

BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD

May 26, 2020

Baltimore Metropolitan Council

9:04 to 10:58 A.M. (through GoToMeeting)

MINUTES

The 319th meeting was called to order at 9:04 A.M. by the Chair, Ms. Lynda Eisenberg. Ms. Eisenberg welcomed members and guests as well as thanked all members of the Armed Forces in honor of Memorial Day Weekend.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A request for a motion to approve the minutes of the May 1, 2020 BRTB meeting was made by Ms. Eisenberg. A motion was made by Ms. Sally Nash to approve the minutes and seconded by Mr. Greg Carski. Ms. Rebecca Deibel conducted a roll call vote with the result that the minutes were approved unanimously.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

No members of the public participated in the opportunity to comment.

3. REPORT ON PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda provided a report on public involvement activities. The comment period for the 2020 Federal Certification Review concluded on April 30, 2020. Comments received have been shared with the federal review team and the BRTB as well as posted on the BMC website.

On June 16, the BRTB will launch a comment period for the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the associated Air Quality Conformity determination. The public involvement strategy is currently being planned.

Ms. Haines Benkhedda also reported that staff have been working with a consultant team from WSP and PRR to evaluate the effectiveness of current public involvement activities of the BRTB and to develop recommendations for improving the BRTB's public involvement program. The consultant team will provide an update on the project and ideas for revamping the Public Advisory Committee (PAC) to the PAC at their virtual meeting on May 27 at 5:30 p.m.

Lastly, Ms. Haines Benkhedda shared highlights of BRTB member activities:

- The Draft Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan (RTP) is open for comment through June 18, 2020. View the draft online at rtp.mta.maryland.gov.
- [Bike to Work Day](#) has been rescheduled to Friday, September 25.
- Census 2020 - BMC's GIS team developed an app that tracks 2020 Census self-response rates, based on Census Bureau data. This app is a great tool for government agencies, planners, and community activists to identify low response rates as they develop, so community leaders can take early action to encourage Census participation. View the app online at arccg.is/1buC1f.

[Handout: Public Involvement Report for May 2020, with Public comments received during the Certification review]

4. REPORT FROM THE PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Ms. Haines Benkhedda reported the following:

- The PAC participated in the April 22 online meeting for the 2020 Federal Certification of the BRTB.
- Their next meeting is set for Wednesday, May 27 at 5:30 p.m. and features a presentation on options for the future of the PAC, as well as a discussion of the goals and public involvement for the next long-range transportation plan.

5. REPORT FROM THE INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION GROUP

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

- The ICG reviewed and approved the draft regional emissions analysis results for the Conformity Determination of the 2021-2024 TIP and Plan. The emissions are below the established state implementation plan (SIP) emissions budgets for every horizon year analyzed, 2021, 2025, 2035, and 2045.
- As mentioned at a previous meeting, the inputs into the MOVES 2014a emissions model included vehicle population data, meteorological data, and fuel data from 2017. This data is updated by MDE every three years.
- Draft Round 9A socioeconomic data, developed through the cooperative forecasting process at BMC, was used as input as well into the travel demand modeling. BMC staff presented information on this forecast at the meeting as well.

6. REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Mr. David Cookson reported the following from the May TC meeting:

- MDOT MTA gave a presentation on using so-called "Big Data" and "Internet of Transit" to improve transit performance through implementing transit signal priority along selected

corridors. Transit signal priority (TSP) involves buses and other transit vehicles communicating with traffic signals to get preference in moving through signalized intersections. This can happen in two ways: (1) by extending the length of time a green light is in effect and (2) by shortening the length of time a red light is in effect on the intersecting roadway.

- BMC staff presented a comparison of the 2007 and 2018 MDOT MTA on-board transit survey. Findings include rider demographics, trip purpose, and fare payment. The 2018 survey will be analyzed in an upcoming report, *2018 On-Board Transit Survey, BMC Analysis*. The Q&A discussion focused on observations about differences in ridership between the two surveys in some income and age groups. For example, there was a 52 percent increase in ridership from 2007 to 2018 in the \$27,001-\$45,000 income range. The report will discuss these differences in greater detail.
- A short survey, part of the New Mobility Study is now available to help rank a series of proposed case studies that could be undertaken as the final part of the effort. Members were asked to take the survey or share it with the appropriate colleagues.
- A Nominating Committee was created for FY 2021 TC Officers comprised of Baltimore City, Carroll County, as well as MDOT.
- The due date for 3rd quarter billing has passed with only a few submissions. Jurisdictions were urged to make every effort to pull together their documentation to keep the process moving.
- BMC staff announced that staff will delay bringing the FY 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program to the BRTB for approval by one month at MDOT's request. Approval of the TIP, originally scheduled for July 2020, is now scheduled to take place in August 2020.
- BMC staff summarized the federal certification review that took place on April 22, 2020. Certification reviews are intended to give federal partners an opportunity to ascertain that the MPO (i.e., the BRTB) is conducting its regional transportation planning process in accordance with federal requirements. Another important aim of this review is to give the public an opportunity to weigh in on the regional transportation planning process.
- MDOT expects to release a survey soon on the Chapter 725 process, which involves local jurisdictions providing justification for the projects that they include in their priority letters to MDOT. This is intended to support the UPWP focus area requesting information on what constitutes an effective Priority Letter.
- The Maryland Department of Planning is starting the 2020 update to its statewide Land Use (formerly "Land Use Land Cover") GIS product. The Land Use Map will show generalized locations of developed land, including varying densities of residential land as well as commercial, industrial, institutional, other developed, and undeveloped resource land.

