

BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD

May 24, 2022
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
9:02 to 10:18 A.M.

MINUTES

The 342nd meeting was called to order at 9:02 A.M. by the Chair, Mr. Sam Snead.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A request for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2022 BRTB meeting was made by Mr. Snead. A motion was made by Mr. Alex Rawls to approve the minutes and seconded by Mr. Bruce Gartner. The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

No members of the public wished to speak at this time.

3. REPORT ON PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda reported on the following public Involvement activities:

- This year we are updating our Public Participation Plan. As part of this process we are doing some advanced consultation with interested parties through an online survey. The brief survey includes questions like: What are the barriers to your participation and what suggestions do you have to improve the process? Do you attend public meetings? Do you prefer virtual or in person? and Do you feel as if your comments make a difference?

Survey responses will help to shape the update to the BRTB Public Participation Plan, which will be released for a 45-day comment period later this year. The survey is available online at publicinput.com/2022publicparticipation. This survey can be translated into over 100 different languages using the embedded google translate tool. You can also take the survey via text message and If you want a print copy or to have your responses recorded, you can request this from the Public Involvement Coordinator. Comments are welcome through May 27, 2022.

- Staff continue to develop a series of educational white papers and surveys to share with the public on a range of topics related to Resilience 2050 - the regions next long-range transportation plan. Four white papers have been released so far on the topics of transit in the Baltimore region; freight movement; Traffic Safety; and the project scoring methodology for Resilience 2050. Additional white papers will be released every month this year so stay tuned for more papers, including our next paper on air quality. Once you read the white paper, email us your thoughts, leave us a voicemail, or take our survey online at: publicinput.com/resilience2050whitepapers.

- Volunteers are still sought to serve on a newly formed group called Transportation CORE. Transportation CORE is a new form of public engagement that will bring together people from around the region to provide feedback on a range of transportation and planning topics. We have received over 50 applications, however, volunteers are still needed from Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Queen Anne's counties. Applications are now being accepted on a rolling basis. To apply, visit baltometro.org.

[Handout: Public Involvement Report for May 2022]

4. REPORT FROM THE INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION GROUP

Ms. Nicole Hebert reported the following from the May 4th ICG meeting:

- ICG discussed the status of the conformity determination for the 2023-2026 TIP and LRTP. BMC is working to complete analysis as swiftly as possible, however due to delays in the validation of the InSITE travel model the target date for BRTB approval is August 23rd.
- ICG approved conformity exemption of the May 2022-2025 TIP amendment for the Rural Transit Systems – Capital Assistance project.
- ICG discussed the status of CMAQ planning efforts. Coordination is ongoing between BMC, MDOT, and MDOT SHA regarding target setting, which is in progress. MDOT aims to present and discuss emissions targets with ICG at the June 15th meeting.
- The status of ozone SIP planning efforts was discussed as well. The EPA has proposed adjusting the ozone nonattainment status of the Baltimore region from marginal to moderate. ICG voting members and BMC have met with MDE to discuss potential Reasonably Available Control Measures (RACM) for analysis and consideration in the SIP.

5. REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Ms. Regina Aris reported the following from the May TC meeting:

- MDOT MTA requested to amend the FY 2022-2025 TIP to increase Section 5339 funding for the Rural Transit Systems – Capital Assistance project. After details were provided, a vote was taken with unanimous support from the members.
- Morgan State University introduced the Transit Cooperative Research Program H60: Lessons Learned from COVID-19: Strategies to Enhance Racial and Social Equity through Public Transportation as a Community Lifeline project. A key component is a survey and focus

groups in 10 case study areas across the country to document the experiences of disproportionately affected groups, especially low-income communities and communities of color that have high economic need and are transit dependent, during the COVID-19 crises as it relates to transit service. Baltimore will be one of the case studies. In addition to learning about this research project, the Technical Committee was asked to assist. Members were asked to review the list of partner agencies and identify if any key groups are missing. Survey questions were also provided with a request to review and the possibility that one or two additional questions could be posed.

