB Public Participation Plan.

#### FY 2010 PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:

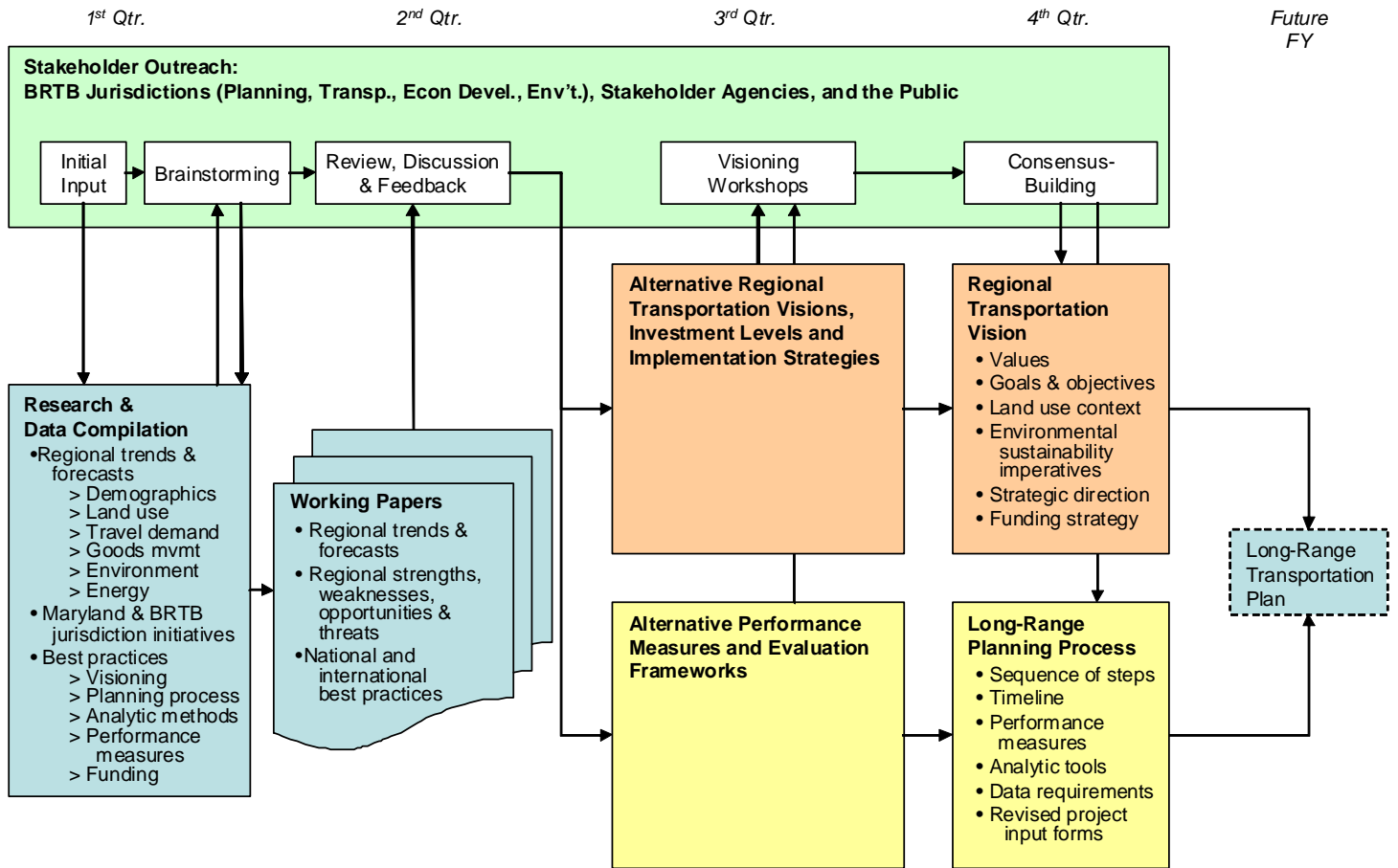
1. Document all activities related to possible update to Transportation Outlook 2035.
2. Develop a public and stakeholder outreach plan and schedule.
3. Initiate outreach to agencies responsible for land use, conservation and climate plans to understand their goals and how they affect the transportation plan update.
4. Undertake a research and data compilation effort to identify national and international best practices
5. Understand historical trends (success) of project planning and implementation.
6. Coordinate trends analysis, local planning assumptions and cooperative forecasts.
7. Review financial forecasting tools and documenting procedures.
8. Prepare a Comprehensive Regional Transportation Vision, through collaboration with stakeholder groups, including development of goals and objectives to be carried forward in the long-range plan development.
9. Prepare an updated process for developing the long-range transportation plan, including identification of specific performance measures.
10. Revise the project submittal form to capture necessary information.
11. Continue coordination of activities such as regional mitigation strategies.

