

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

December 5, 2023
9:30 to 10:28 A.M.

MINUTES

1. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 2023 MINUTES

Mr. Dan Janousek asked for approval of the minutes from the November meeting of the Technical Committee. Mr. Kwaku Duah moved to approve the minutes with Mr. Brian Ulrich seconding the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION ON RESOLUTION #24-8

Mr. Keith Kucharek presented Resolution #24-8. The City of Annapolis has requested to amend the FY 2024-2027 TIP to add one new project. The Annapolis Electric Ferry Pilot Program project. This project was presented to the Interagency Consultation Group and determined to be exempt according to the conformity rule. Mr. Duah presented the Annapolis Electric Ferry Pilot Program project.

Mr. Duah noted that this project must be included in the FY 2024-2027 TIP in order to obtain NEPA approval. Mr. Duah gave a brief overview of the proposed Annapolis Ferry Service. This program will consist of a fixed-route ferry service for passengers and bicycles. The proposed route is approximately one half mile long and connects Eastport with downtown Annapolis. The City of Annapolis estimates 20,500 annual users.

Funding for this project totals \$3.5 million (\$2.975 million federal and \$525,000 local) and is utilizing Section 5307 Passenger Ferry Grant Discretionary Program funds. The \$3.5 million is further broken down to \$1.8 million for purchase of Ferry Vessels, \$1.5 million for landing improvements and \$200,000 for charging station infrastructure.

An Environmental Impact assessment is currently underway. The City is developing three separate RFP's for the ferry vessels, landing improvements and charging stations. All components of this project are expected to be complete in FY 2024 with service beginning in FY 2025.

Mr. Janousek asked for a motion and a second regarding Resolution #24-8. Mr. Stuart Sirota offered the motion and Mr. Ulrich made the second. No members of the public had any comments. A vote was taken on Resolution #24-8, with unanimous support from the members.

[PowerPoint: Annapolis Electric Ferry Pilot Program]

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION ON RESOLUTION #24-9

Mr. Kucharek presented Resolution #24-9. MDOT MTA has requested to amend the FY 2024-2027 TIP to add one new project. The Baltimore Ferry Service Improvements project. This project was presented to the Interagency Consultation Group and determined to be exempt according to the conformity rule. Ms. Erika Falk presented the Baltimore Ferry Service Improvements project.

MDOT MTA was awarded funds to improve ADA access between existing ferry landing decks and to replace two existing light-duty ferry boats, which have reached the end of their useful life, with new hybrid-electric powered ferry boats. Ferry vessel specifications were developed in coordination with the US Coast Guard. ADA access will be improved by matching ferry landing heights with ferry decks and constructing landings that have unimpeded access for wheelchairs and persons with mobility devices. Five existing Ferry landings will be replaced.

Funding for this project totals \$9.376 million (\$8.061 million federal and \$1.315 million local) and is utilizing Section 5307 Passenger Ferry Grant Discretionary Program funds. The ADA improvements are expected to be complete in FY 2024 with the purchase of new ferries anticipated in FY 2025.

There was a request for a motion regarding Resolution #24-9. Mr. Duah made a motion to send Resolution #24-9 to the BRTB as presented and Mr. Sirota seconded the motion. Mr. Duah asked if the purchase date of the vessels was for the requested purchase or delivery. Ms. Falk indicated she would get back to the members with that answer. Subsequent to the meeting, Ms. Falk confirmed that the purchase of the vessels would take place in FY 2025 with delivery in FY 2026. A vote was taken on Resolution #24-9, with unanimous support from the members.

[PowerPoint: Baltimore Ferry Service Improvements]

4. PRESENTATION: PROCESS FOR MAKING CHANGES TO FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION BASED ON THE NEW ADJUSTED URBAN AREAS

Mr. Darren Bean provided an update on the status of the 2020 Census Urban Area Boundary Adjustment process. The need to do this is fourfold: 1) Align with existing planning boundaries, 2) Address irregularities in Census Urban Areas, 3) Maintain consistency with highway functional classification system, and 4) Impacts funding for Federal-Aid Highway System.

There are five key FHWA Adjustment guidelines: 1) Boundaries should encompass the entire Census Urban Area, 2) Boundaries should encompass one contiguous area, 3) Boundaries should be simple without irregularities, 4) Boundaries should follow municipal boundaries or other physical features, and 5) Boundaries should include areas with urban characteristics (ex. commercial areas).

To conclude this process for MDOT SHA, they will submit the boundaries to FHWA for review by December 27, 2023 and then begin process to review functional classification of roadways.

