

BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD

January 23, 2024
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
9:04 to 10:42 A.M.

MINUTES

The 361st meeting was called to order at 9:04 A.M. by the Chair, Ms. D'Andrea Walker.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A request for a motion to approve the minutes of the December BRTB meeting was made by Ms. Walker. A motion was made by Mr. Sam Snead to approve the minutes and seconded by Mr. Steve Cohoon. The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

There was no one who wished to address the BRTB.

3. REPORT ON PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda shared the following highlights of public engagement efforts:

- Last month the final comment period on the Guinness to Southwest Area Park Trail wrapped up. Last week the planning process for another new section of the Patapsco Regional Greenway in Anne Arundel and Howard Counties began. The initial meeting is more of a meet-and-greet with planners looking to hear from the community what they are interested in. A community meeting is scheduled at the Elkridge Branch of the Howard County Library System (6540 Washington Blvd, Elkridge, MD 21075) on Tuesday, February 6 from 6-8 p.m. Visit publicinput.com/prg to share your thoughts.
- There will be an upcoming 30-day comment period for the FY 2025 Addendum to the Work Program. More information will follow.

- B'more Involved is published monthly to share planning activities around the region. If BRTB members have announcements for the February issue please contact Ms. Haines Benkhedda.

[Handout: Public Involvement Report for January]

4. REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Mr. Dan Janousek reported the following from the January Tech Committee meeting:

- The TC considered four resolutions that ultimately were recommended to go to the BRTB. 1) the annual safety targets with supporting activities, 2) the 2020 urban area boundary, 3) 25 miles of additional critical urban freight corridor segments, and 4) a change to the functional classification of several service roads on US 50 in Anne Arundel County.
- A refresher on the Congestion Management System designed to meet the federal requirements. After the basics, the focus turned to a piece that ensures travel demand reduction and operation management strategies are considered in the development process for projects that add capacity. The BRTB process requires project sponsors to present to the BRTB at three critical points in a project: Purpose and Need; Alternatives Retained; and Preferred Alternative.
- Staff reviewed the schedule for the FY 2025 Addendum and noted the Technical Committee will review the tasks and budget at the February meeting and indicate if staff can begin a 30-day comment period.

5. REPORT FROM THE INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION GROUP

Ms. Anna Marshall reported the following from the Interagency Consultation Group meeting:

- ICG met on January 3, 2024 to begin the conformity process for the 2025-2028 TIP. The previous meeting was in July, and since then the TIP, LRTP and associated conformity determination document were approved by federal partners in the fall of 2023.
- ICG discussed the draft methodology and assumptions letter, which details the testing methods and emission budgets to be used for conformity. The Baltimore region is designated as a moderate non-attainment area for the 2015 ozone standard. The 2023 Motor Vehicle Emission Budgets were deemed adequate for use by the EPA on August 18, 2023, and were included in the 2015 8 hour-ozone State Implementation Plan.
- Mr. Tim Shepherd from MDE presented information about the Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT) Regulation, which was adopted by Maryland on December 25, 2023. The ACT requires a growing percentage of medium and heavy duty vehicles sold to be zero-emission, starting with Model Year 2026. This will help reduce on-road NOx emissions.

6. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION #24-10

Ms. Cindy Burch shared the regional safety performance measure targets (fatalities, fatality rate per vehicle miles traveled (VMT), serious injuries, serious injury rate per VMT, and non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries) for Resolution #24-10. In 2022, traffic crash-related fatalities, serious injuries, and non-motorist fatalities and serious injuries decreased in the Baltimore region while the state saw increases in fatalities. The MDOT SHA submitted state safety performance targets in August 2023 and the BRTB must set regional targets within 180 days of that report. This will be the seventh time targets are set and the BRTB previously decided to utilize the state methodology for setting targets, which remained the same as last year. Ms. Burch shared the anticipated targets for 2020-2024 average and goal for 2030, then she provided a snapshot of fatalities in the region for 2023 year-to-date. Unfortunately, those figures are higher and reports for close to 600 fatalities have been submitted statewide, the highest figure in over 15 years.

Mr. Snead asked if the number of motorists has increased, while the fatalities have decreased in recent years. Ms. Burch discussed how it is difficult to count motorists, but the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) rates did decrease. That is the number of fatalities per miles traveled, so as VMT has increased, the fatalities decreased more to have the rate decrease. Ms. Walker explained what VMT stands for vehicle miles of travel. There has been a slower increase in VMT since lowest figures seen during the pandemic when much of the population were on Safer-at-Home guidelines. Mr. Snead also asked if the highest number of fatalities occurred on high-speed interstates and roadways; Ms. Burch did not have those figures on hand and will follow-up with that data analysis. Mr. Snead wants to focus on high-speed roadways if they account for a large part of the problem, knowing that speeding is a concern.