| PRODUCTS/MILESTONES  | SCHEDULE                |
|--|-------------------------|
| Obtain stakeholder input and conduct brainstorming sessions            | 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter |
| Research & Data Compilation  | 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter |
| Working Paper: Regional Trends and Forecasts                           | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter |
| Working Paper: Regional Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter |
| Working Paper: Best Practices  | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter |
| Visioning Workshops with Stakeholders and the Public                   | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter |
| Draft White Paper: Regional Transportation Vision                      | 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter |
| Draft White Paper: Long-Range Planning Process                         | 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter |
| Update submittal forms   | 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter |
| Coordinate Conformity of Plan amendment/revision with TIP              | Throughout Fiscal Year  |
| Continue approach to mitigation  | Ongoing                 |

PARTICIPANTS: Baltimore Metropolitan Council

BUDGET: \$700,000 [suggested doubling of FY2009 level of effort]

# BRTB Work Program for Long-Range Planning and Visioning – FY 2010



April 28, 2009

Mr. Carl Balsler, Chair  
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board  
2700 Lighthouse Point East, STE 310,  
Baltimore, MD 21224

Chairman and BRTB Members and Staff:

CMTA thanks for the opportunity to share our thoughts regarding the Unified Planning Work Program. Our comments are as follows:

- 1) Kudos for budgeting for planning the Bayview Multimodal Transit Center. This is smart planning on many fronts, not least of which is providing a rail link between the NIH and a major medical research complex within Central Maryland. It is timely planning because of the priority we are giving the Red Line. It complements two CMTA regional priorities: the Baltimore Regional Rail Plan and the MARC Growth & Investment Plan.
- 2) Also kudos for budgeting for implementing elements of the Red Line Community Compact. The BRTB does well to make the Community Compact a living, guiding document that brings together the many stakeholders in the Red Line project.
- 3) Finally, kudos for developing the Production, Exchange and Consumption Allocation System (PECAS) model to assess land value, employment and other changes based on changes in the transportation network. This is valuable to the region, but please make it well known and accessible (see recommendation #8 below).

Corrections and Recommendations:

- 1) The dollar figure listed for work task 17, "GIS Activities" on p. 97 and the amount listed in Table 1 on p. 8 do not agree. Please verify the correct amount.
- 2) Parts A and B under Anne Arundel County: Subarea Analysis are budgeted for \$40,000 and \$125,000, respectively. They should total \$165,000 but the subtotal on p. 122 is listed at \$185,000.
- 3) It should be a priority under the short range planning for Baltimore City to study connections between the planned Red Line, the downtown circulator and existing services such as the Green Line, Blue Line, and commuter buses. The lack of connectivity has been a frequent criticism of the existing transit system and the issue has been raised repeatedly during public participation at Red Line events.
- 4) Part C under short range planning for Baltimore County addresses Western Baltimore County Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Planning. It should address connections to the planned Red Line stations within walkable and bikable radii of the stations.

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Venable, LLP

VICE CHAIRMAN  
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Greater Baltimore Committee

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The Baltimore Urban League

**David Hillman**  
Southern Management Corporation

**Caroline Moore**  
ULI Baltimore

**Joe Nathanson**  
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**Otis Warren**  
Otis Warren & Company, Inc.

PRESIDENT/CEO  
**Otis Rolley, III**

**$R^3 = E^3$**

***Regional, Rapid, Reliable Transportation =  
Economic Growth, Equitable Access, & Environmental Protection for Central Maryland***

- 5) Long range planning should make it a priority to understand and target "choice" riders of transit. In particular plans should aim to improve perceptions about safety and crime related to public transit.
- 6) Planning efforts should address funding sources for commuter bus and commuter rail to keep up with demand when demand increases. Between fall 2007 and fall 2008 those modes saw significant increases in ridership. Given the goals of reducing congestion and reducing mobile source emissions the increased ridership on commuter modes should be viewed as contributing greatly to transportation planning outcomes, yet both modes cut service in Central Maryland during winter 2008/2009. While we understand the budget realities that MDOT faced when making the cuts, as planners we must view the decisions as insanity not to be repeated. It is a Catch-22 that MTA should have to cut back commuter bus and MARC service as commuters are leaving cars to use those services in greater numbers. Transportation planning should study the funding mechanism and recommend solutions.
- 7) Emulate the web interface utilized by MDOT to show where ARRA funds are being spent. Use a similar interface to show where BRTB funds are being spent throughout the region and make it available on the web site.
- 8) Dedicate a portion of the UPWP budget to making the information generated more accessible to the public. This would best be done by an outside media consultant or PR agency. Items such as the household travel survey, the PECAS model, the transportation and land use connection (TLC) plan, etc. are missing some of their potential value because they are difficult for the public to discover, access or understand. A strategy for the BMC/BRTB web site, press releases, and other media would add value to the rest of the work products.
- 9) Develop more performance objectives that measure outcomes rather than inputs. For example, the performance objectives listed under freight mobility planning on p. 73 list meetings to be held rather than a measure of the success of outreach efforts to the freight industry.
- 10) Organize the work plan in terms of goals first with work tasks and measurable objectives listed under each goal. Otherwise, the only things we'll know we accomplished at the end of FY 2010 are newsletters issued, meetings held, and \$6.8 million spent.

