
The Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Baltimore Region

FREIGHT MOVEMENT TASK FORCE

March 25, 2021
10:01 to 11:35 A.M.
Online

SUMMARY

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Tom Madrecki, chair of the Freight Movement Task Force, kicked off the meeting with a round of introductions.

2. MARYLAND STATE FREIGHT PLAN

Ms. Gladys Hurwitz, MDOT, provided an update on the MD State Freight Plan including stakeholder groups and the advisory committee. Her presentation included an interactive poll to provide input on vision, goals and priorities. The purpose of the plan is to examine existing and projected conditions, and identify policy positions, strategies, and freight projects to improve freight movement efficiency and safety.

The State Freight Plan update will focus on:

- Federal freight planning requirements of MAP-21, FAST Act, or beyond
- Comprehensive overview of freight movement in Maryland
- Freight supply chain or technology influences
- Identifying policy needs and strategies
- Identifying freight project priorities and related investment plans for a five-year forecast period
- Collaborative effort amongst freight stakeholders
- Coordination with existing/ongoing plans and resources

The update process began in the fall of 2020 and is expected to be completed by April 2022 with federal approval in October 2022. As part of this process MDOT conducted a peer assessment of other state and MPO freight initiatives and looked at best practices. It showed that there is no “one size fits all” and common themes include plan organization, use of data, and inclusion of external planning partners.

MDOT is also conducting extensive stakeholder outreach which includes internal quarterly meetings of the MDOT business units, MPO roundtable meetings, FHWA and others.

The goal of the State Freight Advisory Committee (SFAC) is to represent the freight community at large and advise the State on freight-related priorities, policies, issues, projects, and funding needs in order to advance freight Goals and Objectives in Maryland. A list of the State Freight Advisory Committee members is included in the presentation. The first meeting of the SFAC was held in March 2021 and the next one is scheduled for September 2021.

Ms. Hurwitz shared results from the online, interactive polling which showed that economy, efficiency of movement, and safety are some of the factors considered most important by participants. The polling results and what is missing from the 2017 Freight Plan are available on the FMTF committee page online.

[PowerPoint: Maryland Freight Plan Update]

3. MARYLAND STATE RAIL PLAN

Mr. Harry Romano, MDOT, OFM, outlined the needs for an update to the rail plan. These include:

- Federal requirement per the 2008 Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA), affirmed in federal surface transportation bills, 4-year update per the FAST Act
- Positions the state and rail stakeholders for federal funding
- Outlines public and private investments and policies needed to ensure the efficient, safe, and sustainable movement of freight and passenger by rail

Mr. Romano detailed the state's freight and passenger rail networks and the amount of traffic on each. The plan update began on October 2020 and is expected to be completed by September 2021. The process takes the 2015 rail plan goals and updates them by taking into account the 2019 MTP plan goals and stakeholder input. The State Rail Plan Advisory Committee has 16 members – including Class I, short line, and passenger railroads, state agencies (MDOT MTA, MDOT SHA, MDOT MPA, MDP, Commerce), and MPO's. The first meeting was held in December 2020 and the next one is scheduled for May 19, 2021.

The following are some of the observations from an online public survey:

Passenger

- When asked to rank priorities for Amtrak, more respondents preferred new service off Northeast Corridor
- Proposed extensions of MARC service: Eastern Shore, Waldorf area; Newark DE; Westminster
- Respondents wanted more frequent MARC service, particularly on Brunswick Line

- An integrated passenger fare system was identified as a popular strategy to improve customer experience

Freight

- Concern with blocked highway-rail grade crossings in rural areas and of hazardous materials
- Rail access, including access to the Port, TradePoint Atlantic, and direct access to industrial sites
- Add capacity to rail lines for freight and passenger rail

The three most valued freight options for the Rail Plan Update were:

- Enhanced rail access to the Port of Baltimore
- New intermodal facilities (e.g., truck to rail)
- Rail-served industrial and commercial sites

For more information on the rail plan, please refer to the FMTF page online.

[PowerPoint: Maryland State Rail Plan – Project Update]

4. OVERNIGHT TRUCK PARKING

Ms. Nicole Katsikides, Texas Transportation Institute, working for MDOT SHA, in an abbreviated presentation due to time restrictions, pointed to a new truck parking application that is available for use by MPOs and others to identify where trucks are currently parking overnight and at other times of the day – and to help identify potential parking solutions. The MDOT SHA Truck Parking Analysis Tool is an ArcGIS Online (AGOL) web application which showcases the geospatial data products that provide a complex overview of freight parking throughout Maryland. Several other resources are also available – such as the Statewide Truck Parking Study, Truck Parking data application, emergency truck parking options – for operational/law enforcement awareness, and property availability information.

Ms. Larysa Salamanca, asked if this presentation could be given to the Baltimore Development Corporation. Other members asked if private parcels can contribute to the reduction in parking shortages. That is certainly an option that will be considered.

[PowerPoint: A Resource for Truck Parking Solutions]

Mr. Louis Champion, Maryland Motor Truck Association, provided context to the above presentation by highlighting the challenges faced by truck drivers related to parking. He pointed to a 2006 BMC truck parking partnership study that captures this challenge and is true to this day:

The Baltimore metropolitan region, and specifically the Northeast Corridor, has seen unparalleled growth in truck traffic over the past 20 years—and truck traffic is expected to keep

growing. In the next 25 years, the BMC travel model forecasts a more than 30 percent increase in truck vehicle trips. This increase in commercial traffic and the restrictions on driver operation time create a growing demand for truck parking facilities throughout the country, and particularly in densely populated areas such as the Baltimore region.

He pointed to several actions taken by Baltimore County that limits the ability of drivers to park in several areas of the county. Both of these presentations/topics had to be cut short due to time and will be on the next meeting agenda.

[PowerPoint: Truck Parking Challenges]

5. ROUNDTABLE

Due to the time, the Roundtable discussion was deferred to the June 24, 2021 meeting.

ATTENDANCE:

Members and Guests:

Kwame Arhin, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), MD Division
Summer Bowman, U.S. DOT FMCSA
Louis Campion, Maryland Motor Truck Association
Larry Collins, Baltimore Development Corporation
Jared Childress
Meredith Hill, MDOT State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA)
Gladys Hurwitz, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Rick Johnson, Baltimore County Department of Economic and Workforce Development
Jocelyn Jones, FHWA
Nicole Katsikides, Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)
Kyle Leggs, Baltimore City DOT
Valorie LaCour, Baltimore City Department of Transportation
Jill Lemke, MDOT Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA)
Troy Mix, University of Delaware
Tom Madrecki, Consumer Brands Association
L'Kiesha Markley, MDOT State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA)
Roxane Mukai, MDOT Maryland Transportation Authority (MDOT MDTA)
Donovan Murray, MPA
Armand Patella, Preferred Service, LLC
Harry Romano, MDOT
John Rotz, MDOT SHA
Larysa Salamacha, Baltimore Development Corporation
Bradley Smith, MDOT MPA
Kipp Snow, CCBC
Russell Walto, MDOT MDTA
Sam Sherman, Delaware DOT

BMC Staff:

Bala Akundi, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)

Regina Aris, BMC

Blake Fisher, BMC

Keith Kucharek, BMC