

BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD

November 30, 2021
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
9:01 to 10:17 A.M.

MINUTES

The 336th meeting was called to order at 9:01 A.M. by the Chair, Mr. Ramond Robinson.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A request for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 28, 2021 BRTB meeting was made by Mr. Robinson. A motion was made by Mr. Bruce Gartner to approve the minutes and seconded by Ms. Heather Murphy. The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

No one from the public wished to share comments at this time.

3. REPORT ON PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda reported on recent comment periods:

- A comment period for the goals and strategies for *Resilience 2050: Adapting to the Challenges of Tomorrow* was held from September 8 through October 12. Thirty five participants generated over 165 comments. Staff worked with the BRTB and Technical Committee members to review all comments. A number of changes were made to the proposed goals and strategies based on public input. A summary of comments and changes made can be found online at Resilience2050.com.
- Another comment period was held for comments on the Preferred Alignments for the Patapsco Regional Greenway: Sykesville to McKeldin Segment from September 30 through October 29. Over 2,900 people viewed the project page at publicinput.com/prgsykesville and 62 participants generated 45 comments. In addition, 47 people subscribed to get project updates. A public meeting was held on September 30. Over 40 people registered and 17 people participated in the livestream event. A [YouTube recording](#) of the public meeting has yielded 92 views to date. Staff have reviewed comments and posted responses on the project site.

Ms. Haines Benkhedda went on to share initiatives of local jurisdictions:

- Today is the last day to add comments to a survey the Baltimore City Department of Transportation (BCDOT) is conducting. As part of their process to develop a Transit Development Plan (TDP) for the Charm City Circulator bus service and the Harbor Connector ferry shuttle service, BCDOT is conducting an online community survey. Visit streetsofbaltimore.com/tdp to complete the survey or learn more.
- Carroll County is seeking public input on the county's first Transportation Master Plan and asks residents to complete a new online survey. The purpose of the survey is to identify travel patterns, congestion issues and community interest in new transportation opportunities. Residents and commuters who travel from or through Carroll County are encouraged to share their thoughts on a number of transportation related questions. Visit bit.ly/3kQvmcw to complete the survey.

[Handout: Public Involvement Report for November 2021]

4. REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Mr. Joel Gallihue reported the following from the November TC meeting:

- The TC has engaged in the development of the goals & strategies over several months. In November public comments were reviewed and after recommending changes, the TC voted to send the draft document to the BRTB for consideration.
- The TC reviewed the most significant recommended updates to the scoring methodology. BMC staff has worked with the TC members for several months to review and update several areas. The TC recommended sending the scoring criteria to the BRTB for approval.
- Staff walked through a list of possible UPWP topics, based on member input and suggestions from the AMPO Conference. There are a range of topics, topics have also been suggested by members. Currently the TC is prioritizing the topics to share with the BRTB.
- In a closed session, BMC shared tasks and deliverables proposed for a second phase of the Climate Change Toolkit task that is currently wrapping up. There was agreement for this to move forward.

5. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #22-6

Mr. Zach Kaufman presented Resolution #22-6 regarding endorsement of the regional goals and strategies for *Resilience 2050*. Mr. Kaufman summarized the nine regional goals and the comment period for the goals and strategies.

Several themes emerged in the comments. Themes included an emphasis on improving safety for transit and pedestrians, a desire for reliable and timely transit service, and a recommendation to shift towards sustainable modes and away from adding highway lanes. Improve Accessibility received the most comments followed by Increase Mobility.

BMC staff recommended revisions to the goals and strategies based on the comments received. Several Technical Committee members met on October 20 to discuss additional

revisions based on public comment. The final recommended revisions and responses to public comments were emailed to commenters and posted on the BMC website on November 17.

Mr. Robinson asked if there were any questions or comments from the committee. Ms. Bihui Xu praised BMC staff for their excellent job in revising the draft goals and strategies based on public comment. Mr. Robinson then asked if any member of the public wished to comment. Mr. Jay Meashey, Economic Development Director for the City of Taneytown, spoke on the issue. His comments were in favor of increasing redundancy in the transportation system as there are two major truck routes that pass through Taneytown's downtown with no alternate route. He also commented on a strategy encouraging transportation investments within local- and state-designated growth areas to enable prosperity in existing communities. This strategy is associated with the goal to Promote Prosperity and Economic Opportunity. He noted that growth areas in rural areas such as Taneytown might be more limited. He hopes that common sense and system safety will prevail if efforts to increase redundancy come into conflict with the principle of directing investment into growth areas.

