

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

April 1, 2025
9:30 to 11:05 A.M.

MINUTES

1. APPROVAL OF MARCH 2025 MINUTES

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

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION ON RESOLUTION #25-25

Mr. Todd Lang introduced the resolution to consider adopting the FY 2026 – 2027 UPWP. During the presentation, Mr. Lang covered the FY 2026 budget as well as the breakdown between BMC staff, local jurisdictions and possible consultant activities. The document, using the plain language title of Transportation Planning Budget, was sent to our federal partners for initial review and also released for a 30-day public comment period. A number of individuals responded to two survey questions, 1) are there parts of the budget that should get more funding or less funding? and 2) do you have any ideas for future planning activities. There was also a letter from Baltimore People Oriented Places, or BaltPOP, that included thirteen topic areas. All comments have been shared with members, while staff continue to draft responses for the Technical Committee and BRTB to review and consider finalizing.

Next Mr. Lang talked through the new focus areas, most of which will be supported by consultant teams. Mr. Lang also mentioned a few changes to the draft that will be included in the final document. These include documentation of public comments and the responses, the inclusion of Additional Planning Studies sent by a few members, as well as some minor budget adjustments based on updated allocation figures sent by MDOT.

Mr. Janousek asked for a motion and a second for Resolution #25-5. Mr. Cohoon moved to approve the resolution with Mr. Sirota seconding the motion. One member had a question about the demographic module at the end of the PublicInput summary. The demographic module allows staff to have an understanding of the characteristics of folks responding, and adjust outreach to gain feedback from groups that are not represented. Also, the demographic question on education does have an option for high school/GED. The chair also asked if anyone from the public has questions on the resolution, there were none. The resolution was unanimously approved to move to the BRTB.

[PowerPoint: Finalizing the UPWP & DBE Goal]

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION ON RESOLUTION #25-26

Mr. Lang then moved on to the DBE goal to be set for FY 2026. As has been the practice, the BRTB piggy-backs on the MDOT TSO process for DBE goal setting. This year MDOT conducted a refresh of the program looking at substantial data and has set a new goal of 28.4 percent. As a reference point, during the last reported billing period (ending 9/30/24), the DBE participation in consultant work for the BRTB was 41.0 percent.

Mr. Janousek asked for a motion and a second to Resolution #25-6. Ms. Angelica Daniel moved to approve the resolution with Mr. Kwaku Duah seconding the motion. There were no questions or comments from the members or from the public. The resolution was unanimously approved by the Technical Committee to move to the BRTB.

[PowerPoint: Finalizing the UPWP & DBE Goal]

4. RECOMMENDED ACTION ON RESOLUTION #25-27

Mr. Lang introduced the two proposed amendments to the FY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program. One amendment will add a project to the FY 2025-2028 TIP, and one amendment updates an existing project.

Ms. Jamie Richardson of MDOT MTA presented the details of the Rural Transit Systems – Operating Assistance project. When the MDOT MTA receives a grant, funds must be reflected in the year of obligation, and the amendment would reflect shifting funds to do so. The project supports local transit systems in Baltimore and Carroll Counties for operations. The amendment seeks to obligate \$783,000 in 5311 funds with \$183,000 in local and state match in FY 2025.

Mr. Janousek asked for a motion and a second to Resolution #25-7. Mr. Dauh moved to approve the resolution with Ms. Daniel seconding the motion. There were no questions or comments from the members or from the public. The resolution was unanimously approved to move to the BRTB.

[PowerPoint: TIP Amendment for MDOT MTA]

5. RECOMMENDED ACTION ON RESOLUTION #25-28

Ms. Krista Ziegenfuss of Carroll County presented the details of the Upper Beckleysville Road Bridge over Murphy Run project, which will be re-introduced to the FY 2025-2028 TIP. The project had previously appeared in older iterations of the TIP. The project is a part of the county's bridge replacement program. The amendment will update the budget and is necessary in order to further the project and allow the County to advertise for construction. During the 2021 Biennial Bridge Inspection, the bridge's condition was reported as Poor/Severe due to significant section loss in beams. Weight limits were imposed for the first time of 27,000 pounds for a single unit and 40,000 pounds for the combination unit.

Carroll County updated the schedule for inspection to every three months rather than every two years to monitor and maintain safety.