Ms. Corren Johnson shared that it is helpful to look at non-motorist fatal crashes and locations to focus outreach efforts. Ms. Burch shared congratulations for Baltimore City on securing US Department of Transportation Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) funding, \$9 million in Round 2 (largest in country).

Ms. Walker asked for more information about the enhanced public engagement. Ms. Burch explained that her position is funded through a grant with the Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administrations Highway Safety Office (MHSO) and, in the FY2024 grant, one of the activities/goals is to identify at least one new group, population, or area in each BRTB jurisdiction to engage about safety. It will be an underserved or unapproached group, for example minority populations with an unofficial ride-sharing network that may not have enough child passenger safety seats. Another example may be groups of new or expectant mothers to share more safety messages beyond child safety and also elicit feedback and opinions. Ms. Haines Benkhedda includes safety messaging in the B'more Involved newsletters and Ms. Burch has been working with MHSO to use the Baltimore Region as a pilot area for any new outreach ideas. There are no set dates or events at this time. Ms. Johnson shared that the Maryland Cycling Classic, in its third year, is hoping to do more local community projects and engagement, so that will be a good partner.

Mr. Chris Jakubiak asked about the state crash figures and Ms. Burch confirmed that they do represent all crashes in the state, including the Washington metro region.

Ms. Johnson recommended approval of the resolution, and Mr. Snead seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to recommend approval of the resolution.

[PowerPoint: Safety Performance Target Setting]

7. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION #24-11

Ms. Erin Bolton updated the committee on the process for creating the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Adjusted Urban Areas. FHWA asks state DOTs to coordinate with local jurisdictions and MPOs to create these. The general guidelines are that these must encompass the full urban areas as defined by the 2020 Census, but should also be expanded as needed in order to align with existing planning boundaries, address irregularities in boundary shapes, and maintain consistency with the highway functional classification system. The urban/rural designation can influence funding from the Federal Aid Highway System. Specifically, minor collectors (functional classification 6) are eligible if urban, but not eligible if rural.

MDOT has participated in cooperative meetings with the local jurisdictions and BRTB to create adjusted urban area boundaries based on the 2020 Census urban areas. These were submitted to FHWA for review by December 27, 2023. The 2024 HPMS data submission must conform to the approved urban area boundary as of June 15, 2024. The next step is to begin the process to review and revise the functional classification of roadways, due by December 2025.

A member asked about the distinction between an urban area and an urbanized area. Staff responded that there is no longer a distinction as of 2020, the Census Bureau no longer distinguishes between urbanized areas and urban clusters based on population size, and now uses the term "urban areas" to refer to all of them.

Another question asked was about the increase in the geographic size of the urban area from the 2010 Census to the 2020 Census. Staff responded that they would follow up with these comparisons.

Another member asked about the relationship between the urban area boundary and the Priority Funding Areas (PFA). Staff responded that PFAs are state-defined areas and the urban areas are federally-defined areas, so there is no formal relationship between them. PFAs were developed in order to direct state resources to designated growth areas.

A member asked if the expanded FHWA adjusted urban areas would result in roadways now becoming eligible for federal funding and if that was a driving factor in expanding the boundaries. Staff responded that designation as an urban roadway does make it eligible for more types of federal transportation funding, which would generally be considered a positive benefit. The Census Bureau determines urban area boundaries based on specific demographic and land use criteria. FHWA starts with these areas and advises states to expand their adjusted urban area boundaries to include areas of future growth. Our staff's role was ensuring

that all jurisdictions had the opportunity to review and adjust their boundaries; we did not work with jurisdictions on the detailed level of specific roadway and boundary decisions.

Ms. Bolton was asked if Harford County's large expanded area meant that the county based this on their development plan. Mr. Rawls responded that this expanded area is outside of the development envelope and doesn't follow Harford County's land use or zoning plans. Mr. Rawls suggested that it may have been included because it does connect the large employment center of Aberdeen Proving Ground with the county seat of Bel Air along the MD 22 corridor. Staff responded that the state worked with the counties on these adjustments, which may have been done to maintain funding eligibility and follow the FHWA directive to avoid having roadways going in and out of urban classification where possible.

Mr. Snead recommended approval of the resolution, and Mr. Bruce Gartner seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to recommend approval of the resolution.

[PowerPoint: Urban Boundary 2020 Urban Area Boundary for the Baltimore Region]

8. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION #24-12

Mr. Keith Kucharek provided background information on how the first 25 miles of Critical Urban Freight Corridors (CUFC) were established. The FAST Act established the National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) in 2016. This provided a mechanism for additional federal funding for freight corridors. The CUFC is a subsystem of the NHFN. The FAST Act laid out criteria for establishing a mileage cap for CUFC. Maryland was allotted a total of 75 miles of which 25 are in the Baltimore Region. BMC and SHA coordinated in 2017 to establish the original 25 miles of CUFC in the Baltimore Region based on a variety of criteria.

