

BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD

July 28, 2020
Virtual Meeting
9:04 to 10:37 A.M.

MINUTES

The 321st meeting was called to order at 9:04 A.M. by the Chair, Ms. Lynda Eisenberg. Ms. Eisenberg welcomed everyone to the beginning of a new fiscal year and the associated work activities.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A request for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2020 BRTB meeting was made by Ms. Eisenberg. A motion was made by Mr. Theo Ngongang to approve the minutes and seconded by Mr. Tyson Byrne. The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

Mr. Brian O'Malley, President and CEO of the Central Maryland Transportation Alliance, shared comments on the draft 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. O'Malley reported he provided testimony last year when the TIP had a 500 to 1 investment of highway over transit. At that time, some BRTB members stated they were new and asked for patience as other projects be added to the TIP in future years. However, this new TIP features a 650 to 1 investment of highways over transit. This is the wrong direction.

There are five highway capacity projects that are new to the 2021-2024 TIP, totaling about \$45 million. CMTA respectfully requests that the five new highway capacity projects be removed and redirect the funds toward other projects. Canceling them would bring the highway capacity budget from 30.68% of the TIP budget to 29.62%. The funds could go to any number of worthy projects, such as:

- Addressing the \$1.5 billion backlog of deferred maintenance identified in MTA's Capital Needs Inventory¹⁵
- Making sidewalks near bus stops and train stations compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Completing bike trails like the Baltimore Greenway Trails Network, the Baltimore Separated Lane Network, the Anne Arundel South Shore Trail, and the North Point Trail

Ms. Sarahia Benn shared concerns that the draft 2021-2024 TIP is an inequitable investment of federal funding. In neighborhoods that are historically disinvested and economically distressed, more than a third of households have no access to a vehicle. The proposed 2021-2024 TIP's heavy investments in widening highways are aimed at improving mobility for higher income people and those with private automobiles. Approving the TIP will further entrench structural inequities that disadvantage some populations over others. Lastly, Ms. Benn expressed concern that climate change is an urgent need, not addressed by the highway heavy TIP.

Mr. Chris Yoder expressed an interest to comment, however experienced technical difficulties and subsequently emailed his comments to the BMC.

3. REPORT ON PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda reported that a comment period on the draft 2021-2024 TIP & Air Quality Conformity ran from June 16 and July 17, 2020. The draft 2021-2024 TIP includes \$4.26 billion in proposed federal, state and local money for 140 highway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian projects during the next four years. During the comment period, two virtual public meetings were held to share information and answer questions. A recording of the meeting was shared online, along with a Storymap and an interactive project map, where the public was able to both view projects and offer comments. Over 40 comments were received from nearly 30 individuals and organizations. The majority of comments supported modifying the TIP to invest more in transit. A significant portion also supported many local bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

Staff also held a comment period from July 6 through July 17, 2020 for the Patapsco Regional Greenway: Elkridge to the Guinness segment. Three trail alternatives are under development and the public was invited to weigh in on the alignments and help to select the final design. Over 130 comments were received via email, phone, and survey.

It was also shared that BMC has partnered with an organization called Love to Ride to help boost engagement, ridership, and business participation beyond a single day Bike to Work Day event. Anyone who lives or works in the Baltimore region has access to Love to Ride Central MD's bicycling encouragement programs from June through September 2020, including the month-long global workplace or group challenge, Cycle September. Learn more or sign up at lovetoride.net/CentralMD.

[Handout: Public Involvement Report for July 2020]

4. REPORT FROM THE PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr. Eric Norton reported the following:

- The PAC did not meet this month as the group is on hiatus awaiting to hear the final recommendations and what the BRTB decides to do with the PAC and public involvement moving forward.

5. REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

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

- The Nominating Committee recommended returning the current slate of officers, Howard County as Chair and Harford County as Vice Chair, for a second term as officers for Fiscal Year 2021. The TC voted unanimous support for the officers.
- BMC staff clarified that the figures contained in Round 9A do not contain any Covid-19 impacts, as the forecasts were developed in 2019. It was mentioned that the CFG is currently working on a draft schedule for the next round of forecasts, which are expected to incorporate Covid-19 effects. The Round 9A forecast dataset contains updates from Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County, and Howard County. After hearing details about the update the TC members voted to send Resolution #21-1 to the BRTB.
- While a recommendation is not currently available due to additional information needs, BMC staff reviewed the four Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) applications in the Baltimore region and met with MDOT SHA and FHWA to discuss. Available TAP funding in the region for FY 2021 totals \$2,138,046. Four applications were submitted for a total of \$4,583,994 in requests. No applications were submitted for Aberdeen/Bel Air South/Bel Air North.
- MDOT SHA is coordinating responses to a number of outstanding questions for the applicants. At this time, BMC is not making a recommendation for awards. Depending on when responses are received, an email vote may be called, or Ms. Mahoney will return at the August meeting with recommendations.
- Regarding the next LRTP, there has been a recommendation to revert to a 4-year update schedule, this would establish a due date of July 2023 for BRTB adoption of the next plan.
- BMC staff mentioned that the regional transportation goals and supporting strategies have been under review over the past several months. This has included a review by BMC staff members as well as the Technical Committee and other advisory committees. The TC recommended that the revised list of goals and strategies, incorporating revisions recommended by BMC staff members, be prepared for release to the public for review and comment.
- There was a presentation on final CMP products. The project, which followed the CMP elements as detailed in the FHWA CMP Guidebook, involved developing CMP objectives, defining the CMP network, developing CMP performance metrics, and developing a process to collect data, monitor system performance, analyze congestion problems and needs, identify and assess strategies, implement strategies, and evaluate effectiveness of strategies. There is also a recommendation to create a CMP Committee to advance the implementation of the CMP recommendations.

- BMC staff reported that the BRTB opened a comment period on a new section of the Patapsco Regional Greenway in Howard and Baltimore Counties. This is to seek public input on several alternatives for the Elkridge to Guinness segment.

6. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #21-1

At the beginning of the presentation Mr. Shawn Kimberly clarified that the figures contained in Round 9A do not contain any Covid-19 impacts, as the forecasts were developed in 2019. He mentioned that the Cooperative Forecasting Group (CFG) is currently working on a draft schedule for the next round of forecasts, which are expected to incorporate Covid-19 effects. Mr. Kimberly then presented an overview of the Round 9A socioeconomic forecasts for 2015-2045. He reported that the Round 9A forecast dataset contains updates from Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County, and Howard County. Baltimore City, Carroll County, Harford County, and Queen Anne's County did not participate in Round 9A (an update to the Round 9 forecasts).

Mr. Kimberly provided an overview of the forecasting process, noting that the CFG utilizes a "bottom-up" approach, with local jurisdictions responsible for the development of their own local forecasts, which sum to a regional total. He described that the participating jurisdictions made updates to the population and household figures, but no changes to employment. The Round 9 data for employment is carried forward for employment for participating jurisdictions, and for all datapoints for the jurisdictions that chose not to participate in Round 9A.

Mr. Kimberly provided summaries of the adjustments that each participating jurisdiction made to their population and household forecasts in Round 9A. He supplied charts and tables comparing the Round 9 and Round 9A figures for each datapoint for each participating jurisdiction and for the region, as well as population density maps for horizon year 2045.

Responding to a question from Kate Sylvester (MDOT MTA) about changes in the forecasts at the small area, Mr. Kimberly displayed a series of maps detailing Round 9A population and household growth at the transportation analysis zone level (normalized by area), as well as change in growth between Round 9 and Round 9A at the TAZ level.

Mr. Bruce Gartner moved to adopt Resolution #21-1 with Mr. Ramond Robinson seconding the motion. Ms. Eisenberg asked Ms. Deibel to begin a roll call vote, the resolution was unanimously approved.

