

BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD

August 25, 2020
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
9:04 to 11:09 A.M.

MINUTES

The 322th meeting was called to order at 9:04 A.M. by the Chair's designee, Ms. Mary Lane.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A request for a motion to approve the minutes of the July 28, 2020 BRTB meeting was made by Ms. Lane. A motion was made by Mr. Bruce Gartner to approve the minutes and seconded by Mr. Steve Cohoon. The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

No one chose to offer comments at this time.

3. REPORT ON PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda reported that a comment period on the draft 2021-2024 TIP and Air Quality Conformity ran from June 16 and July 17, 2020. 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. The BRTB issued a response to comments at bit.ly/2Qa1IPX.

Next, Ms. Haines Benkhedda shared the following two initiatives:

- BMC has launched registration for a COVID-safe Bike to Work 2020 from September 21-27. Cyclists who register for Bike to Work 2020 and ride during the week of September 21-27 can pick up one free t-shirt from over a dozen participating bike shops (open to the first 2,500 registrants) as well as have a chance to win prizes. Bike to Work 2020 is part of a larger Love to Ride Cycle September Global Challenge.
- Anne Arundel County invites residents to participate in Plan2040: Community Engagement@Home, an online open house, to comment on draft elements of Plan2040, the

plan for development of Anne Arundel County for the next 20 years. Those who visit their interactive website can review draft elements of Plan2040 and provide comments. The online open house will be available through September 10, 2020 at bit.ly/2YaU9wP.

[Handout: Public Involvement Report for August 2020]

4. REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE AND INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION GROUP

Mr. David Cookson reported the following from the joint meeting in August of the TC and ICG:

- BMC staff presented recommendations for FY 2021 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant funding. BMC reviewed applications for four projects in the region, and then met with MDOT SHA and FHWA to discuss technical issues. Ms. Mahoney reviewed the one Anne Arundel project and three from MDOT MTA. The TC supported the BMC recommendation that the entire allocation for the region be awarded to the Anne Arundel County South Shore Trail Phase II for the construction of 2 miles of multi-use trail from Annapolis Road to Bonheur Drive (2 miles).

BMC staff presented an overview of the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program. This TIP includes 140 federally funded and regionally significant projects requesting a total of \$4.26 billion – \$2.46 billion in federal funds and \$1.8 billion in matching funds. There are twenty-four new projects in the TIP.

BMC staff presented an overview of the conformity determination of the 2021-2024 TIP and *Maximize2045*. The purpose of transportation conformity is to tie together transportation planning and air quality planning. MDE and BMC staff ran the EPA's emission model, which resulted in emissions below the SIP budget.

Both the TC and the ICG approved the TIP and the Air Quality Conformity work. Prior to the vote there was a substantial discussion with commenters to discuss concerns by all parties. The resolution moves to the Board with a recommendation by the TC to incorporate additional transit and bicycle projects in the future.

BMC staff presented information on the requirements the BRTB must follow in conducting regional transportation planning and in preparing plans and programs. It was noted that the self-certification document was updated to reflect activities undertaken during the past year as well as the ways in which the process has been strengthened. Of note is the new Master Agreement between the planning partners.

- MDE described actions undertaken to protect the health of Maryland's citizens. Thirty years ago there was federal guidance on Aftermarket Catalytic Converters (AMCC) to ensure that emissions control systems remained effective. That guidance lapsed, so now MDE felt it best to move ahead with a Maryland specific regulation.
- MDOT MTA provided background on the agency's approach to addressing the four performance measures (for each transit mode) required under the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP). These PMs are the remaining set of performance measures that the BRTB needs to approve. As with other PMs, they will be updated on a regular schedule.

- Three upcoming RFPs were discussed in a closed session at the end of the regular meeting. They included the Climate Toolkit, PRG segment in Carroll County, and Transit Governance & Funding.

5. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #21-2

Ms. Sheila Mahoney presented BMC recommendations for FY 2021 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant funding. BMC reviewed applications for four projects in the region, then met with MDOT SHA and FHWA on June 29 to discuss. The group had questions for the applicants that remained outstanding at the July Technical Committee meeting and have since received responses.