- BMC gave an overview on recent Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) planning efforts. After regulatory background was given, the specific CMAQ performance measures and the periods over which these measurements are made were described. A high level performance period schedule was then reviewed. The next major planning milestone occurs October 1, 2022, when two performance reports are due to FHWA: the First Full Performance Period Progress Report and the Second Baseline Performance Period Report/Plan.
- Mr. Snead shared progress in Anne Arundel County's fleet electrification progress. A draft ZEB/HEB Fleet Electrification Plan has been developed and a total of \$5.6M in funding planned for a variety of activities including purchases of electric vehicles. Elements of the ZEB/HEB Fleet Electrification Plan include planning for workforce training, service provision in disadvantaged communities, potential funding sources, and start up and scale up challenges. Installing charging infrastructure has involved coordination with a variety of services, including the Department of Public Works, Central Services, and Baltimore Gas and Electric, who each work together to build and maintain the infrastructure and vehicles.
- BMC staff summarized the Vulnerable Populations Index (VPI) and noted that the interactive map has been updated to reflect the recently released 2016-2020 5-year ACS data. The VPI shows the concentrations of seven vulnerable population groups in the Baltimore region: low-income population; non-Hispanic, minority population; Hispanic or Latino Population (all races); population with Limited English Proficiency; disabled population; elderly population (age 75+); and households with no car. The only methodological change when updating the data was a change in the definition of low-income from the poverty level to 200% of the poverty level.
- Staff shared key deliverables and products planned for three UPWP tasks from draft RFPs. The TC gave approval for the RFPs to move forward. They include work related to: Safe System Approach, LOTS skills and technology support and CAV planning. All three tasks will provide financial support to local jurisdictions.

6. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #22-14

Mr. Keith Kucharek introduced resolution #22-14. In Resolution #22-14 MDOT MTA requested to amend the FY 2022-2025 TIP to increase Section 5339 funding for the Rural Transit Systems – Capital Assistance project.

Ms. Erika Falk presented the details of the project. TIP development for Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS) are based on the prior year's awards initially. Once actual award

amounts are announced, amendments are made to provide the correct funding. MDOT MTA is working to improve this procedure through enhanced asset management protocol.

This amendment increases Section 5339 funds by a total of \$1.264 million including \$1.011 million federal funding and \$253,000 in matching funds. Funding will be used to provide federal funds to Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County and Howard County.

Anne Arundel County will use funds for Medium Bus Expansion and Small Cutaway Bus Expansion. Baltimore County will use the funds for Small Bus Replacements and Howard County will utilize funds for Heavy Duty Bus Replacement.

Ms. Falk also provided responses to questions that were asked at the Technical Committee meeting. The first question was, will any funds be used for electric vehicles? Ms. Falk explained that it is entirely up to the local planners in each county. MDOT MTA does not get notified of the local planning purchases until the year before the actual purchase at which time MDOT MTA amends the TIP. It is recommended to reach out to the local planners directly for information on purchases outside of the current fiscal year.

The second question asked at the Technical Committee meeting was, how does MDOT MTA determine the difference between rural and urban counties? Ms. Falk indicated that rural and urban designations are determined by the census. The Secretaries Office then determines which counties are eligible for each TIP page (urban or rural). The only time the counties could change from their current status would be if the census changed and TSO revised the rural/urban designation.

Finally, Ms. Falk described the difference between Urban Transit Systems and Small Urban Transit Systems. The primary differences are the types of services provided and challenges faced. Small Urban areas do not carry demands great enough to support a fixed route system and may face the challenge of longer travel distances, along with a lower population. Urban Transit Systems are in more densely populated areas with fixed route systems.

Mr. Snead asked for any comments or questions. No one requested the opportunity to comment or ask questions. Mr. Snead requested a vote on Resolution #22-14. Mr. Tyson Byrne moved approval of Resolution #22-14 and Mr. Kwaku Duah seconded the motion. The resolution passed unanimously.

[PowerPoint: TIP Amendment 22-25 TIP – Rural Transit Systems Capital Assistance]

7. NOMINATING COMMITTEE PRESENTS PROPOSED SLATE OF OFFICERS

Mr. Byrne said that the Nominating Committee, consisting of Howard County and MDOT, met and is proposing nominating the current set of officers, Anne Arundel County as chair and Baltimore County as vice chair, to be the Fiscal Year 2023 BRTB officers. As a reminder, the BRTB bylaws allow the chair to serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. Mr. Byrne thanked Howard County and Mr. Gartner for serving on the Nominating Committee.

Mr. Snead then asked if there were any nominations from the floor. None were offered. A vote will take place at the June meeting.

8. PRESENTATION: RECOMMENDATION FOR TOP REGIONAL ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES

Ms. Charlene Mingus shared that over 20 attendees with representatives from each jurisdiction in the Baltimore region and MDOT came together in April at the Patapsco Valley State Park Hollofield Area for a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Group work session to develop a list of the top active transportation priorities in the Baltimore region. The group accomplished a lot during the work session which resulted in a list of 16 top active transportation priorities.

The vision of the work session was to develop a list of the top active transportation (bicycle and pedestrian) priorities in the Baltimore region grounded in adopted bicycle, pedestrian, complete streets, and park and recreation plans. And the goals of the work session included; meeting the federal requirement for bicycle and pedestrian planning as a component of the region's long-range transportation plan; to identify opportunities to connect the regional active transportation system; and to position jurisdictions in the region to pursue funding opportunities for funding opportunities.

