

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

March 5, 2024
9:32 to 10:41 A.M.

MINUTES

1. APPROVAL OF FEBRAURY 2024 MINUTES

Mr. Dan Janousek asked for approval of the minutes from the February meeting of the Technical Committee. Mr. David Cookson moved to approve the minutes with Mr. Steve Cohoon seconding the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION ON RESOLUTION #24-17

Mr. Keith Kucharek introduced Resolution #24-17, to amend the 2024-2027 TIP for the I-70: MD 32 to I-695 Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) project. Mr. Kucharek introduced Mr. Tavon Hawkins from the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) to present on the project.

Mr. Hawkins indicated that this is a revision to the original project that was formerly known as TSMO System 1 and included three corridors; I-70, US 40 and US 29. This amendment eliminates the US 40 and US 29 corridors and renames the projects to include only the remaining I-70 from MD 32 to I-695 project. The other two will be pursued separately by the SHA District Offices.

The revised scope will include geometric improvements and intelligent transportation system improvements along the I-70 corridor. These improvements will address safety and operations. The request will remove NHPP funding for construction and right-of-way and adds STBG funding for engineering. Due to the revised scope of work, the estimated total cost of the project is decreasing to \$9.226 million.

Mr. Cookson asked for clarification on where the \$36 million in construction funding is going? Mr. Ben Allen (SHA) indicated that construction funding is being deferred until design is complete which will take several years. Mr. Cookson also asked for the status of the breakout projects being done by the district. Mr. Allen said that those projects are not currently being pursued by the district. Additional actions (amendments) will be taken once they move forward. The scope of those projects is not known at this time.

Mr. Sam Kahl asked if that money was being repurposed to other projects? Mr. Allen indicated that is unknown at this point.

Mr. Janousek asked for a motion and a second. Mr. Kwaku Duah offered the motion and Mr. Stu Sirota made the second. The members unanimously approved the resolution that amends the I-70: MD 32 to I-695 Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) project.

[PowerPoint: 2024-2027 TIP Amendment Requested by MDOT SHA]

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION ON RESOLUTION #24-18

Mr. Kucharek introduced Resolution #24-18, to amend the 2024-2027 TIP to add the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) project. Mr. Kucharek introduced Mr. Benjamin Allen from the Maryland State Highway Administration to present on the project.

Mr. Allen noted that this project will create a network of affordable, reliable and equitable charging stations along Maryland's designated alternative fuel corridors. These charging stations will help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and put Maryland on the path to net zero emissions.

This amendment is requesting \$0.9 million in design funds and \$21.4 million in construction funds using NEVI funding. Other funds include STBG and \$4.3 million private contractor funds. Construction is anticipated to begin in the fall of 2024 and be complete in fall of 2030. This request represents the BRTB's portion of the statewide \$62.8 million program. Specific locations have not been identified but will as design progresses.

Mr. Cohoon asked how many charging stations this project will fund. Mr. Janousek indicated that originally 45 DC Fast charging stations are expected, but that could depend on the number of applications received and the cost for each charging station. The current estimate is about \$600,000 per charging station.

Mr. Janousek asked for a motion and a second. Mr. Sirota offered the motion and Ms. Angelica Daniel made the second. The members unanimously approved the resolution that introduces a new project for National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) funds with private sector match.

[PowerPoint: 2024-2027 TIP Amendment Requested by MDOT SHA]

4. PRESENTATION: ABOUT THE MTA ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY TOOL

Ms. Jennifer Martin, MDOT MTA, began by identifying all of the transit modes operated by the agency. The goal when creating this toolbox was that it could be adapted to other MDOT modes or to local jurisdictions. Then Ms. Martin shared the vision for a resilient program as: "Manage increased climate risk by evaluating MTA's climate vulnerability, increasing adaptive capacity, and implementing priority strategies through effective and equitable program, project, and purchasing decisions." Key factors include environmental health, economic growth and quality of life. Involving various staff in a worksop, seven areas of note were identified. Ms. Martin then explained how all parts of the agency could assess the areas they are responsible for to

explore solutions and identify next steps. The Toolbox has multiple portals to provide additional information and support.