The 2021 TAP funding for allocation in the region totals \$2,138,046. Four applications were submitted for a total of \$4,583,994 in requests.

The four projects submitted include the following:

- Anne Arundel County South Shore Trail Phase II (Odenton): Construction of a 2-mile x 10-foot paved/boardwalk multi-use trail to provide a recreational/transportation facility to connect residential areas with schools, shopping, employment areas, and the Odenton MARC station
- MDOT MTA Transit Priority Initiative: Bel Air Road (Baltimore City): 0-100% design of bus bulb curb extensions along 2.4-mile corridor to enhance pedestrian safety and accessibility at bus stops in high crash corridor
- MDOT MTA Transit Priority Initiative: Garrison Boulevard (Baltimore City): 0-100% design of bus bulb curb extensions along 3.7-mile corridor to enhance pedestrian safety and accessibility at bus stops in high crash corridor
- MDOT MTA Patapsco Pedestrian and Bicycle Connection (Baltimore City): 10-100% design for Phase 1 of a separate ped/bike bridge and path over Patapsco Ave to provide a safer connection from the Cherry Hill neighborhood to the Patapsco Light Rail Station

BMC recommends that the entire allocation for the region be awarded to the Anne Arundel County South Shore Trail Phase II for the construction of 2 miles of multi-use trail from Annapolis Road to Bonheur Drive (2 miles).

- Total Cost: \$4,400,381
- Requested: \$2,199,994
- Anne Arundel County Match: \$2,200,387 (50%)
- BMC TAP: \$2,138,046
- Remaining to be requested from MDOT SHA: \$62,341

Ms. Lane asked for a member to move for approval to send Resolution #21-2 to the BRTB for approval. Mr. Tyson Byrne moved to approve Resolution 21-2 and Ms. Sally Nash seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the resolution was approved.

[PowerPoint: Transportation Alternatives Program]

6. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #21-3

Mr. Zach Kaufman presented an overview of the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program. This TIP includes 140 federally funded and regionally significant projects requesting a total of \$4.26 billion – \$2.46 billion in federal funds and \$1.8 billion in matching funds. There are twenty-four new projects in the TIP.

Mr. Kaufman summarized a change made to one project in the draft 2021-2024 TIP that will be incorporated into the final document. MDOT SHA requested to add \$4.413 million to the engineering and construction phases for the I-695 bridge replacement project on Putty Hill Avenue. The additional funds will be used for the relocation of existing utilities. Mr. Kaufman also summarized significant sources of funding increases from the 2020-2023 TIP. These include additional federal funds programmed by MDOT MTA as they catch up on grant execution, a mix of over \$400 million in federal, state, and private funding for the Howard Street Tunnel project, and an increase of over \$200 million in toll revenues programmed for MDTA's I-95 Northbound Extension project.

The funding split is as follows: MDOT SHA (\$1.5 billion), MDOT MTA (\$1.14 billion), and the Maryland Transportation Authority (\$801 million) are the largest sources of programmed funds by sponsoring agency. Of the eleven project categories, highway capacity (30.6%), highway preservation (25.5%), and transit preservation (15.8%) account for the largest shares of programmed funds. The majority of funding for these project categories tends to be concentrated in only a few projects or project types:

- Highway Capacity: I-95 Express Toll Lanes Northbound Extension and I-695: I-70 to MD 43 account for 78.7% of highway capacity funds
- Highway Preservation: Road resurfacing/rehabilitation and bridge repair/deck replacement account for 79.8% of highway preservation funds
- Transit Preservation: Metro and light rail rolling stock overhauls and replacement, bus and rail preventive maintenance, and metro and light rail system preservation and improvement account for 83.7% of transit preservation funds

Mr. Kaufman provided an overview of new and large projects in the 2021-2024 TIP including a multimodal transportation center in Anne Arundel County, four new bicycle and pedestrian improvements in Baltimore City, the Towson Circulator in Baltimore County, Howard County's widening of Marriottsville Road, MDOT SHA's expansion of I-695 from I-70 to MD 43, MPA's Howard Street Tunnel project, and MDTA's expansion of express toll lanes on I-95 northbound.

