

BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD

May 28, 2024
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
9:02 to 9:58 A.M.

MINUTES

The 364th meeting was called to order at 9:02 A.M. by the Chair, Mr. Tony Russell.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A request for a motion to approve the minutes of the April BRTB meeting was made by Mr. Russell. A motion was made by Mr. Steve Cohoon to approve the minutes and seconded by Mr. Christopher Jakubiak. 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 highlights of community engagement efforts:

The Bikeable Baltimore Region Project Launched It is intended to help us create a safe and comfortable bike network connecting communities to transit, schools, work, parks and more. Public meetings are scheduled from June 3 to June 27; online comments open until July 26. More feedback opportunities in the fall. Visit <http://publicinput.com/bikebaltoregion>.

- The 2025-2028 TIP launched with the Air Quality Report. The BRTB is asking for feedback on a \$4.52 billion investment in 162 projects, including bike, transit, and highway improvements. Virtual meetings will be held on June 10 at noon and again at 6:30pm. Get involved at publicinput.com/BRTB-TIP.
- Phase 2 of the PRG Stoney Run Trail opened for public comment. Folks are asked to share thoughts on four trail options by June 5. Visit publicinput.com/PRG.

- Thanks to all of the participants and sponsors for this years Bike to Work Week celebration. There were 20 events and 40 different locations this year. To join the mailing list for this and other bike events go to biketoworkmd.com.
- The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conducted a review and public comment period for the federal certification. For this project, we were able to reach over 45,000 people through email and social media impressions. We met our goals of reaching over 650 people and nearly doubled the number of participants (40) over the last certification. A report is expected in July. Results will be shared online. Learn more at publicinput.com/BRTBcertification.

[Handout: Public Involvement Report for May]

4. REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Mr. Dan Janousek reported the following from the May Technical Committee meeting:

- The Technical Committee reviewed and recommended one action item for the BRTB. Staff introduced Resolution #24-23. MDOT MTA requested to add one new project; the Penn-Camden Connector. The project was described and then approved to move forward to the BRTB by the Tech Committee.
- A Nominating Committee was formed at the request of the chair. Carroll County and Harford County was tasked to develop a slate of Officers for FY 2025. The slate will be presented in June with elections in July.
- Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda discussed the federal certification review, Bike 2 Work Week, the upcoming Bikeable Baltimore Region project and the 2025 TIP and Air Quality Conformity.
- There was a discussion about the Transportation Planning Institute that AMPO is standing up. Representatives on the BRTB and the Tech Committee, as well as BMC staff, will be able to participate in on-demand classes once the platform is launched in a few months. There is a plan to periodically add new content to the platform to keep current. Staff also distributed class lists offered by the National Highway Institute and the National Transit Institute. Both have a mix of in person, virtual instructor led, and on demand classes. There is a description of the content and if the class is offered free.
- A Closed Session followed the business meeting to discuss three upcoming RFPs. These included 1) a PRG segment, one extending to Cherry Hill, 2) Safety Messaging & Outreach Campaign associated with Signal Woman, and 3) LRTP Scenario Planning, to prepare for uncertainty in the context of multiple possible futures.

5. REPORT FROM THE INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION GROUP

Ms. Anna Marshall reported the following from the May 15 ICG meeting:

- The modeling results of the regional emissions analysis were approved. The results show that the region is measuring below the approved emission budgets for both NOX and VOC emissions for all 5 horizon years, up to 2050. This is excellent news for our region to demonstrate attainment of the national ozone standard. Ms. Marshall noted that the air quality conformity results and draft documents are available for public review along with the TIP at Publicinput.com/BRTB-TIP through June 17th.
- ICG members reviewed a total of 5 TIP amendments. 2 of them, The Penn-Camden Connector, and the Francis Scott Key Bridge Study, were presented as resolutions at this meeting. The other three will be presented in June. ICG approved all of the amendments to be exempt from air quality conformity analysis.
- The next time ICG will be meeting is July 2nd in person, at the joint meeting with the technical committee.

6. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION #24-23

Mr. Keith Kucharek introduced Resolution #24-23. MDOT MTA requested to add one new project to the FY 2024-2027 TIP; the Penn-Camden Connector. This project was presented to the Interagency Consultation Group on May 15, 2024 and has been determined exempt according to the conformity rule. Ms. Jamie Richardson from MDOT MTA presented the details of the project.

Ms. Richardson indicated that the Penn-Camden Connector project received a Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant. Along with the state match, \$11.0 million is included for engineering in 2025. Additional grants will be sought after for additional funding to complete the project. The total project cost will be \$232.9 million. The \$11.0 million is expected to be obligated in FY 2025.