The presentation next focused on a success story along with likely challenges. Additional [information is available](#) on MDOT MTA's website.

[PowerPoint: Transit Planning Support Tools to Prepare for a Changing Climate - MTA's Adaptation and Resiliency Toolbox]

5. TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE CONNECTIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Kucharek presented the BMC recommendations for Round 2 awards of the Transportation and Land Use Connections (TLC) program. The purpose of the TLC program is to assist local governments in the region with short-term assistance in planning and preliminary engineering for projects that will help to reduce traffic, make it easier to walk, bike or use transit. Four applications were received. One each from Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County, Carroll County and Queen Anne's County. There is a total of \$300,000 available for Round 2 projects.

Anne Arundel County submitted an application for a planning study in Brooklyn Park for the feasibility of new paths and sidewalks in the neighborhood. The request is consistent with priorities laid out in the Brooklyn Park Neighborhood Transportation Study. The County is asking for \$100,000 and has committed staff time and resources as their matching funds.

Carroll County submitted an application for a bicycle and pedestrian study in the Town of Finksburg. The study would provide a guiding document to help update other county and local plans such as the Finksburg Corridor Plan and the Carroll County Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan. The County is requesting \$80,000 for consultant services and has committed staff time and resources as their matching funds.

Queen Anne's County submitted an application for a feasibility study to extend the existing Cross County Connector Trail. The County also requested the study to look at possible trail spurs to connect to Main Street in Grasonville. This project would increase opportunities to utilize resources such as parks, libraries, restaurants and other employment centers. The County is requesting \$80,000 for consultant services and has committed staff time and resources as their matching funds.

BMC Staff reviewed the applications and recommend the following:

- Work with Anne Arundel County staff and consultant support teams to refine a scope of work and schedule for up to \$80,000 for the Brooklyn Park project.
- Work with Carroll County staff and consultant support teams to refine a scope of work and schedule for up to \$80,000 for the Finksburg project.
- Work with Queen Anne's County staff and consultant support teams to refine a scope of work and schedule for up to \$80,000 for the Cross County Connector project.
- Incorporate the Baltimore County project as part of the upcoming Microtransit project that will be managed by BMC.

The Technical Committee unanimously approved the staff recommendations to be presented to the BRTB at the March meeting.

[PowerPoint: Transportation and Land Use Grants - Round 2]

6. UPWP UPDATES

- **Preview of schedule for next LRTP and an introduction to the upcoming scenario planning task.** Mr. Zach Kaufman introduced a scenario planning exercise planned as part of the 2027 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) along with a draft LRTP schedule. The BRTB votes on an updated LRTP every 4 years. The current LRTP for the Baltimore region, *Resilience 2050*, lists the major roadway, transit, bike and pedestrian projects anticipated to use federal funds through the year 2050. The BRTB determines the best investment approach for the LRTP, ensuring that we're making progress towards regional transportation goals.

In the typical LRTP process, local needs and priorities and technical evaluation criteria are used to select the major projects. BMC's travel demand model is then used in combination with demographic projections to analyze how the selected projects might affect future travel in the region. BMC also conducts a variety of analyses, including air quality conformity, environmental justice analysis and identification of environmental mitigation measures.

This process includes just one scenario of demographic forecasts, projects and model projections. Many other forces could affect our transportation system in the future, including socio-demographic, technological, economic, environmental and political forces. Scenario planning can help us think about the potential outcomes of these forces and the associated impacts on our regional goals and on transportation equity. It can help us to expand our thinking about multiple possible futures to help the BRTB make more informed decisions.

