

## **BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY GROUP**

March 20, 2024  
1:02 to 2:57 P.M.

### **MINUTES**

#### **1. WELCOME AND ROLL CALL**

Mr. Eric Leshinsky (City of Annapolis) welcomed attendees and then Ms. Charlene Mingus (BMC) held a roll call.

#### **2. APPROVAL OF JANUARY MINUTES**

The minutes from the January 2024 BPAG meeting were previously distributed to the group. Mr. Leshinsky asked for a motion to approve, Mr. Chris Eatough (Howard County) motioned to approve the minutes and Mr. Steve Cohoon (Queen Anne's County) seconded the motion. Mr. Leshinsky called a vote for approval. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

#### **3. PRESENTATION: STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION (SHA) GRANT PROGRAMS OVERVIEW**

Ms. Susie Solo (MDOT SHA) presented an overview of the MDOT SHA Grants Program, which includes Transportation Alternatives (TA) program and Recreational Trails Program (RTP).

The TA program is a competitively selected, reimbursable federal aid program for active and related transportation projects. The RTP is a competitively selected, reimbursable federal aid program for recreational trail projects.

The grant cycle opens April 1 and closes May 15 for the TA program and RTP and grant funding will be awarded fall 2024. If applications are submitted between April 1 and April 15, the grants team will perform a completeness check of the application, and let the applicant know if any updates are required.

Grant funding for both programs is eligible for non-infrastructure, feasibility study, design, construction, and trail maintenance projects. Funding is 80% reimbursable, with the additional 20% required as a local match.

Local governments, regional transportation authorities, transit agencies, natural resource and public land agencies, school districts and local education agencies, tribal governments, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, or any other local and governmental entity with oversight of

transportation or recreational trails (other than a metropolitan planning organizations or a state agency) may apply.

Additional details were provided including regarding eligible project types, application requirements and points of contact.

In response to questions,

- Ms. Solo shared that letters of intent are encouraged but not required.
- Ms. Solo confirmed Program Open Space (POS) funding can be used as a match for the TA program, but she will need to follow up to see if it can be used as a match for RTP. She recommended speaking to Ms. Cheryl Ladota (MDOT SHA), [CLadota@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:CLadota@mdot.maryland.gov), on specifics regarding funding matches.
- Ms. Solo responded that one can submit a TA program application, even if they have already submitted an earmarked request for TA funding.

The MDOT SHA [TA Program](#) and the [Recreational Trails](#) program websites are live.

**[PowerPoint: MDOT SHA Grants Roadshow]**

#### **4. PRESENTATION: TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES OVERVIEW**

Ms. Mingus presented an overview of the Transportation Alternatives (TA) program and BMC's role in the grant process.

The TA program is a set-aside from the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program. It is a reimbursable federal funding program for transportation related projects that strengthen the intermodal transportation network.

Approximately 59% of TA program funds are apportioned to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in urbanized areas with populations over 200,000. In Maryland, this includes BRTB, TPB and WILMAPCO.

Approximate funds available in the region for Fiscal Year 2025 are \$4,252,237 in the Baltimore region, and \$412,619 in the Aberdeen/Bel Air South/Bel Air North small Urban Area.

MPOs are responsible for completing a competitive project selection process for these funds. The remaining 41% of funds can be allocated anywhere throughout the state through a competitive process managed by MDOT SHA.

Evaluation criteria for this regionally competitive process includes: the impact on high need areas such as low-income, transit-dependent, rural, or other areas; expected benefits to the community; feasibility and project readiness; sponsor's demonstrated ability to manage a Federal-Aid project; how the project advances the Goals and Strategies of *Resilience 2050*; and how the project improves public safety for all users.

Under 23 U.S. Code §133 (STBG program) an individual project should be awarded no more than 50% of allocated funds.

Also noted, any project eligible under the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is also eligible under the TA program. Any recreational trail project funded under the TA program will follow the same procedures the state uses for RTP projects.

Ms. Mingus related the timeline for the grant progress, including the role of BMC and the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB). The MDOT SHA call for projects will open April 1, and applicants must submit their proposals by May 15.