Constructing the Penn-Camden Connector will provide a connecting track between the Northeast Corridor that the Penn Line operates on and the MARC Camden Line. The connection will utilize existing right-of-way north of BWI Airport. Penn Line Trains would be able to access storage and maintenance at the Riverside Yard and MARC would be able to more efficiently bring its locomotives to Riverside and reduce the need for storage at Amtrak's Penn Station.

The CRISI grant was awarded in the fall of 2023 with a project kickoff in spring of 2024. Thirty percent design is expected to be complete in the fall of 2025.

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

[PowerPoint: TIP Amendment for the Penn-Camden Connector]

7. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION #24-24

Mr. Kucharek introduced Resolution #24-24. MDOT MdTA requested to add one new project to the FY 2024-2027 TIP; the Francis Scott Key Bridge Reconstruction project. This amendment is only seeking planning funds. Additional funding will be requested for the FY 2025-2028 TIP. This project was presented to the Interagency Consultation Group on May 15, 2024 and has been determined exempt according to the conformity rule. Mr. Carl Chamberlin from MdTA presented the details of the project.

The original 1.7 mile bridge was completed in March of 1977. In March of 2024, a cargo ship struck the bridge causing a catastrophic collapse. There are four main elements to the reconstruction of the bridge. Clearing the Ft. McHenry Channel to reopen marine vessel traffic to the Port of Baltimore, removing unstable debris from the river, removing remaining debris to prepare for bridge reconstruction and rebuilding the bridge. This amendment focuses on the final element, the reconstruction.

The goal of the project is to restore functionality, revitalize the surrounding areas, stimulate economic activity and attract investment to the communities impacted by the collapse. The new bridge will be constructed at a higher elevation to allow taller ships to pass. The new bridge will be constructed on roughly the same alignment and carry the same number of lanes, including shoulders. And finally, the new structure will include larger pier protection in the water.

The current timeline began in April with regular agency coordination meetings. In May of 2024, the Federal Channel was restored. US Coast Guard Clearance Determination is expected in June 2024 with NEPA approval expected in July 2024. Between September and December of 2024 all permits and authorizations are expected to be obtained with construction tentatively set to begin in January 2025. Mr. Chamberlin noted that this is a very fluid timeline and things could change.

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

[PowerPoint: TIP Amendment for the Francis Scott Key Bridge for Planning]

8. REPORT FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Mr. Snead reported for the Nominating Committee on the slate of officers offered for FY 2025. The Committee suggested a second, one-year term for the chair as Baltimore County and for the vice chair as Howard County. The vote will occur at the June meeting.

9. PRESENTATION: MARYLAND'S CLIMATE POLLUTION REDUCTION PLAN

Mr. Mark Stewart from the Maryland Department of the Environment presented on Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan that was released in December 2023. Maryland's goal is to

reduce statewide GHG emissions 60% by 2031 (from 2006 levels), and to set the State on a path to achieve net-zero emissions by 2045. There are 42 policies that, if fully implemented, will achieve Maryland's goals. Efficient electrification and reducing coal power plants has helped reduce two-thirds of statewide emissions. The grid will be able to handle efficient electrification of buildings and vehicles. There are federal tax credits that Marylanders can take advantage of to save money and upgrade to energy efficient appliances.

Related to transportation, legislation was approved regarding Advanced Clean Cars II and Advanced Clean Trucks to guide the transition to zero-emission electric cars and trucks. MDOT's efforts to develop transit projects and reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) will further reduce emissions. To support the transition to EVs, Maryland's EV Charging Network is poised for additional growth.

[PowerPoint: MDE Climate Plan]

8. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business. The meeting ended at 9:58 am.

Members

Geoff Anderson, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Jasmine Champion, Federal Highway Administration, Maryland Division
Steve Cohoon, Queen Anne's County Department of Public Works
David Cookson (for Trey Dickerson), Howard County Office of Transportation
Elizabeth Gordon, MDOT Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA)
Christopher Jakubiak, Annapolis Department of Planning
Corren Johnson, Baltimore City Department of Transportation
Mary Lane, Carroll County Department of Planning
Alex Rawls, Harford County, Department of Planning
Anthony Russell, Baltimore County Department of Public Works & Transportation
Catherine Salarano, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)
Sam Snead, Anne Arundel County Office of Transportation
Bihui Xu, Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)

Staff and Guests

Regina Aris, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Cindy Burch, BMC
Carl Chamberlin, Maryland Transportation Authority
Rebecca Deibel, BMC
Monica Haines Benkhedda, BMC
Dan Janousek, MDOT
Zach Kaufman, BMC

Mike Kelly, BMC
Keith Kucharek, BMC
Todd Lang, BMC
Jill Lemke, MDP
Anna Marshall, BMC
Charlene Mingus, BMC
Eric Norton, Central Maryland Transportation Alliance
Jamie Richardson, MDOT MTA
Andrea Sherman, HDR
Mark Stewart, MDE
Marium Sultan, BMC
Bryan Weinstein, guest

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board