

BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD

January 14, 2025
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
9:10 to 11:03 A.M.

MINUTES

The 371st meeting was called to order at 9:00 A.M. by the Chair, Mr. Tony Russell.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A request for a motion to approve the minutes of the December BRTB meeting was made by the Chair, Mr. Russell. A motion was made by Mr. Sam Snead to approve the minutes and seconded by Mr. Alex Rawls. The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

- Mr. Michael Scepaniak, representing Baltimoreans for People-Oriented Places (BaltPOP), offered comments on Resolution #25-19 regarding the updated highway safety performance targets, specifically non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries. While the resolution states both the BRTB's and MDOT's long-term commitment is to achieve zero deaths on our roadways, given the upward trends of deaths, he feels the commitment sounds like the targets are "a hollow hearts and prayers statement", absent a more substantive response. He cited the annual goal-setting process as ineffective in reversing the rising trend of deaths and injuries and more of a "goalpost moving exercise."

Given the numbers and lack of progress, Mr. Scepaniak called for a commissioned analysis to determine the necessary measures to achieve meaningful progress toward zero fatalities.

He also suggested significantly expanding MDOT's revamped Complete Streets policy and the successful quick build initiatives. He noted that these are commendable steps, but to move the needle, those measures, and others, need to be amplified quickly, and by a hundredfold.

Lastly, Mr. Scepaniak suggested MDOT and other transportation agencies in the region adopt the [crash analysis studio model](#) promoted by Strong Towns. A recent report identified several

key factors contributing to traffic incidents and highlights the lack of institutional mechanisms for making the necessary changes that could save lives.

- Ms. Carolyn Carey inquired about Resolution #25-21, regarding the RAISE Project at Reisterstown Plaza and its connection to the similar [Mondawmin Transit Hub Project](#) in West Baltimore. She cited access issues for people with disabilities and others due to a lack of curb cuts and safe pathways for those who walk or roll. She then asked about the timeline for public hearings on these projects, indicating her interest in learning more about the process. The committee informed her that a presentation on the resolution later in the meeting would address her concerns.

3. REPORT ON PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda shared highlights of public engagement in December.

- The “What If” Project closed December 15 with very strong participation. The What If project page had 2,260 people visit, with 659 people participating. This is a phenomenal 29% participation rate. Over 1,135 comments were submitted and 382 people subscribed to the mailing list. In order to reach people, staff sent out over 10,500 emails, in addition to social media posts and advertising. Staff were pleased we were able to get good representation across the geographic boundaries of the region. Details about the survey can be found at publicinput.com/whatif
- Phase 3 of PRG: Stoney Run Trail wrapped up on December 20, 2024. Staff hosted a community meeting with a dozen people on December 11 at the Severn Library. Over 1,900 people viewed the project page, 74 participated, 78 comments were generated, and 27 people signed up for the mailing list. Staff sent out nearly 2,000 emails, as well as social media advertising to get the word out. Feedback on the chosen trail location was overall very positive with 84% of people happy with the trail location. Learn more at publicinput.com/prg.
- Phase 2 of the Bikeable Baltimore Region (BBR) continued through January 10, 2025. Over 110 people participated in either the community meeting at Baltimore Unity Hall on December 10 or at the virtual meeting that was held on December 12. Over 6,685 people visited the project website and 439 people participated and shared 172 comments as well as answered survey questions. Over 90 people joined the mailing list. To promote this project, staff presented 11 times and conducted over 75 handlebar interviews and popup outreach events. Learn more at publicinput.com/BikeBaltoRegion.
- Staff have also been busy connecting with people in the community at a number of meetings which she highlighted. Staff are also attending area board and commission meetings, as well as connecting with professional organizations to ensure we are keeping each other informed and identify ways to collaborate. Staff are available to attend meetings and can contact Ms. Haines Benkhedda to share upcoming event dates.

[PowerPoint: Public Involvement Report for January 2025.]

4. REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

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

- Per the BRTB Bylaws, with the closure of Baltimore County schools system wide on January 7th, the Technical Committee meeting was cancelled.
- However, there was an interest in considering the Action Items to come to the BRTB the following week. Therefore, BMC staff sent the presentations and resolutions for the three Action Items to members for consideration related to moving them to the BRTB for a vote. Via email, all members submitted affirmative votes in support of these Action Items.
- The three Informational Items will be moved to the February agenda.