Mr. Robinson asked for a motion for approval. Ms. D'Andrea Walker motioned for approval, and Mr. Theo Ngongang seconded the motion. The committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the resolution.

[PowerPoint: Resolution #22-6 Regarding Endorsement of Regional Goals and Strategies for Resilience 2050]

6. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #22-7

Mr. Kaufman presented Resolution #22-7 regarding endorsement of scoring criteria to assist with project selection for *Resilience 2050*. Mr. Kaufman summarized the two primary components of project scores, the Policy score and the Technical score. Projects receive a policy score that is worth up to 40 points. The policy score is composed of a priority score of 10, 20, or 30 points for low, medium, and high priority projects, respectively. Projects with demonstrated financial support receive an additional 10 points. Projects also receive a technical score that is worth up to 55 points for transit projects and up to 50 points for highway projects. Candidate projects are scored in multiple areas connected to the LRTP goals including safety, accessibility, mobility, environmental conservation, security, and economic prosperity.

BMC staff reviewed the existing criteria this spring and developed recommended updates over the summer. Mr. Kaufman presented the proposed scoring methodology to the Technical Committee in September, with a follow up discussion in October. On November 2, the Technical Committee recommended moving resolution #22-7 to the BRTB as presented.

The recommended updates to the scoring methodology shift the amount of points devoted to the existing criteria, particularly for transit projects. BMC staff recommend adding scoring criteria for transit projects where it had previously been absent in the areas of complete streets accessibility, safety, and security. Staff are also recommending reducing the points allocated to economic prosperity from 10 to 5 so that the point allocation for safety can be increased to

10 to reflect its importance as a regional goal. In addition, the recommended updates clarify definitions and the allocation of points where they had previously been unclear. BMC staff also sought to make the scoring process less subjective by suggesting more quantitative methods focusing on how each project contributes to creating a complete transportation system. Finally, BMC staff recommend updating the scoring criteria to integrate impacts to Environmental Justice populations.

Mr. Kaufman then reviewed the distribution of technical scoring points for transit and highway projects. Transit projects would be eligible for a maximum of 55 technical scoring points while highway projects would be eligible for a maximum of 50 technical scoring points. Many of the comments on the goals and strategies focused on improving transit accessibility, reliability, and frequency and reducing the focus on cars and highways. In an effort to begin to respond to those comments, BMC staff recommended leaving the technical scoring maximums for transit and highway projects as they are, with transit projects eligible for more points than highway projects. The Technical Committee agreed to this recommendation in October.

Mr. Robinson asked if the Environmental Justice (EJ) scoring criteria were stand-alone or if they were integrated throughout the scoring methodology. Mr. Kaufman responded that scores related to EJ populations are integrated into the methodology for most criteria, with a subset of points devoted to EJ impacts. For example, the highway safety scoring criteria includes two points out of a maximum of ten for projects that are anticipated to improve safety for EJ populations. Mr. Robinson also asked about the reduction in the points allocated to economic prosperity, noting the importance of economic prosperity and workforce development. Mr. Kaufman responded that the point total for economic prosperity was reduced not because it is seen as less important, but to allow for the point total for safety to be increased to reflect its importance as a regional transportation priority. In addition, other scoring criteria such as access to jobs are related to economic prosperity and workforce development.

Mr. Robinson then asked if any member of the public wished to comment. Mr. Art Cohen said it would be helpful if members of the public could review the details of the equity and Environmental Justice aspects of the proposed scoring methodology. Mr. Kaufman and Ms. Regina Aris shared a presentation and the resolution in the chat box during the meeting. Both of these include additional details on the proposed scores by criteria, including those related to impacts to EJ populations.

Mr. Robinson asked for a motion for approval. Mr. Alex Rawls motioned for approval, and Mr. Robinson seconded the motion. The committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the resolution.

[PowerPoint: Resolution #22-7 Regarding Endorsement of the Project Scoring Methodology for Resilience 2050]

7. PRESENTATION: MDOT MTA REPORT ON PROGRESS ON EARLY RTP CORRIDORS

Ms. Oluseyi Olugbenle (MDOT MTA) began the presentation with a brief introduction to the two corridors currently under study.

Ms. Laura Barcena (Rossi Group) then continued the presentation with an overview of the East-West corridor from Ellicott City in Howard County to Johns Hopkins Bayview campus in Baltimore City and the North-South corridor from Towson in Baltimore County to Camden Station area in downtown Baltimore City. The studies began with no pre-determined routes or modes. Ongoing studies will identify 2-3 options for each corridor for further engineering analysis.

