

BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD

January 21, 2022
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
9:23 to 10:10 A.M.

MINUTES

The 338th meeting was called to order at 9:23 A.M. by the Chair, County Executive Stuart Pittman.

1. WELCOME

This BRTB meeting followed the BMC Board of Directors meeting. County Executive Barry Glassman was voted into the Chair position of the BMC. Executive Pittman joked that the chairs of the BMC and BRTB are both farmers – but join together to represent a diverse region.

2. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #22-9

Mr. Keith Kucharek introduced Resolution #22-09 which will add two new projects to the 2022-2025 TIP; one in Baltimore City and one in MDOT State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA). The Interagency Consultation Group has determined that both of these projects are exempt according to the conformity rule, and the Technical Committee recommended sending the resolution to the BRTB as presented.

Baltimore City is requesting to add the Central Avenue – Phase 2 project to the 2022-2025 TIP. Mr. Kucharek presented the details of the project. This project was originally shown in the 2016-2019 TIP and included work between Dock Street and Baltimore Street. Work included street reconstruction, ADA upgrades, utility work, traffic signals and a new bridge between Harbor Point and Harbor East. Work is 90% complete. This amendment will improve the design of the original streetscape project by providing better bicycle and pedestrian accessibility. The original striping plan contained 4-through lanes and a center turn lane. The proposed striping plan will contain 2-through lanes and a center turn lane as well as protected bicycle lanes on both sides of the road.

Reducing the number of travel lanes from 5 to 3 follows FHWA's guidance on best practices for road diets while adequately serving existing and future traffic demand. Providing protected bicycle lanes also complies with the City's Bicycle Master Plan of improving multi-modal transportation options throughout the City.

Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds will be used as well as local matching funds. The total estimated cost for the Central Avenue – Phase II project increases from \$51.0 million to \$53.45 million with anticipated completion in October 2022.

MDOT SHA is requesting to add the I-95/I-695 Interchange Bridge Deck Replacement project to the 2022-2025 TIP. Mr. Kucharek presented the details of the project. This project will be added to the 2022-2027 Consolidated Transportation Program and must be added to the FY 2022-2025 TIP in order to accommodate the anticipated February 2022 advertisement date.

The project will replace 10 bridge decks with latex modified concrete before they reach a deteriorated state. Also included in this amendment is the upgrade of bridge parapets in order to meet current safety standards.

National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) funds as well as matching funds will be used for this project. Total design cost, including the requested \$1.97 million is \$2.2 million. Construction cost is \$25.0 million. MDOT SHA is using toll credits to increase the share of federal funding to 95%. The project will be advertised for construction in February 2022 with anticipated construction completion and all bridges open to traffic in the summer of 2024.

Mr. Pittman asked for any comments or questions. No one requested the opportunity to comment or ask questions. Mr. Pittman requested a vote on Resolution #22-9. Mr. Calvin Ball moved approval of Resolution #22-9 and Mr. Jim Moran seconded the motion. The resolution passed unanimously.

[PowerPoint: January 2022 TIP Amendments]

3. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #22-10

Ms. Cindy Burch shared an overview of recent crash trends and the proposed targets for the traffic safety performance measures (fatalities, fatality rate per vehicle miles traveled (VMT), serious injuries, serious injury rate per VMT, and non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries). She noted the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on trends in 2020, notably an increase in traffic fatalities while crashes and injuries decreased.

Ms. Burch explained a new target-setting methodology that was employed by the State and adapted for these regional targets. This resolution follows the statistical approach used in the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and Highway Safety Plan (HSP) reports submitted to FHWA and NHTSA, respectively, in 2021.

Mr. Pittman asked for any news on the 2021 crash numbers, if this trend is continuing. Ms. Burch noted that the 2021 crash data have not been released yet (typically in fall). Per the www.zerodeathsmd.gov website, there have been 26 fatalities in 2022 so far, there were 547 in 2021, and 573 in 2020. The 2021 figure is not official at this time as reports may still be submitted, but it appears that 2021 will have fewer fatalities than 2020.

Mr. Robert McCord asked for the definition of non-motorized person. Ms. Burch explained that those are individuals reported as pedestrians or bicyclists, essentially anyone other than a vehicle occupant (including motorcycles).