The amendment's programmed cost will reflect the balance remaining, which has increased due to rising costs and inflation. This amendment will add \$185,000 in Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds for engineering with \$46,000 in local match and \$1 million in STBG funds for construction. Carroll County was awarded 100% federal funding for construction through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The County plans to advertise the project in the spring and be open for operation in CY 2025 or 2026 depending on state approval to advertise.

Mr. Janousek asked for a motion and a second to Resolution #25-8. Mr. Sirota moved to approve the resolution with Mr. Sam Kahl seconding the motion. There were no questions or comments from the members or from the public. The resolution was unanimously approved to move to the BRTB.

[PowerPoint: TIP Amendment for Carroll County]

6. PRESENTATION: MDOT TO DISCUSS THE PRIORITY LETTER PORTAL

Mr. Shawn Kiernan offered new information about guidance for local jurisdictions on the Priority Letter process and for sharing local transportation priorities with MDOT. In the past, MDOT has provided little guidance on the length, format, or content of priority letters. As a result, a wide variety of submissions, including some where it has been difficult to discern the top priorities, and the relative priorities among other projects. It was in part for these reasons that the Maryland Commission on Transportation Revenue and Infrastructure Needs (TRAIN) recommended, in an interim report, that MDOT should standardize local priority letters. With this guidance, MDOT has sought to maintain the flexibility that localities have enjoyed in the past while also ensuring that essential information is clearly identified.

Starting with this year's priority letter, due May 16, for the FY 2026 – FY 2031 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), MDOT is offering two ways to submit priority letters: 1) The way they have traditionally been submitted. Localities can submit priority letters exactly as they have in the past, or 2) Priority letters may be submitted through an [online form](#). The form incorporates both opportunities for narrative descriptions of local transportation goals and structured fields for listing priorities across key funding or project categories. Also new in the online form is a request for information on the jurisdiction's priorities for housing and economic development and where it is anticipated to occur. Local governments can provide as much information as they can (up to a 2500 character limit).

Mr. Kiernan also mentioned that MDOT is hosting an Informational Meeting on the Priority Letter Submission Form on Monday, 4/7 from 11am to noon. The purpose of this webinar is to learn more about the MDOT Priority Letter Submission online form. MDOT staff will walk jurisdictions through the online form on the One Stop portal and then be available to discuss any questions. As a reminder, jurisdictions will need to register for a free online account if they

have not already done so. Information on how to register for a One Stop account can be found [here](#). The portal is for jurisdictions to submit projects and is not for the general public.

7. PRESENTATION: 2024 BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY

Ms. Crystal McDermott presented the 2024 Regional [Building Activity Report](#), which is available on the BMC website and provides data on new residential and non-residential permits issued in the Baltimore region. The data is sourced from local jurisdictions and has been tracked by BMC for over 50 years. In the 10-year period from 2014 to 2024, there were 77,079 new residential units issued, with an average of 7,708 per year. The majority of these were single-family units, accounting for 59% of the permits, while multifamily units made up 41%. In 2024, there were 6,448 new residential units authorized, with 59% being single-family and 41% multifamily.

Ms. McDermott presented data on the number of residential units permitted in each jurisdiction. Baltimore County led with 1,511 units, followed by Anne Arundel County with 1,305 units, and Baltimore City with 1,270 units. The top 5 Regional Planning Districts in each jurisdiction were also discussed, with specific numbers of units permitted in each RPD. The data showed that certain RPD's within each jurisdiction accounted for a significant percentage of the total units permitted.

Ms. McDermott discussed the non-residential permit activity in 2024, highlighting that a single building can significantly impact the distribution of investment across jurisdictions, building types, and time periods. She noted that Howard County led the region with \$525.6 million in new non-residential construction, followed by Baltimore County with \$218.4 million and Baltimore City with \$202.8 million. The highest value permit was for a new commercial office building in Howard County, valued at \$435 million, which accounted for 40% of the total new non-residential permits. The office structures category had the highest permitted values, followed by retail and commercial, and industrial structures. Ms. McDermott also mentioned the availability of a complete list and map of new non-residential projects (can be found in the Building Activity Report – page 9) on the [building permit dashboard](#) on the website.

Members asked a few questions: are we building enough housing, what types of facilities come under the warehouse category, and where are government buildings located. Ms. McDermott answered several questions and staff will follow up on the housing question.

[PowerPoint: Annual Building Permit Activity - 2024]

8. UPWP UPDATES

- **Status of Safety Campaign utilizing Local Messaging** - Ms. Cindy Burch shared an update on the hyper-local safety campaign approved in the FY 2025 UPWP, including development of creative images and contracted vendors. She showed that all jurisdictions in the region are receiving messaging and a new outlet, Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS) vehicles, are being used to share pedestrian/bicycle safety and speeding messages.