When the IIJA was adopted in November of 2021 the allotment of CUFC doubled, meaning Maryland now is eligible for 150 miles, 50 of which are in the Baltimore Region. The 50 miles does not have to include the original 25 miles. However, after reviewing the current 25 miles, it was determined that only 25 additional miles would be added and no changes would be made to the original 25 miles.

SHA partnered with the Texas Transportation Institute to identify over 200 miles of eligible roadway segments in the Baltimore Region. SHA developed a ranking system based on roadways with the highest Average Annual Daily Truck Traffic (AADTT), segments of roadway with 25% or more AADTT, and proximity to freight generators. Segments were ranked on a weighted scale to develop an overall ranking. SHA also created an interactive map which allows users to view segments and the freight generators in the area.

BMC used the SHA rankings and compared them to projects in the Long Range Plan, eliminating Transit projects since they have other funding sources. BMC looked at continuity in segments, logical connections and overall mileage as additional factors. In all, BMC is recommending an additional 24.81 miles.

Several questions were asked from members and the audience.

Ms. Johnson asked if there were segments in Baltimore City that were already included and are there new segments that could be included? In the original 25 miles, Baltimore City had 10 miles of CUFC. This round included several smaller eligible segments in Baltimore City that didn't necessarily connect to any of the existing segments and some were very small (as small as 0.07 miles). Staff didn't think it made sense to include small segments that don't connect to anything. The smaller segments are likely the result of trucks being near a freight generator, but once the trucks disperse to different roadways, that segment is no longer eligible.

Mr. Chris Jakubiak asked what the implication of classifying MD 2 from College Parkway to MD 658 would be? Staff responded that if there is an improvement on that roadway, there are now additional federal funds available because it is considered a critical urban freight corridor. This is why we also looked at projects in the LRTP to see if there were long term improvements proposed.

Mr. Jakubiak asked if this would facilitate more truck traffic and if the freight funding is only tied to truck travel? Staff responded that trucks are already on these corridors and the designation does not create additional truck traffic. This just adds an additional funding opportunity. Projects would have to identify specific improvements that would benefit trucks such as improved turning radii or truck parking which would remove illegally parked trucks from shoulders and ramps.

Mr. Brandon Murray (guest) asked if the truck routes in Baltimore City are already considered under this provision, and if not, were they added to help with maintenance on those roads? Routes were identified, working with Maryland State Highway Administration and local jurisdictions. Some of the truck routes in the City are important to the City, but don't necessarily qualify to be included as part of the CUFC because they don't meet the eligibility requirements.

Mr. Alex Rawls recommended approval of the resolution, and Ms. Heather Murphy seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to recommend approval of the resolution.

[PowerPoint: Critical Urban Freight Corridors]

9. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION #24-13

Mr. Darren Bean, MDOT SHA, indicated that Anne Arundel County has requested a change of functional classification of several US 50 service roads from Local Road to Minor Collector. There are four segments on MD 908 and 2 segments on MD 931. Those six segments serve as access to 1) residential and commercial areas, 2) US 50, or 3) St. Margaret's Road. The request would align the current function of the roadway to the associated functional classification. Mr. Jakubiak asked if this would encourage additional trucks to enter the City of Annapolis? This functional class change would not lead to that situation.

Ms. Walker recommended approval of the resolution, and Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to recommend approval of the resolution.

[PowerPoint: Functional Classification Change: US 50 Service Roads]

10. PRESENTATION: BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMISSION (BRTC)

Mr. Don Halligan began by describing the role of the BRTC. It is to request, review and comment on the following efforts and progress of: 1) The MTA capital needs inventory report; 2) Updates to the Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan; 3) Annual operating and capital budget requests for the Baltimore region; 4) Information from the Annual Attainment Report and MTA including performance goals and metrics, evaluate any other measures of the performance of the Baltimore region transit system; 5) Review locally operated transit system (LOTS) plans and services to ensure coordination between local and MTA transit services; 6) Endeavor to ensure that MTA's plans, budgets, decisions, policies, goals, priorities, operations, and services address the public transit needs of residents and businesses in the Baltimore region; 7) Provide input and engage in advocacy for the Baltimore region public transit systems maintained by MTA; and, 8) Accept public comments, keep meeting minutes and records of all Commission activities, and report findings and recommendations to MTA, the Governor and the General Assembly on or before December 1st of each year.

The commission is composed of sixteen members. Eight members were selected by the Governor and seven by County Executive and Mayor. The background of the BRTC is due to the Baltimore region being the only large metropolitan area in the nation with a transit system operated by a state agency without board or commission oversight. Local stakeholders have lacked influence on how our regional transit network is planned, built, operated and funded. There were repeated efforts to create a transit authority in the region that did not pass in the state legislature intended to address this issue.

