

BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD

May 28, 2019
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
9:14 to 10:12 A.M.

MINUTES

The 308th meeting was called to order at 9:14 A.M. by the Chair, Ms. Valorie LaCour.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A request for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2019 BRTB meeting was made by Ms. LaCour. A motion was made by Mr. Greg Carski to approve the minutes and seconded by Mr. Ramond Robinson. The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

There was no one from the public who wished to address the BRTB.

3. REPORT ON PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda reported that the public comment period for *Maximize2045*, the TIP, and the air quality conformity determination launched Thursday, May 9. Staff hosted two public meetings, one in Harford County and one in Baltimore City thus far. Ms. Haines Benkhedda shared a list of additional public meetings and asked for the BRTB's help in sharing information about the upcoming meetings and opportunity for comment.

In addition, over 1,600 people registered to ride in BMC's 22nd annual Bike-to-Work Day on Friday, May 17 and BMC with the Baltimore Regional Fair Housing Group hosted a successful *What's On Tap: Piecing It Together - Framing Affordable Housing Messages* on Monday, May 6 at Diamondback Brewing Company.

[Handout: Public Involvement Report for May 2019]

4. REPORT FROM THE PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Ms. Haines Benkhedda reported the following from the May PAC meeting:

- BMC staff gave a brief overview of the Local Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) effort.
- PAC members discussed the draft *Maximize2045* and will share comments with the BRTB in June.
- The July PAC meeting will be held on July 10 at Impact Hub and will feature a strategic planning session for members work in the coming year and beyond.

5. REPORT FROM THE INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION GROUP

Ms. Sara Tomlinson reported the following from the May ICG meeting:

- The ICG members approved the draft results of the regional emissions analysis of the Conformity Determination of the 2020-2023 TIP and 2019 Plan, for public review. Emissions of nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds are below the motor vehicle emission budgets established in the State Implementation Plan (SIP). These are estimated for summer weekdays, in tons per day.
- The Conformity Document along with the TIP and Plan went out for public review on May 9th.
- MDE said that EPA approved the MWCOG re-designation request for 2008 ozone standard to attainment; and
- In early May, MDOT hosted a transportation climate change webinar.

6. REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Mr. Terry Freeland reported the following from the May TC meeting:

- The Technical Committee saw presentations on the two resolutions the BRTB will be asked to consider: Resolution #19-22, Title VI program update, and Resolution #19-23, update of the Language Assistance Program and the Limited English Proficiency Plan. The committee unanimously recommended both resolutions for approval.
- The committee has formed a nominating committee to recommend the next slate of officers. The committee has exchanged information via email and has agreed on its recommendations.
- Maryland Department of Planning presented information on MDP's updated Transit Station Area Profile Tool. Updates include incorporation of historical data; the addition of layers to provide data on Opportunity Zones, MDOT MTA bus routes and stops, and real estate activity; the addition of Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamic (LEHD) data from the U.S. Census; the development of improved dashboards. TC members were shown how to access the profile tool and demonstrated some of its features. Next steps include the continued incorporation of new features, preparation of user documentation, and coordination with MDP communications staff on a public outreach strategy.
- BMC presented on new data available from the U.S. Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program. The Cooperative Forecasting Group monitors population trends because these

estimates determine the allocation of federal funds to state, county, and local governments. There was data on population growth for each jurisdiction in the region. Also, the Population Estimates Program will release population estimates by age, sex, and race and Hispanic origin characteristics in July.

- Staff gave an update on the status of *Maximize2045*, the FY 2020-2023 TIP, and the associated air quality conformity determination. These documents are available for public review, and two public open house meetings have been held to date: in Harford County and Baltimore City. Also, BMC presented information to the committee members on the results of the travel demand modeling analysis and the Environmental Justice analysis.
- Under Other Business, MDOT MTA announced a second round of Statewide Transit Innovation Grant funds. MDOT MTA is accepting applications from local agencies through June 26, 2019
- The committee also went through the formal procedure of closing the meeting to consider information about an upcoming RFP to seek consulting services to help the region improve its Congestion Management Process.

7. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #19-22

Ms. Regina Aris introduced this topic and began with an explanation of what Title VI is and who the statute protects. The key is not to deny anyone, especially specified groups of people, the opportunity to participate in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination. Ms. Aris reviewed the Title VI policy statement as well as the assurances that are required at the time of approval. The Title VI plan also encompasses a Title VI notice and complaint form, the DBE Program, the Public Participation Plan and LEP Plan.

Mr. Robinson asked about the cycle for updating the Title VI Plan. Mr. Tyson Byrne interjected that MDOT is reviewed by U.S. DOT and then in turn MDOT reviews the BRTB's Title VI plan and offers comments. They in turn share those comments with U.S. DOT as part of their oversight function. Regarding MDOT MTA, their current Title VI Plan is for the 2017-2020 period.

Ms. LaCour asked for approval of resolution #19-22. Mr. Carski moved to approve the Title VI resolution with Mr. Robinson seconding the motion. The resolution was unanimously approved.

[PowerPoint: Title VI Program – Update of the 2015 Plan]

8. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION #19-23

Ms. Aris explained the purpose and origin of a language assistance program and who it is intended to assist. LEP is a term used to describe individuals whose primary language is not English and they are not proficient in the English language. The key to creating or updating the LEP is taking reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to the information and services the BRTB provides. To do this a four-factor process is considered. The factors include: 1) the

number and proportion of LEP persons in the eligible service area; 2) the frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with the program; 3) the importance of the service provided by the program; and 4) the resources available to the recipient. Based on the current low levels of residents that are limited in their capacity to speak and understand English, translation of all BRTB plans and programs is not required. However, to engage this population the BRTB commits to some translation of key documents.