Thanks for you anticipated consideration and review of our comments.

Sincerely,



Otis Rolley, III

## SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

### UPWP Budget

- The proposed budget for the Long-Range Planning task for FY2010 is only \$75,000 greater than the corresponding budget for FY2009, which represents approximately the same percentage (6.2%) of the total proposed annual budget - despite the addition of the regional vision activity in next year's work program. This is too lean a level of effort, given the importance of the task at hand and the urgency with which the comprehensive Vision is needed.
- Recommend that the BRTB proceed expeditiously and without delay to prepare the Regional Transportation Vision and update the process by which the long-range transportation plan is developed. SEE SUGGESTED MODIFICATION
- Increase FY2010 budget for the Long-Range & Vision Planning task, to enable the regional visioning process and the development of an updated regional transportation planning process to be progressed as expeditiously as possible, without resource constraints and with an appropriate level of public participation.
- Why is the UPWP submitted year after year without specific budget figures? All that are supplied are totals. For instance, it would be important to know explicitly:
  - a) How the UPWP 2010 proposed \$140,000 for public participation is to be budgeted (with specific line items). How was the figure arrived at, and is it large enough to do the job?
  - b) How the \$425,000 proposed by UPWP 2010 for "Long-Range Vision & Planning is to be budgeted (with specific line items)? Who is supposed to get how much to do what?
  - c) How the \$4,795,000 (about 70% of the total) proposed for BMC staff is to be spent (again with specific budgetary line items).
  - d) How much of the \$6,886,698 total is to go to private consultants, and why?

### Long-range vision and plan

- This is essential to the future of public transportation in Central Maryland. The BRTB has already unanimously approved a resolution calling for the same thing at its meeting of Chief Executives last December.
- Develop specific long-range vision for public transportation in Central Maryland.
- Initiate in Fall 2009
- 2 major objectives that need addressing are:
  - a) the link between objectives and the money to achieve them
  - b) taking a long-term view outside narrow Party Political considerations, that allow projects that have a longer time frame, are not seen as candidates for cuts when a different party is elected. The resultant short term view is preventing important decisions being made and will inhibit decisions without the standard political time frame.
- Twice within the past year, the CAC has approved resolutions recommending that the BRTB update the process by which the regional long-range transportation plan is developed, to better reflect regional needs based on a comprehensive regional vision, and to be more inclusive of the public, specifically:
  - “That work begin immediately on a... long range plan, [including] a comprehensive community planning process to develop a vision, framework and priorities” (CAC-08-01, April, 2008); and

“Establish a vision-driven and need-based comprehensive long-range plan and planning process” (CAC-08-06, September, 2008); and

### Planning Process, Public Involvement and Outreach

- Needs to be much more involvement of the public from the beginning and continuing during all subsequent stages of planning. This will require training for public participants, and location of planning meetings at places and at times convenient to the public.
- More advertising needed to notify the general public - More and better use of TV news, Radio news, papers, public announcements, etc.
- The public isn't involved as it should be in the planning because many are not even aware of what's going on.
- The current planning process does not fully engage the link between plans and finance
- Planning process needs to formulate and evaluate multiple investment scenarios and outcomes: at least one should maximize environmental sustainability benefits and exceed Fed requirements. Likewise, some scenarios should be need-based and drive from the Vision, while others will need to be financially-constrained.

### Exceed don't just meet federal requirements

- The new Obama Administration policy and stimulus funds favor states/regions that planned ahead with a vision for how to prepare themselves for transit that served the future -- we need to be in that league.
- With the new Administration now making totally new noises re limits on pollutants etc, The Region needs to show Leadership in the area that has now moved near the top of the thinking in the Federal Government. Money could well follow the rhetoric!
- We are already behind federal requirements on air pollution. We need to meet and exceed federal requirements on air quality and other environmental impacts.
- We need to be a LEADER in transportation planning and integration. Let's think ahead with creativity and imagination -- and not always use the nickel-and-dime incremental approach.

### Anticipate federal changes

- Fed legislation could be approved later this year - so initial planning effort and consensus-building needs to happen this year, even if some issues require a longer time to work through.
- It is vital to be as prepared as possible so that as money becomes available, the region can make well balanced and thought through schemes.
- Significant changes in the way surface transportation projects are evaluated and funded by the Federal government and at the State level are likely to be made during FY2010, thereby increasing the importance and urgency of having a regional transportation plan and planning process that can respond to such changes.