Ms. Sara Tomlinson presented an overview of the conformity determination of the 2021-2024 TIP and *Maximize2045*. The purpose of transportation conformity is to tie together transportation planning and air quality planning. For an MPO's Plan and TIP to conform to the state's air quality plan (SIP), the emissions estimated to result from the addition of the Plan and TIP projects to the existing transportation network cannot be higher than the motor vehicle emission budget set by MDE.

The major steps of the conformity determination process completed for the ICG included: 1) Agreeing on methodology and assumptions (model years, emission model version, pollutants to be assessed, SIP budget test approach, etc.), 2) Determining whether TIP and Plan projects

are exempt/non-exempt/regionally significant, 3) MDE and BMC staff run the emissions model, 4) Documentation of conformity process, 5) Agreeing to public release of emissions model results, and finally 6) Recommending BRTB approval of conformity determination.

MDE and BMC staff ran the EPA's emission model, which resulted in emissions below the SIP budget. Ms. Tomlinson asked whether there was a motion to recommend BRTB approval of the conformity determination.

A public review began on June 16 and ended on July 17. Public involvement activities included two virtual public meetings, a presentation to MDOT MTA's Citizen's Advisory Committee, and presentations to several BRTB subcommittees. In addition, BMC staff developed a Storymap, an interactive tableau dashboard, and an interactive project map that allowed people to comment directly from the map. Over 40 comments were received from nearly 30 individuals and organizations. The majority of the comments supported modification of the TIP to: (a) reduce highway capacity expenditures; (b) invest more in transit, particularly in transit capacity for transit-reliant populations; and (c) support local bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

Mr. Lang lead a discussion about the comments received. He highlighted two of those comments. The ACLU submitted comments focusing on the lack of coordination between the TIP and other plans that BMC has produced. In addition, the Central Maryland Transportation Alliance (CMTA) submitted a letter signed by multiple organizations requesting that the BRTB remove funding for five new highway capacity projects and redirect those funds for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit projects. Mr. Lang summarized the five new highway capacity projects. Three involve corridors along MD 2, MD 3, and MD 214 in Anne Arundel County. One is the widening of Marriottsville Road in Howard County. The last is MDTA's conversion of the left shoulder into a part-time travel lane along 5.4 miles of I-95 southbound. Mr. Gartner asked how much of the funding for these projects could be repurposed for transit. Mr. Lang clarified that the Anne Arundel County projects are locally funded and are multimodal in nature. The Howard County project is locally funded and utilizes legally restricted building excise tax revenues. The MDTA project utilizes bond-funded toll authority revenues. Therefore none of the current money can be flexed to other purposes.

Mr. Robinson asked for a motion regarding approval of the 2021-2024 TIP and the associated air quality conformity. Ms. Heather Murphy made a motion to approve Resolution #21-3 and Mr. Steve Cohoon seconded the motion. During discussion by members, Mr. Ramond Robinson asked how the TIP relates to the MDOT CTP. Mr. Lang responded that the MPO role is to approve federal funding and to ensure that federal funds are utilized as part of a regional transportation planning process. The MPO also documents progress on all highway capacity projects regardless of funding source. The CTP accounts for all state dollars while local dollars are allocated in each local jurisdictions' Capital Improvement Program.

Mr. Robinson asked if any members of the public wished to comment. Several members of the public commented verbally as well as from the GoToMeeting chat box:

- Ms. Mary Rayme, Baltimore County resident, spoke in opposition to highway capacity spending in the TIP, saying that it was a plan for cars. She said that her commute to work by bicycle is currently unsafe and expressed a desire for safe bicycling infrastructure. She would like to live in a Maryland without the need for a car.