[PowerPoint: Round 9A Socioeconomic Data]

7. PRESENTATION: SUMMARY OF THE CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS PROJECT

Ms. Eileen Singleton said that this is the final presentation for the congestion management process (CMP) consultant project. She introduced the consultant project manager, Mr. Michael Grant from ICF, who provided an overview of the project and products.

The process, which followed the CMP elements as detailed in the FHWA CMP Guidebook, involved developing CMP objectives, defining the CMP network, developing CMP performance metrics, and developing a process to collect data, monitor system performance, analyze congestion problems and needs, identify and assess strategies, implement strategies, and evaluate effectiveness of strategies. As a federal requirement for our size MPO, this will be folded into our ongoing process.

The CMP Steering Committee, which was convened to support the project, included representatives from all local jurisdictions and stakeholder state agencies. The Committee met six times over the course of the project. In addition, a variety of other stakeholders were interviewed to provide input to the project.

The CMP objectives focus on multimodal mobility and align with the goals in *Maximize2045*. The CMP network is multimodal and includes roads, transit, park-and-ride, bike facilities, and sidewalks (where data was available). The Regional Integrated Transportation Information System (RITIS) is used as the basis for monitoring system performance.

The CMP metrics support the objectives and align with the federal performance requirements as well as more specific CMP needs for the region. The metrics help evaluate how the network is performing and identify sources of problems. The metrics are identified under each objective. Some metrics are geographically-based (i.e., number of jobs accessible within a 30-minute drive) and some are region-wide (i.e., level of travel time reliability).

The Baltimore region is unique in that we prepare congestion reports quarterly. The CMP project recommends maintaining this work, with some revisions: revise the current quarterly bottleneck ranking methodology to include volume; develop separate rankings for freeways and non-freeways; integrate the metrics into the BMC online CMP analysis tool; and identify the top 15 freeway and non-freeway congested corridors annually.

Once congestion locations and causes are identified, the next step is identification of strategies to implement. The CMP Strategy Guide presents a wide array of potential strategies. The guide includes seven categories of strategies. The implementation recommendations focused on six key components:

1. CMP data management and sharing – quarterly congestion analysis reports, on-line CMP tool, share other data sources
2. Regional discussions via proposed CMP Committee – meet regularly to support identification of strategies and solutions, aligned with and feed into CTP process; supports objective 7 to enhance interjurisdictional coordination
3. Corridor studies – focus on corridors that are important to local jurisdictions but have not been studied
4. Long-range transportation plan updates – update the project submittal form to align with CMP strategy guide
5. Development of the TIP – capture CMP strategies in the TIP and track CMP strategies being implemented
6. Analysis of single occupant vehicle capacity addition projects – create checklist

The proposed CMP Committee would advance the implementation of the CMP recommendations. This new committee is proposed to meet three times per year, at points suggested to enable the group to provide regional input to the CTP process.

The final CMP deliverable provides a process to evaluate the effectiveness of implemented CMP strategies.

The project also included the development of a corridor study template that can be used by BMC staff, consultants, local jurisdictions, and others so the studies can be prepared in a consistent manner.

After Mr. Grant finished the presentation, Ms. Singleton stated that staff will work with the BRTB to create the new CMP Committee and aim to have that new group meet for the first time in the fall.

Mr. Ramond Robinson commented that the products from this project will also help local jurisdictions in their work. Any questions can be directed to Ms. Singleton.

[PowerPoint: Congestion Management Process Update]

8. PRESENTATION: NEW COVID DASHBOARD AVAILABLE ON THE BMC WEBSITE

Mr. Zach Kaufman summarized the Baltimore Regional Recovery Dashboard. BMC launched the Baltimore Regional Recovery Dashboard on Wednesday, June 17. The dashboard includes data analysis and visualizations across BMC's various areas of focus. The data visualizations are intended to aid BMC's partners at the local and state level as they work to assess the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and to design effective policy responses. The Baltimore Regional Recovery Dashboard currently includes several interactive Tableau visualizations focused on economic and transportation data points.