BMC will coordinate with BPAG members to create a TA program Work Group with the focus on developing project evaluation and scoring criteria, and considering eligible project types. The tentative schedule for the work group is as follows:

- June –July 2024: Volunteers requested from BPAG for work group
- Aug –Oct 2024: Approximately three work group meetings: kick off and work group scope, draft scoring criteria, and finalize scoring criteria (Note: Feedback will be requested from all BPAG members at key points during the process)
- Nov –Dec 2024: Recommended scoring criteria presented to BRTB and Technical Committee for approval

***[PowerPoint: Transportation Alternatives Program]***

## **5. PRESENTATION: BALTIMORE CITY BICYCLE COUNTS PROGRAM**

Mr. Jon Leishman (Baltimore City) and Mr. Quinton Batts (Rails to Trails Conservancy) presented on the Baltimore City bicycle count program.

Mr. Leishman first presented the history of the Bike and Pedestrian Count Program, which was started with an MDOT Bikeways Award in summer 2021. Mr. Leishman displayed a map of the 10 active bike counter locations in Baltimore City, and the ridership for each location. He shared the types of bike counters used by the program.

Mr. Batts shared that the Rails to Trails Conservancy awarded Baltimore City a \$41,000 grant to purchase and install four multi-counter automated pedestrian and bicycle counters. The locations of the four counters was shared, and are available in the presentation.

The Baltimore City DOT Bike and Pedestrian Count Program launched in winter 2023. The current step is creating a public dashboard, in collaboration with EcoCounter. The program will expand with 8-10 counters funded by the Kim Lamphier Bikeways Network, in addition to the four funded by the Rails to Trails Conservancy. The aim is to have 20 counters installed by the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Leishman clarified that the program is not using video verification of counter data at this time, but that is a long-term objective, requiring additional funding.

***[PowerPoint: BCDOT Bike Counter Program]***

## **6. PRESENTATION: QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE MASTER PLAN**

Mr. Steve Cohoon (Queen Anne's County) shared information on the County Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan. This is the first countywide Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan.

The County worked with the consulting firm Kimley-Horn and Associates to create the plan, starting about a year ago. They will be moving to final approval this April.

Mr. Cohoon related the steps of the planning process.

Developing the master plan started with a review of existing conditions. Next, there was a community input period, including stakeholder meetings, steering committee meetings, open house meetings, an online survey and online map. The recommendations of routes coming out of public input were used to create a network of potential paths, which was then pared down and prioritized into short term, medium term, and long-term priority trails.

Stakeholder and steering committee meetings highlighted the need for budgeting for long-term upkeep and maintenance and marketing trails for tourism. The online survey had 298 responses, and there were 157 comments on the online map.

Most of the respondents use the existing safe separated trails in Queen Anne's County, the Cross County Connector and the Southern Kent Island Trail, and want to see more separated trails like those in the future.

The planning team looked at bicycle Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) for segments of requested trails. LTS was used to determine what types of bike facilities should be recommended for which segments. Many requested routes were town-to-town, and these were higher stress as the shortest distance would be alongside highways.

After determining possible low-stress routes between locations, planners used existing conditions to determine constraints and opportunities associated with each recommendation.

Recommended routes, cover the entire county. The routes were tiered into existing, short-, medium- and long-term. Ranking routes took safety, accessibility, connectivity, health and comfort, equity, multimodal connections, and county priority into account. The plan includes a project summary for each recommended trail with a rating for each of these criteria on a scale of one through five, along with other information.

Additionally the plan includes sections on supporting next steps. Mr. Cohoon said the final draft will be out within a week for a round of public comment.

Responding to a question, Mr. Cohoon shared that there is widespread support in Queen Anne's County for building new trails.

***[PowerPoint: QAC Pedestrian Bike Master Plan]***

## 7. PRESENTATION: BALTIMORE REGION CRASH DATA DASHBOARD

Mr. Charles Baber (BMC) and Ms. Cindy Burch (BMC) presented a prototype of the BMC-developed [Crash Data Dashboard](#), which was a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) project.

The dashboard is currently being worked on, and the presentation shows an older version of the dashboard.

Planning area dashboards covering five areas- Environmental, Census/Demographic, Plans and Programs, System Performance, and Simulation- are available on the BMC webpage. The crash dashboard is under the System Performance category.

The dashboard is hosted in Tableau, and is best viewed in full-screen. Mr. Baber walked the viewers through the buttons and tabs on the webpage.

The crash behavior summary page allows for many filters, including jurisdiction/agency, time period, time of day, season. Data is segmented into crash type, matrixed by road type. The dashboard includes a mapping feature that shows crashes by severity. There is an ability to overlay an equity analysis onto the map. For example, can see number of crashes in areas with above the jurisdiction average of a given minority population.

For now only the some parts of the dashboard are functional due to performance issues, but Mr. Baber related the team is working on fixing the issues. Ms. Burch said that crash data for 2024 will be posted in the next few weeks.