5. REPORT FROM THE INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION GROUP

Ms. Anna Marshall reported on the January meeting of the ICG:

- ICG met on Wednesday, January 8, for the first meeting since July to kick off the next round of transportation conformity.
- The Baltimore region was bumped up to a serious non-attainment area for the 2015 ozone NAAQS on August 1, 2024, because the region didn't meet the ozone standard by the attainment date.
- For some context, the BRTB is responsible for demonstrating conformity with the mobile emission budgets in the State Implementation Plan, which were demonstrated last year as part of the 2025-2028 TIP. There are other sources of ozone pollution besides mobile emissions, which contribute to the region not attaining the standard.
- Also, in December, EPA released the MOVES 5 model to be used for SIPs and transportation conformity, with a grace period of two years.
- During the meeting, ICG discussed the draft methodology and assumptions letter, which lays out the methods and models to be used for conformity. The final draft will be discussed at the next ICG meeting in February.
- BMC staff presented information about the two TIP amendments you will be hearing about today, and ICG determined both amendments to be exempt from air quality requirements.

6. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION #25-19

Ms. Cindy Burch, BMC, shared the regional highway 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 #25-19. In 2023, traffic crash-related fatalities and non-motorist fatalities and serious injuries increased in the Baltimore region while the state saw increases in each area. A notable increase was the number of non-motorist fatalities, from 63 in 2022 to 88 in 2023. The MDOT SHA submitted state safety performance targets in August 2024 and the BRTB must set regional targets within 180 days of that report. 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 2021-2025 average and goal for 2030, then she provided a snapshot of fatalities in

the region for 2024 year-to-date. Although not officially finalized, those figures are significantly lower than 2023 and may be under 600 fatalities statewide for the first time in many years.

Ms. Burch also shared some of the projects underway at BMC that will affect safety, notably the crash data dashboards available to support local safety planning efforts and the hyper-local safety outreach campaign that will begin in the coming months. She also shared the 2024 Safe Streets and Roads For All awardees in the region.

Mr. Snead asked about the feasibility of ranking intersections using crash data to identify the most high-risk locations for improvement. Ms. Burch agreed with the idea and shared that several jurisdictions have developed High Injury Networks and there has been some discussion about possibly developing one for the entire region.

Mr. Russell asked about using the crash reconstruction reports written after investigation of fatal crashes. Ms. Burch noted that those reports are not standardized or maintained electronically, but could be available on a case-by-case basis for regional research purposes.

Ms. Bihui Xu recommended analyzing the crash data further into locations and causes. The increases in non-motorist fatalities and serious injuries is concerning as the population becomes more compact and people are encouraged to walk and bike more. She recommended an in-depth analysis in the region and Ms. Burch agreed.

Mr. Snead recommended approval of the resolution, and Mr. Trey Dickerson seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to recommend approval of the updated highway safety performance targets.

[PowerPoint: Safety Performance Target Setting]

6. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION #25-20

Mr. Todd Lang presented, on behalf of MDOT SHA, Resolution #25-20 to add the Areawide Carbon Reduction Program into the FY 2025-2028 TIP. Funding in the TIP will include Planning, Engineering, Right-of-Way and Construction.

The Carbon Reduction Program includes projects intended to reduce transportation emissions and includes projects such as public transportation facilities, congestion management technology, energy efficient traffic control devices/street lighting, efforts to reduce environmental and community impacts of freight movement.

MDOT SHA is requesting \$1.0 million for Planning, \$4.2 million for Engineering, \$1.1 million for Right-of-Way acquisitions, and \$15.7 million for construction. This project was presented to the ICG and is considered Exempt according to the conformity rule.

Mr. Snead recommended approval of the resolution, and Mr. Rawls seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve Resolution #25-20.

[PowerPoint: 2025-2028 TIP Amendment: SHA Project]

7. CONSIDERATION of RESOLUTION #25-21

Ms. Elizabeth Gordon provided a presentation on MDOT MTA's request to add the Reisterstown Plaza Metro Station – Multimodal Access project to the FY 2025-2028 TIP.

Ms. Gordon noted that when MDOT MTA obligates a grant, they need to have the funds in the year of obligation which is what has necessitated this amendment.