The first set of visualizations focuses on unemployment insurance claims for all U.S. states, Maryland counties, and Maryland counties by industry (at the 2-digit NAICS code level). The tool takes normally static data from state and federal sources and transforms it into easily interpreted comparisons of UI claims rates across states and counties. The industry-level UI data is particularly useful to our local partners as they seek to identify the industries that have been hardest hit and how that has varied over time.

The second set of dashboards presents economic data on the sectors that are most exposed to economic impacts from COVID-19, allowing comparison across both Baltimore region counties and metro areas comparable in population to the Baltimore region. The most exposed sectors are those that were/are either shut down or experienced reduced demand such as restaurants and bars, travel and transportation, entertainment, personal services, other sensitive retail, and sensitive manufacturing. These dashboards compare the most exposed sectors to all other sectors in the economy for data points such as jobs, gross regional product, payrolled business locations, and median hourly wages.

Occupational analysis for the most exposed sectors has been of particular interest to economic development and workforce development practitioners. The data shows that occupations in the most exposed sectors require lower educational attainment and have low median hourly wages. For example, 46.4% of jobs in the most exposed sectors in the Baltimore region have median hourly wages of less than \$12 per hour, compared with 5.1% of jobs in all other sectors.

Transportation data visualizations focus on key transportation indicators for the Baltimore region and county-level transportation behavior. Regional indicators include transit ridership, traffic and truck volumes at permanent counters on state highways, and daily trips on the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. The county-level dashboard utilizes data from the University of Maryland Transportation Institute to enable easy analysis of travel behavior over time in Baltimore region counties for data points including the percentage of people staying home, miles traveled per person, and trips per person.

BMC staff will modify and improve these visualizations as additional months of data become available from state and federal sources. BMC will also integrate additional data visualizations focusing on development permit activity and exposed sectors by demographic characteristics such as race and gender. The dashboard is publically available here: <https://baltometro.org/data/baltimore-regional-recovery-dashboard>.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Eisenberg asked BMC if there were plans to return to in person meetings anytime soon. Mr. Lang commented that due to the continuing health emergency and most schools not returning for in person fall sessions, that BRTB meetings will continue to be held virtually. There was no other business

The meeting adjourned at 10:37 A.M.

Members

Kwame Arhin, FHWA – MD Division

Gary Blazinsky, Harford Transit

Tyson Byrne, (for Heather Murphy) Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)

Greg Carski, Baltimore County Department of Public Works (DPW)

Steve Cohoon, Queen Anne’s County Department of Public Works

Bruce Gartner, Howard County Office of Transportation (OOT)

Theo Ngongang, Baltimore City Department of Transportation)

Lisa Nissley (for Tad Aburn) Maryland Department of the Environment

Lynda Eisenberg, Carroll County Department of Planning

Sally Nash, City of Annapolis, Department of Planning

Joel Gallihue (for Alex Rawls), Harford County Department of Planning

Ramond Robinson, Anne Arundel County, Department of Planning & Zoning
Kate Sylvester, Maryland Transit Administration
Bihui Xu, Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)

Staff and Guests

Bala Akundi, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Regina Aris, BMC
Sarahia Benn
Cindy Burch, BMC
David Cookson, Howard County OOT
Rebecca Deibel, BMC
Blake Fisher, BMC
Terry Freeland, BMC
Michael Grant, ICF
Monica Haines Benkhedda, BMC
Don Halligan, BMC
Dan Janousek, MDOT
Zach Kaufman, BMC
Shawn Kimberly, BMC
Todd Lang, BMC
Sheila Mahoney, BMC
Lisa Nissley, BMC
Eric Norton, PAC Chair
Brian O'Malley, CMTA
Eileen Singleton, BMC
Lisa Sirota, MDOT SHA
D'Andrea Walker, Baltimore County DPW
Chris Yoder, Sierra Club

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board