Mr. Duah suggested working with local utility companies to send out print safety messaging with notices and bills. Ms. Richardson asked about messages for drivers to operate safely around transit vehicles, in addition to non-motorist safety.

[PowerPoint: Safety Messaging and Outreach Campaign]

- **Recap of Progress on Scenario Planning and Transportation Needs Assessment Tasks -** Mr. Zach Kaufman presented an update on the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Scenario Planning and Transportation Needs Assessment tasks. The scenario planning project will build the BRTB's capacity for exploring and selecting policy actions to address transportation issues that are pressing and uncertain. BMC is using an exploratory modeling tool known as VisionEval for this project. VisionEval is more nimble than traditional travel demand models and enables quick analysis of the potential impacts of a broad array of policy decisions. BMC also plans to use the InSITE travel demand model as well as GIS-based spatial analyses for the project. The project will inform the development of the 2027 LRTP.

BMC staff are working with the consultant team to calibrate the base model and plan to run initial scenarios in VisionEval soon. Scenario categories include policy drivers such as transportation investments, housing, and transportation fees and incentives as well as external forces related to the economy, technology, and infrastructure resilience. Each scenario category includes several levels representing different possible futures. Choosing one level from each category yields one scenario bundle. VisionEval will be used to model each of the 1500 possible scenario bundles across the categories.

Once the initial scenario runs are complete, staff will work with the consultant team to analyze the results. Results will be presented at a series of three stakeholder workshops in May for BRTB members; state and local housing and planning leaders; and non-profit, business, and community leaders. After exploring tradeoffs and policy options with stakeholder groups, the team will run refined scenarios and recommend refinements to LRTP policies.

Mr. Kaufman then presented progress thus far on the Transportation Needs Assessment project. This project is gathering information on transportation needs from a user's perspective. Needs are being assessed in relation to existing LRTP goals and will be used to inform development of the goals and strategies for the 2027 LRTP.

BMC and the consultant team are currently finalizing a storymap focusing on existing conditions in the Baltimore region. This public-facing tool is intended as a baseline for communicating who lives in the Baltimore region, how they travel, and how the network is performing in relation to LRTP goals (accessibility, mobility, safety, etc.).

The project also includes a survey and focus groups to gather information on needs, challenges, and investment priorities. The survey is currently open through April 4, though the deadline will likely be extended by one week to gather additional responses. There have been more than 500 responses thus far, with advertising conducted through direct outreach, social media, targeted emails, and two rounds of 8,000 mailers.

After completing the survey and focus groups, the project team will analyze results to identify primary transportation needs, cause(s) for needs, and investment priorities in the region.

These will be used to identify performance metrics to track and gauge the BRTB's progress in addressing identified needs and to identify potential improvements to the 2027 LRTP. BMC anticipates completing the project in July.

Mr. Kaufman answered a few questions from Technical Committee members related to the project purpose and ongoing outreach activities.

[PowerPoint: LRTP Scenario Planning and Needs Assessment]

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Lang shared that the April BRTB meeting will be on Friday, 4/25 as an elected official meeting. Mr. Janousek reminded members that the next meeting will be virtual on 5/6. The meeting ended at 11:05.

ATTENDANCE

Members

Ben Allen – MDOT State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA)
Steve Cohoon – Queen Anne's County Department of Public Works
Connor Jett (for David Cookson) – Howard County Office of Transportation
Angelica Daniel – Baltimore County Department of Public Works & Transportation
Kwaku Duah – Annapolis Department of Transportation
Jamie Richardson (for Albert Guiney Engel) – Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA)
Dan Janousek – Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Clare Stewart – Carroll 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)
Monica Haines Benkhedda - BMC
Tim Briggs - BMC
Cindy Burch - BMC
Rebecca Deibel - BMC
Ndemazea Fonkem - BMC
Don Halligan - BMC
Zach Kaufman - BMC
Mike Kelly - BMC
Shawn Kiernan – MDOT TSO
Keith Kucharek - BMC
Todd Lang – BMC
Crystal McDermott - BMC
Charlene Mingus – BMC

Md. Mokhlesur Rahman - BMC
Brian Ryder - BMC
Pat Smith – Howard County DPW
Krista Ziegenfuss – Carroll County