The BRTB will have it's first meeting on February 2 in the BMC offices at 10 am. Their immediate attention will be to: Elect a chairman to focus the group and run the meetings. Immersing themselves into the task of understanding the issues facing transit in the region, which include: the largest provider in the region, the MTA and it's various modes, systems, issues and challenges; and understanding how funding for the region's largest provider works and is being impacted by reductions in funding to support these systems. The BRTC will also organize themselves and develop bylaws as well as hear from stakeholders and the public.

The agenda for the first year covers the following topics: organize themselves, understand transit in the region, examine the resources available to the MTA and LOTS, examine performance - both successes and challenges - of the MTA and LOTS, examine key plans and programs, begin to identify and examine critical issues facing transit in the region, and advocate for improvements to transit system in the region.

[PowerPoint: Baltimore Regional Transit Commission]

11. DISCUSSION: REVISED CTP BUDGET

Ms. Heather Murphy provided a high-level overview of the final Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) that was submitted to the General Assembly on January 17th. There were many ups and downs from what had been previously funded and what is in the program now. The document includes a 6-year \$20.2 Billion program. Key items include the commitment to

\$450 Million to the Frederick Douglass Tunnel where AMTRAK received a federal grant. MDOT is sharing the match due to the MARC trains use of the tunnel. The Red Line planning effort is moving fast and receives \$98 Million. There is funding for a new light rail fleet that is at the end of its useful life. MDOT MTA is looking to replace the entire fleet. Cost over-runs on the Howard Street Tunnel took some additional funding. MDOT did not remove any planning and engineering (P&E) money from projects, in order to keep those projects on schedule should federal funds become available. Projects already under construction continue to be funded in this CTP. MDOT is unhappy about some reductions to the State of Good Repair; however, the cuts do not impact safety.

The \$150 Million restored to the transportation budget will go to:

- \$52 million to fully restore Highway User Revenue funding for one year
- \$26 million to fully restore Locally Operated Transit System operating grants for one year
- \$28 million in MTA commuter bus funding to maintain service on the highest ridership routes. The agency has yet to determine which routes will be impacted.
- \$15 million for MTA State of Good Repair needs to meet the required funding levels under the Transit Safety and Investment Act
- \$8 million in MARC Brunswick Line funding to maintain service frequencies to West Virginia and to test new midday service

Members appreciated the continued funding to the planning and engineering phases of projects as well as the infusion to the LOTS. The members commented on the hard work to put the program together.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

It was announced that Mr. Bruce Gartner would be leaving Howard County to assume the position of Executive Director of the Maryland Transportation Authority. Members offered their support and hoped that they would continue to collaborate.

Mr. Alex Rawls was acknowledged for serving for five years on the ICG as the BRTB voting representative. This is a critical role and Mr. Rawls was extended the BRTB's appreciation for serving in that position.

The meeting ended at 10:42 am.

Members

Jasmine Champion, Federal Highway Administration, Maryland Division
Steve Cohoon, Queen Anne's County Department of Public Works
Bruce Gartner, Howard County Office of Transportation
Elizabeth Gordon, MDOT MTA
Chris Jakubiak, Annapolis Planning & Zoning
Corren Johnson, Baltimore City Department of Transportation
Mary Lane, Carroll County Department of Planning

Heather Murphy, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Alex Rawls, Harford County, Department of Planning
Jason Quan, RTA of Central Maryland
Catherine Salarano, Maryland Department of the Environment
Sam Snead, Anne Arundel Office of Transportation
D'Andrea Walker, Baltimore County Department of Public Works & Transportation

Staff and Guests

Regina Aris, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Melissa Badeker, McCormick Taylor
Charles Baber, BMC
Darren Bean, MDOT SHA
Monica Haines Benkhedda, BMC
Erin Bolton, BMC
Cindy Burch, BMC
Tyson Byrne, MDOT
David Cookson, Howard County OOT
Rebecca Deibel, BMC
Louisa Glazunova, BMC
Monica Haines Benkhedda, BMC
Don Halligan, BMC
Dan Janousek, MDOT
Zach Kaufman, BMC
Mike Kelly, BMC
Shawn Kimberly, BMC
Keith Kucharek, BMC
Jill Lemke, Maryland Department of Planning
Sheila Mahoney, BMC
Anna Marshall, BMC
Brandon Murray, guest
David Plent, guest
Deborah Price, Baltimore County DPW&T
Ashley Roach, BMC
Amanda Roberts, BMC
Eric Norton, Central Maryland Transportation Alliance
Tony Russell, Baltimore County DPW&T
Jake Schutt, BMC
Brittany Sink, guest
Jacob Took, BMC
Daniel Zawodny, Baltimore Banner

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board