7. PRESENTATION: CONNECTING OUR FUTURE - A REGIONAL TRANSIT PLAN FOR CENTRAL MARYLAND

Ms. Kate Sylvester began by saying that MDOT MTA is developing a 25-year plan to meet the transit needs of the core service area that will define public transportation goals over that time period. The vision will address traditional transit (buses and trains) as well as explore new mobility options and technology. The partners and schedule were described. The Plan was based on six goals and recommendations in the draft plan have been grouped by: strategies, transit network improvements, or by regional corridors. The strategies are associated with one of the six goals. The network improvements describe either expanded or enhanced current or previous investments, and regional corridors are defined by certain common characteristics. Another feature is targets that have been identified which will be tracked on a dashboard.

Ms. Sylvester described a robust public involvement plan which had to pivot to virtual from the onset of the comment period. The comment period began on April 22 and extends to June 18. The Commission will meet on June 18th to discuss the public input on the draft plan with the plan finalized by the deadline of October 1, 2020.

[PowerPoint: Project Update: Gathering Input On The Draft Plan]

8. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON COVID-19 TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Mr. Todd Lang began the discussion with information released by MDOT indicating revenues are likely to be down in FY 2020 by \$550 Million that will impact the FY 2021 budget \$490-\$560 Million across all categories, both the capital and operating budgets will be impacted. CARES Act funding has come to MDOT to benefit transit and aviation services but will have some flexibility to plug holes in the MDOT program due to the combined Transportation Trust Fund. Then Mr. Lang shared some high level regional trends, those trends going down include: car sales, traffic volumes, crossings at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge, transit ridership, and unemployment. Those trends going up include: speeding and air cargo. Then members began sharing local experiences.

Ms. Eisenberg kicked off the discussion, followed by the Vice Chair, Mr. Ramond Robinson and the remaining members. Topics included:

- Creating a new telework program or implementing full scale teleworking to continue the business of local government remotely. Some jurisdictions were hampered by the need for equipment and software to work remotely at this scale. Also needed to determine essential versus non-essential employees.
- All jurisdictions have taken a hit to revenues and some have instituted a hiring freeze.
- Members with locally operated transit service (LOTS) all said they were taking a hit, trying to balance the restrictions incurred by the pandemic while some LOTS had plans to expand.
- Members are concerned with impacts to local budgets.
- Trying to find a way to allow for payments to be made (not in person) and permits to be processed.
- Establishing a safe process for road crews to continue to operate.

- Jurisdictions have suspended their traffic count programs due to the anomaly that this situation presents. Jurisdictions varied in their consideration of accepting private sector traffic impact studies based on historic traffic patterns.
- Harford Transit described the lengths they have gone to protect drivers and passengers to keep service viable.
- Transit agencies are considering doing away with cash and the possibility of a common fare system.
- The state reported on rampant speeding, is helping businesses with more information on telework programs and is promoting webinars offered by the Smart Growth Network.

[PowerPoint: COVID-19 Impacts Related to Transportation]

9. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business came before the BRTB.

The meeting adjourned at 10:58 A.M.

Members

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

Staff and Guests

Bala Akundi, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Regina Aris (BMC)
Cindy Burch, BMC
Tyson Byrne, MDOT
David Cookson, Howard County, OOT
Rebecca Deibel, BMC

Blake Fisher, BMC

Monica Haines-Benkhedda, BMC

Don Halligan, BMC

Victor Henry, BMC

Dan Janousek, MDOT

Mike Kelly, BMC

Shawn Kimberly, BMC

Todd Lang, BMC

Tara Penders, MDOT State Highway Administration

Ed Stylc, BMC

Sara Tomlinson, BMC

D'Andrea Walker, Baltimore County DPW

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary

Baltimore Regional Transportation Board