[PowerPoint: 2020 Census Urban Area Boundary Adjustment]

5. UPWP UPDATES

- **Preparing for upcoming Highway Safety Performance Targets** – Ms. Cindy Burch provided an update on 2022 crash data and shared 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). In 2022, traffic crashes-related fatalities, serious injuries, and non-motorist fatalities and serious injuries decreased in the Baltimore region while the state saw increases in fatalities. This was an encouraging trend after the increase in fatalities during the pandemic in 2020. 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. The BRTB decided to utilize the state methodology for setting targets, which remained the same as last year - an exponential forecast using five-year rolling averages. Ms. Burch shared the anticipated targets for 2020-2024 average and goal for 2030 for members to review and digest. Those figures will be shared at the January meeting with a Resolution. She then provided a snapshot of fatalities in the region for 2023 year-to-date. Unfortunately, those figures are higher and partners are projecting more than 600 fatalities statewide which would be the highest in over 15 years. Several jurisdictions have more fatalities through November 2023 than in all of 2022.

[PowerPoint: Safety Performance Targets]

- **Maryland Travel Survey: NextGen Cars in the Baltimore Region** –this presentation was postponed.
- **FY 2025 UPWP Addendum Discussion** – Mr. Todd Lang 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.

From the prior month, members had ranked a list of proposed topics. Below are the results of that ranking process.

- Scoring methodology for bicycle/pedestrian/alternative mode projects
- Regional goals needs assessment
- Long-range transportation plan scenario analysis
- Streamlining local project delivery and tracking
- BMC staff support for local discretionary grants (FMIS/TrAMS)
- Traffic incident management conference
- Updating regional freight modeling
- Updating building permit database program/master network

In addition to the tasks above, members were able to write in other suggestions as follows:

- Patapsco Greenway final segment for 30% design – Patapsco LRT to Cherry Hill
- Identify viable CRP and PROTECT projects from local jurisdictions

- Develop CRP project technical scoring system with project benefits analysis
- Estimating GHG emissions reductions from smart growth (compact/mixed use land use patterns)
- Best practices on how MPOs can help address GHG reduction goals
- LRTP to transportation atlas – transforming data to graphically rich pieces that are digestible (session at AMPO)
- Fostering better relationships with schools, colleges, state agencies and media to increase outreach
- Evaluating potential benefits of increased bike/ped/transit connections to schools

Mr. Lang requested that members reach out to us and indicate interest. In January staff will bring back a first suggested focus area program for FY 2025 based on the rankings and suggested topics. There is still time to send in ideas to see if they can be incorporated. Meanwhile BMC is putting together an estimated budget based on available information.

[PowerPoint: FY 2025 UPWP Topics]

6. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Janousek shared information from the MDOT office managing state and federal grants. Of note there were several recent awards, including: 1) a Maritime Administration grant under the Port Infrastructure Development program for \$47 million awarded to establish a major offshore wind logistics and manufacturing hub at the TradePoint Atlantic site, and 2) a series of Federal Railroad Administration grant under the Intercity Passenger Rail program: \$4.7B toward the B&P Tunnel Replacement, \$2.1B for three major Amtrak bridge replacements (Bush River Bridge, Gunpowser River Bridge and Susquehanna River Bridge), \$108M for the Baltimore Penn Station, and \$21.6M for the NEC South End Renewal and Speed Improvement Planning Study. A number of other important awards were also named.

Next Mr. Janousek identified 13 grant opportunities with the application due dates. Several other grants in development were mentioned.

[PowerPoint: MDOT Grants Update]

ATTENDANCE

Members

Steve Cohoon – Queen Anne’s County Department of Public Works
David Cookson – Howard County Office of Transportation
Angelica Daniel – Baltimore County Department of Public Works & Transportation
Kwaku Duah – Annapolis Department of Transportation
Tina James – Maryland Department of Planning
Dan Janousek – Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Tavon Hawkins – MDOT State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA)
Clare Stewart – Carroll County Department of Planning

Patrick McMahon – MDOT Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA)
Sam Kahl – Harford County Department of Planning
Catherine Salarano – Maryland Department of the Environment
Stu Sirota – Baltimore City Department of Transportation
Brian Ulrich – Anne Arundel County Office of Transportation (OOT)

Staff and Guests

Regina Aris - Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Charles Baber - BMC
Darren Bean – MDOT SHA
Cindy Burch - BMC
Jasmine Champion – FHWA MD Division
Rebecca Deibel - BMC
Erica Falk – MDOT MTA
Don Halligan – BMC
Keith Kucharek - BMC
Todd Lang – BMC
Charlene Mingus – BMC