The current corridor studies will conclude in Spring and Summer of 2022 with a screening of the alternatives against the goals and objectives identified for each corridor and additional public outreach. Engagement activities to date included outreach to elected officials and local jurisdictions, a public survey and outreach, and regular Regional Transit Plan (RTP) Implementation Team and jurisdiction meetings. This outreach helped the team ascertain transit needs specific to the E-W and N-S corridors and subsequently develop unique goals for each.

There are currently seven preliminary alternatives being developed for each corridor that include different modes, treatments, alignments, station spacing and termini options. Analysis of the preliminary alternatives Measures of Effectiveness for each to ascertain if they address a number of themes, including but not limited to access to jobs, ridership, equity, cost, system impact and sustainability.

Feasibility Study Final Reports will be completed in June 2022 (E-W Corridor) and August 2022 (N-S Corridor) and continued engineering alternatives analyses will begin shortly afterwards.

Related RTP projects currently underway include the following:

- East-West Corridor (MDOT MTA / BCDOT Partnership)
 - Awarded \$22M in 2021 RAISE funding to create a \$50M Transit Priority Corridor Project
 - Focus on CityLink Blue & Orange Routes (Woodlawn to Essex)
 - Project items include dedicated bus lanes, transit signal priority, ADA upgrades at bus stops, pedestrian safety improvements, electric vehicle charging and more
- North-South Corridor
 - York Road Vision Study (BCDOT)
 - Project Limits: Northern Pkwy – 43rd Street
 - Fast Forward Program (MDOT MTA)
 - \$43M for dedicated bus lanes, bus stops and transit hubs, wayfinding and the customer experience, and bike and shared mobility
 - York Road improvements from Bellona Ave. to Radnor Ave. - six month pilot project targeting a Spring 2022 implementation

[PowerPoint: Initial RTP Corridors – MDOT MTA]

8. CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Ms. Aris recapped the information provided at the September BRTB meeting supplemented by a written summary provided in advance of the meeting. The BRTB is being asked to support a pilot Virtual Panel to see if the Panel will allow for greater participation and a clear purpose. Previously, the PAC had expressed a range of concerns about their role. While some issues had been addressed, there were other issues that could not be addressed. A Virtual Panel was one recommendation from a consultant review of the BRTB's public engagement activities.

Ms. Aris shared information on the potential size of the panel, frequency of interaction, as well as a wide range of areas they could be engaged, such as: surveys, preference polls, preview of materials, etc. Several members expressed interest in this approach to engaging a wide swath of the public in ongoing activities. Mr. Robinson asked for members to express support with a "Aye" or "Nay" response. Members were in support of trying a Virtual Panel as one aspect of the BRTB's public engagement.

[PowerPoint: Update on Public Involvement]

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Xu asked if there was going to be a BRTB retreat this year. Mr. Lang indicated that a retreat is currently under consideration and information will be shared with the members shortly.

Mr. Gartner asked if there could be a report on the status of federal transportation legislation at the December BRTB meeting. Mr. Lang agreed to take the suggestion to the Executive Committee. Ms. Murphy indicated that MDOT may have information to add, though she is uncertain at this time.

The meeting adjourned at 10:17 A.M.

Members

Kwaku Agyemang-Duah, Annapolis Transit
Steve Cohoon, Queen Anne's County Department of Public Works
Theo Ngongang, Baltimore City Department of Transportation
Mary Lane (for Lynda Eisenberg), Carroll County Department of Planning
Bruce Gartner, Howard County Office of Transportation
Eric Leshinsky, City of Annapolis, Department of Planning
Heather Murphy, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Oluseyi Olugbenle, Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA)
Alex Rawls, Harford County, Department of Planning
Ramond Robinson, Anne Arundel County, Department of Transportation
Catherine Salarano, Maryland Department of the Environment
D'Andrea Walker, Baltimore County Department of Public Works
Bihui Xu, Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)

Staff and Guests

Bala Akundi, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Regina Aris, BMC
Laura Barcena, Rossi Group
Robert Berger, BMC
Cindy Burch, BMC
Tyson Byrne, MDOT
Art Cohen, individual
David Cookson, Howard County OOT
Rebecca Deibel, BMC
Joel Gallihue, Harford County DP&Z
Monica Haines-Benkhedda, BMC
Don Halligan, BMC
Victor Henry, BMC
Petronella James-Okeke
Dan Janousek, MDOT
Kamron
Zach Kaufman, BMC
Liz Koontz, BMC
Keith Kucharek, BMC
Todd Lang, BMC
Sheila Mahoney, BMC
Jay Meashey, Taneytown
Edson Oladimeji
Rita Ossiander, Rossi Group
Eileen Singleton, BMC
Lisa Sirota, MDOT SHA

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board