- Ms. Anna Ellis, Baltimore City resident, voiced her disapproval of the highway capacity spending in the TIP, saying that widening highways is not an effective means of reducing congestion. Instead, she would like the BRTB to focus on transit capacity and reducing the number of cars on the road.
- Mr. Eric Norton, CMTA, said that further discussion of CMTA's comment letter feels like a waste of time. He expressed disappointment with the response to the comments on the TIP and is frustrated with the BRTB public involvement process. He noted that the BRTB continues to spend money on highway capacity despite evidence that it is not effective, and that this is a barrier to a thriving Baltimore region.
- Mr. Jed Weeks, policy director at Bikemore, said that he also feels ignored by the BRTB. He noted that public comments on the TIP and LRTP consistently focus on reducing highway capacity expenditures in favor of transit capacity, but these documents consistently do the opposite. He said that the TIP was unsustainable, will worsen the climate crisis and racial inequities, and ignores transportation realities during a pandemic.
- Ms. Katie Golden said that she does not support the emphasis in the TIP on highways/automobiles at the expense of public transportation. She requested that the BRTB reconsider adding new highway projects.
- Mr. Brian Seel expressed concern with the amount of highway capacity spending in the TIP and the impact on the climate of increased reliance on cars. He objected to the small amount of money in the TIP devoted to new transit, cycling, and pedestrian infrastructure in a region where 33% of people do not own a car. He encouraged the BRTB to move away from highway capacity spending and to make a change that reflects the realities of the climate crisis. He also objected to the BRTB response to comments.
- Ms. Martine Richards echoed Mr. Seel's comments, recommending that the BRTB stop prioritizing car travel and focus on creating a fully connected bike lane network.

Mr. Robinson called for a vote. Prior to the vote, Mr. Gartner thanked the commenters. He noted that he heard despair in their comments, but encouraged them to keep pushing for action. He said that much of the progress made thus far has been due to advocates. He also said that the ongoing Regional Transit Plan can serve as an ideal forum to encourage MDOT to invest in transit capacity. He asked members to consider how they can continue to encourage transit, both in their local jurisdictions and through the RTP process. Mr. Robinson echoed Mr. Gartner's comments, saying that change is happening even if the process is slow. He said that members want to incorporate transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and environmentally sustainable components into their projects, and that doing so requires us to consider how all modes can work together to get people where they need to go. He cited the RTP and transit planning investments in the BRTB UPWP as positive progress in that direction. Ms. Nash also asked several questions that Mr. Lang responded to. Members then voted on Resolution #21-3. The resolution passed, with Baltimore City abstaining.

[PowerPoint: 2021-2024 TIP and Air Quality Conformity]

7. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #21-4

Mr. Terry Freeland presented information on the requirements the BRTB must follow in conducting regional transportation planning and in preparing plans and programs. He also noted that the self-certification document attached to the resolution has been updated to reflect activities undertaken during the past year (for example, updating of highway safety performance targets) as well as the ways in which the process has been strengthened. Of note is the new Master Agreement between the planning partners.

Mr. Robinson moved to recommend approval of the resolution, and Mr. Greg Carski seconded the motion. Mr. Robinson also commended BMC staff members for the work they do in producing the required transportation planning processes and products. The committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the amended resolution.

[PowerPoint: Self-Certification of the Regional Planning Process]

8. MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION CENTER

Dr. Mansoureh Jeihani spoke about the Urban Mobility & Equity Center (UMEC) which is a federally funded tier-1 university transportation center. This is a three-university consortium led by Morgan State University and including the University of Maryland and Virginia Tech.

To date the team has completed 18 research projects and 16 more are underway. The research projects focus on several areas that are critical for future transportation needs and technologies: driver behavior/traffic safety, consumer behavior, infrastructure, advanced traveler information systems, sustainability, connected & autonomous vehicles, transportation modeling & planning, and equity.

There is also a 23-year-old summer Transportation Institute for high school students to introduce students to transportation and engineering and also teaches stem concepts needed for these fields. There is also a robust internship program with many students embedded with MDOT. Dr. Jeihani encouraged the BMC to consider internships or hires as well as by our partners.