There was some discussion about how the dashboard updates. Mr. Baber said the landing pages shows the starting and ending date of when the data was collected. Crash records can be updated with new information, due to this, Mr. Baber has been downloading previous datasets alongside the most recent ones. Ms. Burch added that the Maryland State Police are committed to having five years of crash data accessible online. State Police data is updated daily. Ms. Burch offered that if any data is needed urgently, or if anyone has additional ideas for the dashboard, to reach out to the team.

***[PowerPoint: Regional Crash Dashboard]***

## 8. UPDATE ON REGIONAL BICYCLE FACILITIES INVENTORY

Ms. Erin Bolton (BMC) provided an update on the [Regional Bicycle Facilities Inventory](#) (RBFi).

First Ms. Bolton shared the history of RBFi which began in 2016 after a BPAG vote, and originated from a need to create a regional map of all the existing, programmed, and planned bicycle facilities in order to aid in regional and cross-jurisdictional planning efforts. The inventory is updated annually.

Existing bicycle and shared-use facilities are available to download and view on an app, on BMC's website. Planned facilities are available for internal government use; contact Ms. Mingus, [cmingus@baltometro.org](mailto:cmingus@baltometro.org), for access.

The 2023 update was recently completed and includes a new schema or way to categorize bicycle facilities which BMC coordinated extensively with MDOT and member jurisdictions to develop. The goals for the new schema were to incorporate more bicycle facility types, to align with the MDOT SHA schema for statewide existing bicycle facility inventory and Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) analysis, and to simplify the annual update process for member jurisdictions.

Member jurisdictions were contacted to submit updated datasets, then BMC reviewed submitted data for completeness and accuracy. The updated RBFI was sent to member jurisdictions, incorporated into BMC maps and web apps, and submitted to MDOT SHA to incorporate into the statewide bicycle facilities inventory.

Ms. Bolton showed a live demonstration of the RBFI web application. The app shows bike facilities by type, and allows for various overlays including public transit stops. The app also allows filtering by facility type. [Examples of each facility type and subtype](#) for the new schema are also available.

In January 2025, BMC will request updated data from member jurisdictions for the next update and the updated dataset will be finalized March 2025.

In response to a question about the difference between separated bike lane and protected bike lane, Ms. Bolton clarified that now separated bike lane is no longer a facility type, due to that confusion. Protected bike lanes include a vertical separation, such as raised bumps or plastic posts while buffered bicycle lanes include buffered space between the bicycle lane and motor vehicle lanes but no vertical separation [Bike facility subtype](#) examples were also discussed.

***[PowerPoint: Regional Bicycle Facilities Inventory]***

## **9. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION**

**City of Annapolis** – Mr. Leshinsky shared that the City is continuing to advance the West-East Express and College Creek Connector and are hoping to move into bidding phase. The Hilltop Lane Connector is moving into 65% design. The City received a Safe Streets for All grant that will allow them to do a complete streets traffic safety plan in order to prioritize bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

**Baltimore City** – Mr. Leishman shared that the City is getting estimates approved for the Boston Street Connector.

**Baltimore County** – Ms. Jessie Bialek shared that the County has many projects in the pipeline for design to be completed by the end of the year. These include the Six Bridges Trail in Towson, The West-East Trail, a section of North-East Trail from Hazelwood to Rossville Boulevard, sections of the North-East Trail on the Perry Hall Boulevard side, and various bike lane projects.

**Carroll County** – Ms. Clare Stewart shared that the Washington Road Safety Process School project received a bid from one contractor, and the County is working on a contract with them now.

**Howard County** – Mr. Eatough shared that the County is updating their neighborhood traffic calming procedures, and responding to requests for neighborhood traffic calming through an inclusive, transparent process. Mr. Eatough also shared that the county is rolling out a bike wayfinding signage system in the spring and summer. Multiple bike lane implementations are planned. The County also has a number of scheduled sidewalk projects for spring and summer construction.

**Queen Anne's County** – Mr. Cohoon shared that there is a mile-long section of the South Island Trail under construction. The County is also engaged in planning and engineering on a final gap in the trail. Once those segments are completed, there will be a complete section of trail from US 50 to the southern tip of Kent Island. The County is beginning planning to extend the Cross Island trail further east, to ultimately reach the town of Queenstown.