BPAG members submitted top active transportation priorities in advance of the work session which were mapped and included in an information packet developed by BMC staff. Each jurisdiction presented priorities to the group at the beginning of the work session and the group had breakout discussions before the priorities were selected through two rounds of voting.

Ms. Mingus shared the 16 top active transportation priorities for the Baltimore region and noted that the order of priorities were grouped by jurisdiction in alphabetical order and did not indicate prioritization. The priorities were presented and discussed at the May BPAG meeting which included public comment and BPAG members voted to approve the list of priorities for BRTB consideration.

Ms. Mingus noted that the presentation includes a slide for each priority with the following information; map of the priority that is highlighted in red, the priority name, jurisdiction, approximate length, facility type, status, and description. Ms. Mingus did not cover each priority in the interest of time and noted that the presentation will be available on the BMC website for further review.

Next steps include determination of the scale and scope of set asides by the Technical Committee and BRTB as the financial forecasts become available. Also, in fiscal year 2023 a Unified Planning Work Program project will focus on developing a vision for an integrated regional bicycle network.

[PowerPoint: Top Regional Active Transportation Priorities]

9. BRIEFING: BIKE TO WORK WEEK WRAP

Ms. Mingus thanked our regional partners and sponsors for a very successful 25th anniversary of bike to work in the Baltimore region. Since 1996, BMC and regional partners have organized an annual Bike to Work celebration to promote biking as a healthy commuting option while promoting public awareness of its safety and environmental benefits. The celebration continues to grow including an expanded mission to promote biking anywhere, anytime.

The 25th annual bike to work celebration was held Monday, May 16 to Sunday, May 22, with almost 1,800 registrants, which is a significant increase from 2020 participation. Over 650 of the registrants responded that it was their first time participating in the event which is great news as BMC and partners work to continue to expand the reach of the program. Bike to Work Week 2022 included 16 in person events, including 9 pit stops throughout the Baltimore region. As well as, 25 pickup locations at local bike shops where participants could pick up their t-shirts and safety swag anytime during the week, which allowed more people to participate in the event. BMC is very thankful to the 14 sponsors of the event.

[PowerPoint: B2WW 2022 Wrap]

10. BRIEFING: UPDATE ON FEDERAL AND STATE COMPETITIVE GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Mr. Todd Lang presented on a range of competitive funding opportunities in the new legislative package called the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act (IIJA) that was branded as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). Information on where to find more details was provided along with when the Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFO) were released and the deadline for the application, if known.

Following the overview, Mr. Lang shared details on individual grant programs if it has been released. Examples of grants with a NOFO out include: Bus & Bus Facilities Grants, Low & No Emissions Bus Grants, Safe Streets & Roads for All Grant.

Mr. Lang also shared slides on a range of state grants available to local jurisdictions: Transportation Alternatives Program, Kim Lamphier Bikeways, Recreational Trails, MD Aviation Administration Community Enhancement, and the MD Energy Administration Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment Rebate Program.

Members asked for access to the information to share with their leadership. There was also a discussion about how to coordinate regionally to best utilize available match money to advance key initiatives. It was noted that the tool to calculate equity benefits had an error and has now been updated. If anyone had the tool for an application that work will need to be updated. APTA has requested an additional week for submittals to FTA because of this issue, it is unclear at this time if the time will be granted. MDOT indicated that they are reviewing current Priority Letters due to higher levels of federal funding in some formula programs. Another key aspect of the applications is congressional support and a range of letters expressing support for the project.

[PowerPoint: Update on Federal and State Competitive Grant Opportunities]

11. OTHER BUSINESS

The June meeting will take place virtually while the July 15 meeting will be in person with the elected officials. There was no other business.

The meeting adjourned at 10:18 A.M.

ATTENDANCE:

Members

Kwame Arhin, Federal Highway Administration, Maryland Division
Kwaku Duah, Annapolis Transit
Elizabeth Gordon (for Kate Sylvester), Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA)
Tyson Byrne (for Heather Murphy), Maryland Department of Transportation
Angelica Daniel (for D'Andrea Walker), Baltimore County Department of Public Works & Transportation
Theo Ngongang, Baltimore City Department of Transportation
Lynda Eisenberg, Carroll County Department of Planning
Bruce Gartner, Howard County Office of Transportation
Eric Leshinsky, City of Annapolis, Department of Planning
Alex Rawls, Harford County, Department of Planning
Catherine Salarano, Maryland Department of the Environment
Sam Snead, Anne Arundel County, Department of Transportation
Bihui Xu, Maryland Department of Planning

Staff and Guests

Regina Aris, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Cindy Burch, BMC
Rebecca Deibel, BMC
Erika Falk, MDOT MTA
Monica Haines-Benkhedda, BMC
Nicole Hebert, BMC
Todd Lang, BMC
Charlene Mingus, BMC

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board