Mr. Kaufman discussed the basic premise of scenario planning. The process can be normative, meaning that it considers variables that will help you to reach a specific target. Scenario planning can also be exploratory, with a focus on navigating uncertainty amid many different driving forces of change. These forces could be factors that the BRTB does not control such as the pace of technological innovation, environmental patterns and macroeconomic conditions. Scenario planning could also include policy choices such as land use, infrastructure investments and transportation funding mechanisms. Ultimately, scenario planning can be useful in identifying strategies or policy options that best hold up across the spectrum of possible future conditions.

There are many questions to consider before beginning a scenario planning exercise. First is considering what an organization is trying to achieve. Desired outcomes include education and awareness of uncertainty, identification of a preferred combination of strategies, and identification of concrete policy and investment actions. Who to involve is another important consideration. Other MPOs tend to involve a wide variety of stakeholders including their board, subcommittees, the public, and experts from government agencies, nonprofits and community organizations.

The variables or driving forces that we're interested in exploring will be the basis for the scenarios. These variables or driving forces could be related to transportation policies, investment strategies, land use, the location and quantity of housing and affordable housing, technological change, and post-pandemic trends, among others.

There are many potential methods for scenario planning. Quantitative methods utilized by other MPOs include travel demand modeling and other open-source modeling packages such as VisionEval. Most scenario planning exercises include a qualitative component as well. Qualitative methods include workshops, focus groups and surveys. Regardless of the methods chosen, it's vital to effectively communicate the tradeoffs associated with scenarios due to the complexity of the issues involved.

Mr. Kaufman then highlighted scenario planning work from other MPOs and agencies, including the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, and the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). These agencies used a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods. For example, DVRPC conducted qualitative scenario planning while ARC utilized an open-source modeling tool that enabled much more rapid analysis of many more combinations of variables than would be possible with a traditional travel demand model.

Once scenarios are developed, it's important to consider performance measures for scenario evaluation. The LRTP goals are a logical starting point for identification of potential categories of evaluation metrics. Examples of evaluation metrics used by other MPOs include access to jobs and other key destinations, transit ridership, non-auto mode share, congestion, emissions, exposure to environmental hazards and transportation costs. The scenario planning process and evaluation criteria should emphasize the potential impacts on vulnerable populations in the region. A scenario planning exercise centered on equity was a key recommendation from the 2023 equity scan project. The BRTB scenario planning exercise should include a discussion of what equity means for the region, what populations we'd like to focus on, and identification of strategies that can advance equitable outcomes that work well under a variety of scenarios.

Mr. Kaufman highlighted several key questions for committee consideration along with next steps. The Fiscal Year 2025 budget includes \$250,000 for this project. BMC is hoping to develop and release an RFP for the project early in the new fiscal year. BMC staff will continue to refine the scope for the project and will need continued committee input, potentially through separate work sessions, to ensure that the scenario planning exercise suits the Technical Committee's needs and interests.

Mr. Kaufman closed with a draft schedule for the 2027 LRTP. Four years seems like a long time, but LRTP tasks build on each other. For example, the scenario planning and transportation needs assessment projects should be complete prior to updating regional goals and strategies and the project prioritization process in 2025. Other steps include the financial forecast, development of demographic forecasts, project scoring, selection and analysis of the draft preferred alternative, public input, and a BRTB vote in 2027.

[PowerPoint: Draft 2027 LRTP Schedule and Introduction to Scenario Planning]

7. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

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

Ben Allen – MDOT SHA
Charles Baber - Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Erin Bolton, BMC
Cindy Burch - BMC
Rebecca Deibel - BMC
Victor Henry - BMC
Zach Kaufman - BMC
Shawn Kimberly - BMC
Keith Kucharek - BMC
Todd Lang – BMC
Anna Marshall - BMC
Jennifer Martin – MDOT MTA
Matt Miller, guest
Charlene Mingus – BMC
Md. Mokhlesur Rahman, BMC
Eileen Singleton – BMC