MTA received a RAISE award in 2024 to complete preliminary engineering and environmental studies for the Reisterstown Road Plaza Metro Station Transit Oriented Development (TOD). The study includes Complete Streets considerations and accessibility improvements between the station, proposed TOD, and existing facilities.

This project will compliment ongoing TOD efforts by proposing infrastructure improvements at the station and proposed development. In FY 2025, \$4.6 million in RAISE funds will be obligated. Since the project is located in a disadvantaged community, no state matching funds are required.

Mr. Dickerson recommended approval of the resolution, and Mr. Snead seconded the motion.

Several questions and comments were asked following Ms. Gordon's presentation. Ms. Bihui Xu (MDP) asked if the RAISE funds included Engineering or just Planning. Ms. Gordon indicated the funds were for Planning only.

During the opportunity for guests to comment on the action item, Ms. Carolyn Carey (citizen group) asked when public meetings would occur and indicated that there were issues with the pop up meetings for Mondawmin and there is a need for additional community engagement. Ms. Carey also mentioned several issues with ADA accessibility around Mondawmin and Reisterstown Plaza. Ms. Gordon indicated that no public meetings were scheduled yet but are expected in the summer. Some communication with stakeholders and community associations has taken place but more is planned. Ms. Gordon also indicated that when public meetings or stakeholder meetings are scheduled, that would be a great opportunity to discuss ADA compliance.

The board voted unanimously to recommend approval of Resolution #25-21.

[PowerPoint: 2025-2028 TIP Amendment: Reisterstown Plaza Metro Station – Multimodal Access]

8. PRESENTATION: MARYLAND VISION ZERO COMMISSION UPDATES

Dr. Tim Kerns, Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration's Highway Safety Office (MHSO) shared information about recent crash data trends, the state's Vision Zero program, and outreach and educational efforts from the MHSO. He reiterated that the 2024 crash fatality figures should be below 600, commenting that while 600 is an unacceptable number, it is a decrease from recent years. He then shared information about the impaired driving, pedestrian and bicycle safety, speeding, infrastructure, and occupant

protection emphasis areas in the [Maryland Strategic Highway Safety Plan \(SHSP\)](#). With regards to impaired driving prevention, equitable engagement is a priority as well as providing resources to the community; one such project is a grant from the Governors Highway Safety Association for free Lyft credits during holiday seasons. He also shared that the MD Driving Under the Influence (DUI) Task Force is being re-constituted and will include the newly acquired State Judicial Outreach Liaison and Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor. He shared that the recently updated Maryland Complete Streets Policy will support infrastructure designs to improve non-motorist safety. He also noted recent legislation to expand the use of automated enforcement to reduce speeding and protect work zones. Lastly, Dr. Kerns explained how the Vision Zero Committee began meeting quarterly with access for the public, per legislation. All information about that committee, including links to the meetings, is available [online](#).

Ms. Xu asked if the MD SHSP includes local roadways and projects. Dr. Kerns shared that all jurisdictions are encouraged to develop local SHSPs because the state plan has to be more general to cover the state. She also noted the need for more education on safe driving practices beyond initial driver education and licensing tests. She suggested outreach from car dealerships or insurance companies. Dr. Kerns acknowledged those concerns and agreed that education and partnerships with dealerships could be effective in promoting safe driving habits. Ms. Xu asked about any coordination of enforcement between states, since so many out-of-state vehicles travel through Maryland.

[PowerPoint: Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration's Highway Safety Office]

9. PRESENTATION: UPDATE TO THE CENTRAL MARYLAND REGIONAL TRANSIT PLAN

Ms. Gordon presented information on the forthcoming update to the Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan (RTP). She reviewed the 2020 RTP vision, process, and public participation and noted that the 2025 plan will be coordinated through the Baltimore Regional Transportation Commission (BRTC). She presented the goals and objectives of the 2020 RTP and the progress on the RTP strategies since the previous plan. The 2025 RTP update will include review of the goals and objectives by the BRTC and revised analysis of the priority corridors based on transit demand, transit market, and service allocation data. Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) is currently updating the progress on RTP strategies and the transit market analysis and will assess the RTP corridors during spring 2025. Subsequent work will include determining modes and phasing of service improvements during the summer and release of the draft and final plan in fall 2025.