A guest, Ms. Gina Stewart, Executive Director of the BWI Business Partnership, was interested in the internship program at MSU and asked to speak to Dr. Jeihani after the meeting.

[PowerPoint: The Urban Mobility & Equity Center At Morgan State University]

9. PRESENTATION ON NEW LOVE TO RIDE PROGRAM

Ms. Mahoney spoke about Love to Ride, an online platform to encourage and motivate more people to ride bikes. The State approved a request for BMC to reallocate Metro RideShare marketing budget not utilized during COVID towards funding a pilot partnership with Love to Ride. The Love to Ride Central MD platform launched in June, with a license for users to access

the site through May 2021. The license includes programming through October, including the Cycle September Global Challenge, one of three month-long challenges each year.

Love to Ride establishes the benefits of riding for health and wellness, environmental benefits, cost savings over other modes, and benefits of riding to work. Based on a behavior change model, riders of all levels are provided personalized messaging that includes overcoming obstacles such as barriers to riding, confidence and motivation with the goal that new riders and occasional riders become regular riders, and regular riders ride for transport and commuting. The Central MD community also provides local and general resources, particularly for new riders, and a place to log rides, set goals, share photos and stories and encourage others. The Cycle September Challenge further offers a point system and prize incentives to gamify the experience and help riders stay motivated to reach new goals.

As Bike to Work Day was postponed from its original May date, BMC and partners are cross promoting the virtual Bike to Work Week from September 21-27 with Cycle September to engage new and returning riders. BMC's license also includes an anonymous data report which will identify barriers, types of trips and mileage during the pilot, which may be used for planning purposes. Initial goals for the pilot are to attract 1,000 riders and 50 organizations to register and use the platform, although these numbers may be impacted by COVID. If deemed a success, BMC will work with members and partners to continue funding for the platform for the upcoming Bike Month Challenge in May and beyond.

[PowerPoint: Love To Ride Program]

10. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Lang shared with members and guests that the BMC is releasing an RFP today to undertake a UPWP-funded task to look at Transit Governance and Funding in the region. Proposals are due by September 29. This topic is an example of how the BRTB is tackling some of the issues brought up by individuals and organizations who submitted comments on the TIP.

The meeting adjourned at 11:09 A.M.

Members

Kwame Arhin, FHWA – MD Division
Gary Blazinsky, Harford Transit
Greg Carski, Baltimore County Department of Public Works
Heather Murphy, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Steve Cohoon, Queen Anne's County Department of Public Works
Bruce Gartner, Howard County Office of Transportation (OOT)
Mary Lane, (for Lynda Eisenberg) Carroll County Department of Planning
Theo Ngongang, Baltimore City Department of Transportation)
Lisa Nissley (for Tad Aburn) Maryland Department of the Environment
Sally Nash, City of Annapolis, Department of Planning

Alex Rawls, Harford County, Department of Planning
Ramond Robinson, Anne Arundel County, Department of Planning & Zoning
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 OOT
Rebecca Deibel, BMC
Anna Ellis, Baltimore City resident
Blake Fisher, BMC
Terry Freeland, BMC
Katie Golden
Monica Haines Benkhedda, BMC
Don Halligan, BMC
Dan Janousek, MDOT
Mansoureh Jeihani, MSU - The Urban Mobility & Equity Center
Mike Kelly, BMC
Zach Kaufman, BMC
Todd Lang, BMC
Sheila Mahoney, BMC
Eric Norton, CMTA
Anikwenze Ogbue
Martine Richards
Mary Rayme, Baltimore County resident
Brian Seel – Baltimore City DOT
Brian Shepter, BMC
Lisa Sirota, MDOT SHA
Brigid Smith, Congressman Sarbanes Office
Kipp Snow, Community Colleges of Baltimore County
Gina Stewart – BWI Business Partnership
Danielle Sweeney - CMTA
Sara Tomlinson, BMC
D'Andrea Walker, Baltimore County DPW
Jed Weeks, Bikemore
Taylor Willis

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board