

BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD

December 20, 2022
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
9:02 to 10:26 A.M.

MINUTES

The 348th 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 November 22, 2022 BRTB meeting was made by Mr. Snead. A motion was made by Mr. Eric Leshinsky 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 two open comment periods.

BMC's Transit Governance and Funding Workgroup is seeking comments through this Friday, December 23, on a draft set of recommendations for the future of transit in the Baltimore region. The workgroup has reviewed options detailed in a 2021 Baltimore Regional Transit Governance and Funding Study and is preparing formal recommendations to the BMC Board of Directors, Maryland General Assembly and Governor. Members of the public are welcome to comment on these draft recommendations and BMC will release a final report in January. Details are online at publicinput.com/transitworkgroup.

Second, BMC, on behalf of Howard County and Baltimore County, is conducting a multimodal transportation study for Ellicott City in Howard County and Oella in Baltimore County to address parking, wayfinding, and multimodal access. The public is invited to help shape the future of transportation in historic Ellicott City and Oella by sharing comments on the Transportation in Historic Town Centers project. As part of the process to develop this study,

the project team has developed reports on existing conditions and an analysis of initial recommendations. Comments are welcome through this Thursday, December 22. Learn more at publicinput.com/historictowncenters.

BMC is also working with Harford County to develop a concept plan for bicycle and pedestrian improvements along a segment of US 40 in Harford County. As part of the process, three potential options have been developed. A public comment period closed on November 27 with over 100 people sharing comments. Feedback will be used to shape the preferred concept. Look for another comment period and public meeting early in 2023 where the public will be asked to weigh in on the preferred concept(s). Learn more at publicinput.com/us40bikeped.

Next, Ms. Haines Benkhedda reported on outreach initiatives. The ninth in a series of educational white papers and surveys has been released to share information on a range of topics related to the next long-range transportation plan, Resilience 2050. To date, the BRTB has had over 3,100 visitors to the white papers project page and 44 participants have shared comments.

Ms. Haines Benkhedda highlighted two comments from the active transportation white paper survey. The first person is excited to hear about the "Vision for an Integrated Regional Bicycle Network"; however, they ask if this concept be further strengthened by becoming an Integrated Regional Trail Network? That way it would unite the many overlapping needs for safer pedestrian and bicycle travel and recreation. Additionally, a trail's definition could be expanded to include a combination of a protected bike lane and sidewalk in tandem. The first person emphasized that traffic-separated bike infrastructure should be prioritized and the second commenter noted many risk averse users will not use painted bike lanes that do not feature protection. They suggest that protected bike lanes are more equitable as they prioritize a wider demographic of users, including people of all ages and abilities. The latest white paper looks at demographic trends. Additional white papers will be released this winter, where we'll be exploring: the financial forecast and planning for resilient infrastructure and climate change.

[Handout: Public Involvement Report for December]

4. REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

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

- BMC staff reported on the development of the Public Participation Plan along with the comment period and comments. The TC discussed to document and changes then voted to accept it as presented.
- BMC staff introduced MDOT SHA to present 8 TIP amendments proposed for the TIP. It was a lengthy presentation due to the significance of these new projects. Substantive debate came up as to why these were being introduced at this time. In discussions between MDOT and BMC it was agreed to limit the projects to 30% design or less. This was in part due to needed modeling and conformity analysis, plus a comment period. The other consideration is that these projects are new to the CTP and are not assured of funding, a

key criteria. After a robust discussion the TC agreed to move forward and approved the request for BRTB consideration.

- BMC staff discussed results from the 2018-2019 Maryland Travel Survey, specifically related to *Travel with Friends*. The study used regional rather than jurisdictional data. Usually we think of friends going places together by car, but seldom consider whether some people use public transit, both rail and bus, in the same way. For both Bus and Rail the most common trip purpose for *Travel with Friends* was Shop/Meal trips.
- BMC staff reported on the region's housing growth in 2021, identifying the top ten housing "hot spots". These locations accounted for 39 percent of all new units. The hot spots are: 1) Baltimore Peninsula, 2) Downtown Columbia, 3) Two Rivers, 4) Bristol Court Apts, 5) 7900 Sandy Farm Rd, 6) Somerset, 7) The Edge, 8) 5501 Eastern Ave, 9) Meades Crossing, Meadowbrook, and 10) Watershed.
- Resilience 2050 Activity – Staff are drafting responses to the comments received on the white papers. Comment responses will be posted on public input at <https://publicinput.com/resilience2050whitepapers>. The January TC meeting will include a resolution on the financial forecast of federal, state, and local funds anticipated to be available through 2050 for system preservation, operations, and expansion.
- A preview of the regional safety performance targets (fatalities, fatality rate per vehicle miles traveled (VMT), serious injuries, serious injury rate per VMT, and non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries) was presented prior to a request to adopt targets in January.
- Members were asked to respond to a survey of UPWP focus areas. It is important that each member indicate their priorities so progress can be made on the upcoming UPWP.

5. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #23-9

Ms. Haines Benkhedda reported that the draft 2022 the Public Participation Plan (PPP) was released for a 45-day comment period from August 22 through October 7, 2022. The draft plan was created after a review of other PPPs, prior consultant recommendations, staff debriefs, and the results of a public participation survey this year.

Highlights of changes include: 1) Added virtual or hybrid meetings options for BRTB committee meetings and public meetings or events, 2) Added new ways to comment such as voicemail, text, and through our PublicInput engagement hub, 3) Clarified how to submit comments via social media, 4) Updated accessibility policy to use plain and inclusive language, 5) Added information about EO 13985 – Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, and 6) Reorganized several sections to streamline information and make it easier to understand policies.

Nearly 1,000 people visited the PPP project page at publicinput.com/2022PPP and 65 participants completed survey questions and shared comments. Staff have reviewed all of the comments and developed a set of 5 recommended changes to the final PPP: 1) Update the list of interested parties to include civil rights organizations, 2) Relating to the time to respond to comments, add a sentence stating "If additional time is needed, the BRTB will consider modifying the voting schedule to allow further time to review and incorporate comments.", 3)

Make recorded presentations and meetings available on the BMC website and possibly other communication channels, 4) many in the public do not feel their comments are meaningfully incorporated into the TIP and LRTP specifically, therefore the evaluation section was updated to incorporate metrics for measuring meaningful engagement and include best practices from national research, and 5) Public participation should extend to Title VI which will be refreshed in 2023.

There was a request for a motion regarding Resolution #23-9. Ms. D'Andrea Walker made a motion to approve and Mr. Theo Ngongang seconded the motion. No members of the public had any comments. Ms. Bihui Xu asked about the Transportation CORE not being mentioned. The CORE is not a standing committee the way the Public Advisory Committee was. Should the exploration of targeted feedback from the CORE be successful they will be included in future PPPs.

A vote was taken on Resolution #23-9, with unanimous support from the members.

[PowerPoint: 2022 Public Participation Plan Update]

6. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #23-10

Mr. Keith Kucharek introduced the resolution. In Resolution #23-10, MDOT SHA requested to amend the FY 2023-2026 TIP to add eight projects (seven new and one that has been on hold). Ms. Lisa Minnick presented the details of the projects.

- 1) A request to add \$234,000 in planning funds and \$2.0 million in engineering funding for the **TSMO System 1** project in FY 2023-2024. These funds will be used to develop 30% design for a combination of Information Technology and geometric improvements along I-70, US 40 and US 29.
- 2) A request to add \$3.9 million in engineering funds for the **I-97: US 50 to MD 32 TSMO** project in FY 2023-2024. These funds will be used to develop 30% design for a combination of Information Technology and geometric improvements including extending the left entrance ramp from EB US 50 to NB I-97
- 3) A request to add \$5.0 million in engineering funds for the **I-795: Dolfield Boulevard Interchange** project in FY 2023-2024. This project was in previous TIPs but has been on hold for several years. The project will add a full interchange at I-795 and Dolfield Boulevard and widen I-795 from 4 to 6 lanes from Owings Mills Boulevard to Franklin Boulevard.
- 4) A request to add \$900,000 in engineering funds for the **MD 32: 2nd Street to Main Street** project in FY 2023-2025. This project will provide safety improvements by upgrading intersection geometry, extending turn lanes and modifying access along MD 32.
- 5) A request to add \$500,000 in planning funds for the **MD 97: MD 140 to MD 496 Corridor Study** project in FY 2023. These funds will be used to identify multi-modal transportation needs, including safety and capacity improvements.

- 6) A request to add \$1.59 million in engineering funds for the **MD 22: MD 462 to Mount Royal Avenue Noise Abatement** project in FY 2023. These funds will be used to provide final design for the extension of noise barriers along both sides of MD 22 to mitigate noise impacts resulting from previous BRAC improvements.
- 7) A request to add \$500,000 for engineering funds for the **US 29: Johns Hopkins Road to MD 32 Bicycle-Pedestrian Route** project in FY 2023. This project will provide data collection in order to make recommendations for a preferred east/west alternative trail alignment between the Rivers Edge community, Clarksville Hunt community and the Johns Hopkins Library Service Center.
- 8) A request to add \$500,000 in planning funds for the **MD 18B: Castle Marina Road** to the Kent Narrows Corridor Study project in FY 2023. This project will identify multi-modal transportation needs and develop conceptual improvements for future project funding.

Mr. Snead asked for any comments or questions. Mr. Leshinsky asked if there was any additional detail on the I-97 TSMO project. Ms. Minnick indicated that not all of the TSMO details have been determined at this time. Ms. Tara Penders indicated that MDOT SHA could provide additional information on the geometric improvements but will also add the City of Annapolis to the meetings MDOT SHA holds with Anne Arundel County.