Mr. Pittman asked if the regional and state trends also reflect national numbers. Ms. Burch shared that unfortunately the dramatic increase in fatalities and crash severity was seen nationwide. She also explained that partners in the behavioral safety field thought that reduced exposure would lead to safer roads, but having fewer vehicles on the road actually led to more severe crashes during the pandemic. Speeding and reckless driving behavior increased, impaired driving was seen during non-traditional time periods (e.g. mid-day on a weekday), and more unrestrained occupants were seen. The speeding behavior is problematic because it seems to be persisting as more cars are back on the road with those risky drivers. Ms. Burch noted the Safe System Approach and other safety efforts at BMC as potential for addressing some of these issues.

[PowerPoint: Highway Safety Performance Targets]

4. PRESENTATION: INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT

Acting Secretary Jim Ports began his discussion by sharing some of his previous experience, including a stint as Deputy Administrator at NHTSA. He was complimentary of the safety presentation and stated his commitment to all road users, including non-drivers. Mr. Ports also identified the first round of Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) grants to local jurisdictions.

Began this section with gratitude for the work Greg Slater did at MDOT. Regarding the IIJA, it identified \$567B nationally, with \$274B additional spending over current levels. Much of the money in the IIJA was anticipated for future formula programs. In Maryland, \$4.6B is for highway funding and \$1B will be new to the program, there is \$300M new for transit, and \$158M new for airport funding. The IIJA was passed but not yet appropriated by Congress. There are some shovel-ready projects, they may move forward depending on any new regulations that comes with the funding.

MDOT understands the value of new funding, transportation network open access to employment, supports a robust supply chain, provides transit projects that support access to education and jobs, allows for transit oriented development (TOD) with associated private investment, as well as funding for the port/airport to access new markets.

Also of note, early this year the Statewide Transit Plan was made available for public comment through 2/18 and is a 50-year roadmap for what is next. Now in this legislative session, the administration introduced a bill that repeals the current sunset. Currently the level of HUR going to the jurisdictions is 13.5% and is scheduled to go to 9% in 2025. The bill extends funding at 13.5% into the future. Also introduced is rear-facing infant car seats, the ability for members of the military, students, or workers living out of state to renew licenses online. The administration is also looking to make tax credits available to businesses to support

commuter choices other than driving alone. Finally, there is a bill to protect transit workers, making it a 2nd degree felony to assault transit operators.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

No one attending the meeting chose to address the BRTB.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 A.M.

Members

Calvin Ball, County Executive of Howard County
Gavin Buckley, Mayor of the City of Annapolis
Kwaku Duah, Annapolis Transit
Barry Glassman, Harford County Executive
Mike Kelly, Director Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Ryan Long, Federal Transit Administration, Region III
Rob McCord, Secretary Maryland Department of Planning
James J. Moran, Queen Anne's County Commissioner
Greg Murrill, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Maryland Division
John Olszewski, Jr., Baltimore County Executive
Steuart Pittman, Anne Arundel County Executive
James Ports, Secretary Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Brandon Scott, Baltimore City Mayor
Stephen Wantz, Carroll County Commissioner

Staff and Guests

Bala Akundi, BMC
Kwame Arhin, FHWA, MD Division
Regina Aris, BMC
Holly Arnold, Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA)
Samantha Biddle
Tony Bridges, State Delegate
Cindy Burch, BMC
Tyson Byrne, MDOT
Steve Cohoon, Queen Anne's County Department of Public Works
David Cookson

Rebecca Deibel, BMC
Lynda Eisenberg, Carroll County Department of Planning
Erika Falk, MDOT MTA
Blake Fisher, BMC
Bruce Gartner, Office of Transportation, Howard County
Joel Gallihue, Dept. of Planning & Zoning Harford County
Monica Haines-Benkhedda, BMC
Don Halligan, BMC
Dan Janousek, MDOT
Leslie Knapp
Liz Koontz, BMC
Keith Kucharek, BMC
Todd Lang, BMC
Eric Leshinsky, Dept. of Planning & Zoning, City of Annapolis
Earl Lewis, MDOT
Charlene Mingus, BMC
Heather Murphy, MDOT
Theo Ngongang, Baltimore City Department of Transportation (DOT)
Oluseyi Olugbenle, Director, MDOT MTA
Sam O'Neil
Matt Power,
Alex Rawls, Harford County, Department of Planning
Kathy Renzi, BMC
Larry Richardson,
J. Thomas Sadowski, University System of Maryland
Sidh Sam, Howard County
Lisa Sirota, MDOT SHA
Sam Snead, Anne Arundel County, Office of Transportation
Adrea Turner, Baltimore City DOT
D'Andrea Walker, Baltimore County Department of Public Works & Transportation
Roberta Wyndam, Carroll County
Bihui Xu, Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)
Graham Young, Baltimore City DOT
Michael

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board