[PowerPoint: Regional Transit Plan Update for the BRTB]

10. OTHER BUSINESS

MDOT Prioritization Bill – Mr. Geoff Anderson briefed members on a bill in the General Assembly titled: Transportation Investment Priorities Act. This bill will update the current Chapter 30 prioritization process. The five key points are: 1) Revises the criteria and measures

to make the scoring more objective and analytically based, 2) Connects the projects' scores/rankings more closely to the award of funding in the CTP, 3) Increases the transparency of the process, 4) Applies to new capacity projects between \$5 M and \$400 M, and 5) Requires MDOT to follow similar internal prioritization process for projects under \$5 M.

Also in the bill are changes to the Maryland Transportation Commission and adoption of certain asset management practices.

Significant changes include: 1) Puts capacity improvements on a biennial schedule, 2) Explicitly identifies the amount of funding available for each funding round, 3) Creates a new online portal for applications and a separate online portal for local priority letters, 4) Expands eligibility to include MPOs and Transit Agencies, 5 Adds transparency provisions through public applications and publication of draft list and explanation of any changes in final list, and 6) Eliminates subjective evaluation criteria.

Mr. Anderson also identified the six criterion and measures for evaluation: 1) safety, 2) accessibility and mobility, 3) climate change and the environment, 4) social equity, 5) economic competitiveness, and 6) sustainable land use/demand management. Project selection would be based on a 3-step process: 1) Project scoring based entirely on data and objective analysis. Project scores are reported based on benefit-per-dollar cost, 2) Publication of rankings and projects that receive funding for public review and input during CTP tour, and 3) MDOT Secretary makes changes to funded projects list (if so desired) based on public support/input, geographic equity, or other factors and presents this final list to the MD Transportation Commission at a public meeting (explaining any project substitutions) for review.

Regarding the MD Transportation Commission, it would be Restructured and reconstituted to meet at least quarterly and to include eight members appointed by the Governor, two members appointed by the Speaker of the House, two members appointed by the President of the Senate, and Secretary of Transportation serving as the Commission's Chair. The bill identifies the powers and duties of the Commission to include reviewing and making recommendations on—MDOT's quarterly operating and capital budget updates; MDOT's prioritization process; and The Maryland Transportation Plan.

The bill proposes asset management actions for both MDOT MTA and MDOT SHA. There are existing requirements at FHWA and FTA and this would codify the practice at the state level.

Mr. Snead asked if scoring would be impacted if a significant local match was committed. Mr. Anderson responded that the scores would be divided by the cost to the state, therefore the project would score better. Mr. Russell asked if projects had previously received funding and then was deferred, would they need to be re-scored. Yes, however if the previous information is still available that will remove some of the burden.

[PowerPoint: Transportation Investment Priorities Act]

There was no other business. The meeting ended at 11:03 A.M.

Members

Geoff Anderson, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Jasmine Champion, Federal Highway Administration, Maryland Division
Trey Dickerson, Howard County Office of Transportation
Elizabeth Gordon, MDOT Maryland Transit Administration
Mary Lane, Carroll County Department of Planning
Veronica McBeth, Baltimore City Department of Transportation
Alex Rawls, Harford County, Department of Planning
Tony Russell, Baltimore County Department of Public Works & Transportation
Catherine Salarano, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)
Dam Sommerville, Federal Transit Administration Region III
Sam Snead, Anne Arundel County Office of Transportation
Bihui Xu, Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)

Staff and Guests

Regina Aris, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Terry Brady, BMC
Timothy Briggs, BMC
Cindy Burch, BMC
Carolyn Carey, Guest
Angie Daniel, Baltimore County DPW&T
Rebecca Deibel, BMC
Albert Guiney Engel, MDOT MTA
Blake Fisher, BMC
Ndemazea Fonkem - BMC
Monica Haines Benkhedda, BMC
Andrea Jackson, BMC
Dan Janousek, MDOT
Zach Kaufman, BMC
Timothy Kearns, MVA MHSO
Keith Kucharek, BMC
Anna Marshall, BMC
Md. Mokhlesur Rahman, BMC
Jordan Mueller, MDOT
Ashley Roach, BMC
Michael Scepaniak, Baltimore POP
Sean Winkler, MDOT
Daniel Zawodny, Baltimore Banner

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board