Mr. Ngongang (Baltimore City) noted that there were no projects in Baltimore City. He also indicated that he understands that these projects are county priorities and have been shown in various planning documents including the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) but have they been in any CTP's and how are they being funded. Ms. Minnick indicated that all of the projects are in the current CTP, the current draft CTP and many have been in previous CTP documents. Ms. Murphy (MDOT) noted that all of these projects are state highways. The State does not own any roadways within the City. She did mention, however, that the draft CTP includes numerous MTA projects within the city. The majority of the funding comes from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Most will have a split of 90% federal funding and 10% matching funds, most of which come from toll credits.

Ms. Bihui Xu noted that if these projects get additional funding and become major projects, they will be subject to Priority Funding Area regulations.

Mr. Snead requested a vote on Resolution #23-10. Mr. Steve Cohoon moved to approve Resolution #23-10 and Ms. Walker seconded the motion. Baltimore City voted against approval. All other members voted to approve. The resolution passed by majority vote.

[PowerPoint: TIP Amendment 2023-2026 TIP]

7. PRESENTATION: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BMC TRANSIT GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING WORKGROUP

Mr. Michael Kelly, Executive Director of BMC provided the committee an update to the Transit Governance & Funding Workgroup recommendations as a follow up to the 2021 study that the BRTB undertook. Mr. Kelly discussed the study options based upon that prior BRTB work. He

mentioned that the BMC board formed the group in August and to identify one or two models from the prior study and create a whitepaper for the BMC board to present to the incoming general assembly and governor in January of 2023. All members were appointed by the BMC board and it was chaired by delegate Tony Bridges. He detailed all the representatives and their affiliations. Mr. Kelly said that the group would weigh the status quo of transit decision-making and balance between funding responsibilities. He mentioned there were four meetings through the fall of 2022 and resulting in draft recommendations. Mr. Kelly said the group narrowed down the options and walked the group through each of the recommendations, who is responsible for implementing and a desired timeline. He said the workgroup created five recommendations and he went over each of the recommendations in detail. The five recommendations are:

- create Baltimore a Regional Transit Commission;
- consider regional priorities in the Consolidated Transportation Program;
- restructure Locally Operated Transit System (LOTS) funding formula;
- reconstitute and empower the Maryland Transportation Commission; and,
- conduct formal study of the creation of a Baltimore Regional Transit Authority.

Mr. Kelly told the committee that all recommendations are on the website and there is currently a public comment period open to receive thoughts and comments from the public. Ms. Walker said that as a participant she felt there was a lot of good conversations and discussions and that she was looking forward to next steps. Mr. Gartner thanked Mr. Kelly and Ms. Walker for their effort and specific considerations that were part of the recommendations.

[PowerPoint: Transit Governance and Funding Study]

8. PRESENTATION: FISCAL YEAR 2024 UPWP POTENTIAL FOCUS AREAS

Mr. Lang talked about the Work Program schedule with FY 2024 officially starting July 1. This is the time of year that the upcoming Work Program is in development. A draft will be discussed with the Technical Committee on February 7, followed by a 30-day comment period, and then presented to the BRTB on April 21 (an elected official meeting). With the 30-day public comment period starting on February 8, it will be necessary for members to respond to information requests fairly quickly.

Potential focus area topics include: a regional freight profile, explore micro-transit services that are more flexible, an operations, maintenance and branding task to support build-out of the Patapsco Regional Greenway, making TOD viable with specific recommendations, explore the changing face of employment and retail post pandemic, better integrate affordable housing and transportation planning, explore labor force participation post pandemic and travel choices for commuting, stand up a transportation planning institute, assess deterioration rates for signal infrastructure. As well as continuing the Transportation and Land Use grants and support for the LOTS.

[PowerPoint: Potential FY 2024 Focus Areas]

9. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

The meeting adjourned at 10:26 A.M.

Members

Steve Cohoon, Queen Anne's County Department of Public Works
Bruce Gartner, Howard County Office of Transportation
Mary Lane (for Lynda Eisenberg), Carroll County Department of Planning
Eric Leshinsky, City of Annapolis, Department of Planning
Heather Murphy, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Theo Ngongang, Baltimore City Department of Transportation
Alex Rawls, Harford County, Department of Planning
Catherine Salarano, Maryland Department of the Environment
Sam Snead, Anne Arundel County, Department of Transportation
D'Andrea Walker, Baltimore County Department of Public Works & Transportation
Bihui Xu, Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)

Staff and Guests

Regina Aris, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Charles Baber, BMC
Tyson Byrne, MDOT
Nate Evans, MDOT
Monica Haines-Benkhedda, BMC
Don Halligan, BMC
Zach Kaufman, BMC
Mike Kelly, BMC
Shawn Kimberly, BMC
Keith Kucharek, BMC
Dan Janousek, MDOT
Todd Lang, BMC
Sheila Mahoney, BMC
Anna Marshall, BMC
Lisa Minnick, MDOT SHA
Tara Penders, MDOT SHA
Shane Sarver, BMC
Eileen Singleton, BMC
Francine Waters, MDOT

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board