**Maryland Department of the Environment** – Ms. Hannah Campbell reported that they had no updates at this time.

**MDOT MHSO** – Ms. Cynthia Spriggs shared that Highway Safety Summit will be held May 13 at the BWI Hilton. Her team, for Read Across America Week, read a book called *Cheswick the Crab and the Smart Summer* at different schools throughout the state. The book is available on the [MDOT SHA website](#). In addition, the site has resources for different the levels of reader that a book is appropriate for.

**MDOT MTA** – Mr. Patrick McMahon reported he will be leaving MTA in early April, and MTA is still identifying who will be attending BPAG meetings going forward.

**MDOT SHA** – Ms. Molly Porter thanked everyone who was able to attend a grant workshop over the past month and a half.

**MDOT TSO** – Ms. Francine Waters shared that Mr. Nate Evans will be leaving MDOT TSO and moving on to MDOT SHA. MDOT TSO has completed a third sidewalk data collaboration workshop. The forth will be a demonstration of merging sidewalk data into One Maryland One Centerline. Invitations for workshop four are upcoming.

**BMC** – Ms. Mingus shared that BMC will be reaching out about the TA Work Group in late summer/early fall.

BMC has been working with the Steering Committee of the Vision for a Regional Bike Network project to craft a new name and tagline which are “Bikeable Baltimore Region: A Plan for a Safe and Connected Biking Network”. After the next Steering Committee meeting the team will engage the Advisory Committee, which will consist of non-profits, advocacy groups, and other interested parties. Following that, there will be the first public comment period, including a story map and public meetings.

Ms. Mingus gave a reminder that the deadline to request bicycle-pedestrian counts for spring 2024 is April 3<sup>rd</sup>. These bicycle, pedestrian and scooter counts can be used to assess the potential locations of long-term counters, to measure the change in volume after infrastructure improvements, to measure exposure for pedestrians and bicyclists, to support safety assessments, and more. Ms. Mingus is able to meet to discuss further.

Applications are open for the first round of funding from the Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program.

Ms. Anna Marshall gave an update on the Patapsco Regional Greenway preliminary design project for the Stoney Run segment. The project is in design now for different alternatives, a Steering Committee meeting is coming up in early April to go over the alternatives. Then there will be the second public comment period and a public meeting to let the public weigh in on the alternatives as well.

Ms. Burch shared that the third round of the Safe Streets and Roads for All funding program has opened. Under this round there will be three rolling deadlines for planning and demonstration grants, so it is possible to apply by April 4<sup>th</sup> 2024, get feedback, and resubmit again either May 16<sup>th</sup> or August 29<sup>th</sup>. However, for implementation grant proposals, the deadline is May 16<sup>th</sup>. [Information on grants](#) is available.

## **10. OTHER BUSINESS**

Before adjourning, Ms. Regina Aris (BMC) wished Mr. McMahon well on behalf of all attendees and thanked him for his contributions to both the committee and to bicycle and pedestrian planning. Mr. McMahon expressed that he hopes to still be involved with the committee in his future role, which is as yet undetermined. Mr. McMahon, in the chat, echoed the appreciation directed towards him and towards Mr. Evans, who is also leaving his role.

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 15th, 2024. The meeting was adjourned at 2:57 P.M.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### ***Members***

Jessie Bialek – Baltimore County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T)  
Hannah Campbell – Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)  
Steve Cohoon – Queen Anne’s County Department of Public Works  
Chris Eatough – Howard County Office of Transportation (OOT)  
Nate Evans – Maryland Department of Transportation the Secretary’s Office (MDOT TSO)  
Tina James – Maryland Department of Planning  
Ryan Kivinski – Harford County Department of Planning & Zoning  
Jon Leishman – Baltimore City Department of Transportation (BCDOT)  
Eric Leshinsky – City of Annapolis Department of Planning and Zoning  
Patrick McMahon – MDOT Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA)  
Molly Porter - MDOT State Highway Administration (SHA)

### ***Staff and Guests***

Regina Aris – Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)  
Charles Baber – BMC  
Quinton Batts – Rails to Trails Conservancy



Erin Bolton - BMC  
Cindy Burch – BMC  
Barry List – MDOT State Highway Administration (SHA)  
Anna Marshall – BMC  
Charlene Mingus – BMC  
Mitchell Phillips – Baltimore County DPW&T  
Amanda Roberts – BMC  
Patrick Smith – Howard County Office of Transportation (Howard County OOT)  
Marium Sultan – BMC  
Shane Sarver – MDOT SHA  
Susan Solo – MDOT State Highway Administration (SHA), Transportation Alternatives  
Francine Waters – MDOT TSO