Ms. LaCour asked for approval of resolution #19-23. Mr. Gary Blazinsky moved to approve the limited English proficiency resolution with Mr. Carski seconding the motion. The resolution was unanimously approved.

[PowerPoint: Language Assistance and LEP – Update to the 2015 Plan]

9. PRESENT THE PROPOSED SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR FY 2020

Ms. LaCour requested that Ms. Heather Murphy, a member of the Nominating Committee, report on progress. Ms. Murphy stated that the Nominating Committee recommends a slate of officers for FY 2020 containing Carroll County as Chair and Anne Arundel County as Vice Chair. The slate will be restated at the June meeting as well as allowing for nominations from the floor. That action will be followed by a vote for officers.

10. PRESENTATION: THE BORING COMPANY ON THE LOOP PROJECT

Mr. Todd Lang shared that the Boring Company was scheduled to brief the BRTB however, last Friday evening they chose to postpone their presentation. The Boring Company had asked for individual briefings with each impacted jurisdiction and agency prior to their briefing and we would like to thank all of you for moving around your schedules to accommodate these meetings. While these meetings took place as requested, the Company still postponed.

The Boring Company, which is private, is proposing to construct a 35.3-mile set of two parallel tunnels, each 12 foot in diameter, one in each direction. They are calling this the Washington DC to Baltimore Loop Project. The Environmental Assessment has been released for public comment which will end June 10, 2019. The Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration is the acting as the state agency project sponsor.

The project will have one station at each end of the tunnels, at Camden Yards in Baltimore and on New York Avenue in DC. The project will tunnel under MD 295/Russell Street, the BW Parkway and US 50/New York Avenue. The tunnel is proposed to have ventilation shafts every 0.5 to 2 miles along the corridor, at yet to be determined locations that would also act as emergency pedestrian access. The project also envisions up to four maintenance terminals. At each station, individuals will board a vehicle (either a Tesla or a modified Tesla) that will be automatically piloted through the tunnel at up to 150 miles per hour with no stops between Baltimore and DC. It was described that you will book a ticket timed for your ride and the fare will be comparable to regular public transportation fares. With two stations, ridership is expected to be limited to 1,000 passengers per direction per day. The project expects future

expansion or branches that would provide additional access and the potential for more passengers. Future expansions would be covered by a separate NEPA process. This would be the first public application of this project in public right-of-way that has only been run in private capacity to date not open to the public.

Concerns were raised about the lack of alternatives studied with the alignment seeming to focus on the one with the least number of property owners. Emergency access was raised at most local meetings. The tunnel is not large enough for standard fire trucks. In the event of an emergency the Boring Company indicated that vehicles would be automatically moved away from the incident to the maintenance access points and then emergency vehicles could respond and they would work with local fire companies. There were concerns over the private nature of the venture and what, if any regulatory body, would have control over areas such as access and fares. ADA issues were raised due to the uncertainty of the vehicle and station access. Construction issues were also raised including removal and disposal of the material (the Boring Company said they could make bricks out of the material at a yet to be determined location). Concerns were raised over the release of public right-of-way to a private company and the limited benefit of 1,000 riders per direction per day.

Each jurisdiction and agency can submit comments and/or questions to the docket before June 10.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Bala Akundi briefed the BRTB on a brand-new pedestrian and bicycle safety education and outreach campaign for the Baltimore region. The region has seen an alarming increase in pedestrian crashes, fatalities and serious injuries over the past several years prompting the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and its highway safety office (MHSO) to step up efforts across the 4E's – engineering, education, enforcement and EMS.

The new campaign, developed over the course of the past 9 months with a \$300,000 grant from MHSO, is called **LOOK ALIVE** – and features signal woman – the walk signal sign personified – as a fun and spunky character telling drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists to look out for each other, obey signals and laws, reduce speed and be respectful of one another. The centerpiece of the campaign are two video spots that will air on local media and can be seen on the lookalivemd.org website.

Look Alive integrates several components, including television, outdoor, digital engagement, and community outreach and media relations. Education is coupled with high visibility enforcement waves, in which police put an added emphasis on enforcing traffic safety laws to protect people walking and biking in the greater Baltimore region.

It is expected that this campaign will be implemented in the region for the next 3-5 year with additional grant funding support from the Maryland Highway Safety Office.

[PowerPoint: LOOK ALIVE]

Mr. Lang reminded everyone that BMC's office will be under renovation over the summer, therefore the next meeting will be held at MDOT Headquarters in Harry Hughes Suite #1 on the lower level.

The meeting adjourned at 10:12 A.M.

Members

Gary Blazinsky, Harford Transit LINK
Greg Carski, Baltimore County Department of Public Works
Steve Cohoon, Queen Anne's County Department of Public Works
Bruce Gartner, Howard County Office of Transportation
Valorie LaCour, Baltimore City Department of Transportation
Heather Murphy Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Sally Nash, City of Annapolis Department of Planning
Alex Rawls, Harford County Department of Planning
Ramond Robinson, Anne Arundel County Department of Planning & Zoning
Kate Sylvester, (for Holly Arnold) Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA)
Bihui Xu, Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)

Staff and Guests

Regina Aris, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Cindy Burch, BMC
Tyson Byrne, MDOT
David Cookson, Howard County Office of Transportation
Rebecca Deibel, BMC
Blake Fisher, BMC
Terry Freeland, BMC
Monica Haines Benkhedda, BMC
Don Halligan, BMC
Mara Kaminowitz
Zach Kaufman, BMC
Todd Lang, BMC
Eileen Singleton, BMC
Lisa Sirota, MDOT SHA
Sara Tomlinson, BMC

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board