

**Many of the comments below are shortened for purposes of space.** The full set of comments was shared with all BRTB, Technical Committee, and Interagency Consultation Group members and are also located on the [BMC website](#).

Let us say up front that we are very appreciative of the effort so many individuals and organizations have gone through to review materials and send in comments. This is informative for all of our members and does have an impact on the planning process. As is customary for the BRTB, we share all comments and responses with everyone who commented as well as on the BMC website and include them in the final TIP and Conformity Determination documents.

**1. Baltimore-Washington Superconducting Maglev (SCMAGLEV) Project - Neb Sertsu - Baltimore Washington Rapid Rail**

The description (pg. 321) should be updated to note that the Draft EIS was completed on 1/15/2021. The description (pg. 321) indicates "No schedule or funding for further phases have been identified." This should be updated to reflect that the project has been awarded an additional \$26M in federal funding; \$24M was awarded in 9/2020 and \$2M was awarded in 11/2020.

**BRTB response:** Thank you for the additional information. The project description has been revised on both points and will be reflected in the final document.

**2. Conway Road Bridge over Little Patuxent River - Steven Onken**

I heartily endorse shoulders and sidewalks along the bridge. There is a very wide shoulder on both sides of the bridge - very conducive to cycling, and having it continue across the bridge would be very beneficial.

**BRTB response:** Specific design will be determined during the project, however accommodations will be made for bicyclists and pedestrians. Design is currently in the schematic design phase and is expected to be complete in 2024. Anne Arundel County anticipates holding a public meeting after schematic development is complete, around 30%. This is anticipated to occur around February or March 2023.

**3. Dundalk Marine Terminal Resiliency and Flood Mitigation Improvements - Larry Bannerman**

I love this proactive approach to preventing damage and potential loss of life at the POB. Climate Change is real. Army Corps recently completed a hydrology study for Turner Station and determined that the same kinds of protection is needed. HOPEFULLY it will get funded.

**BRTB response:** Thank you for your support for the Dundalk Marine Terminal project. This project is currently in the procurement stage with construction anticipated to begin in late spring or early summer of 2023.

The Turner Station analysis was completed under the Floodplain Management Services (FPMS) Program and included mapping and assessment of existing stormwater infrastructure, stormwater modeling with regards to flooding for existing conditions and a variety of rainfall events. It also included modeling and mapping for sea level rise and potential rainfall scenarios as well as evaluating measures for reducing flood risks to buildings, bridges and roadways.

Funding would have to be secured under other federal aid programs or by another non-federal sponsor such as Baltimore County.

**4. Greenway Middle Branch Phase 2 - Daniel Paschall – East Coast Greenway**

This is a critical connection in the Baltimore Greenway Trails Network as well as other long distance trails of national significance, Please invest more funds into completing the rest of the gaps in all of these networks, and please prioritize a larger Baltimore Region Trail Network that extends into the surrounding counties with more trail connectivity to destinations, transit, parks, and homes for all.

**BRTB response:** Baltimore City DOT is currently advancing design work on the northern segment of the Baltimore Greenway that will close the gaps between the Herring Run Trail, Druid Hill Park, and Leakin Park. The City is monitoring grant opportunities and other programs for funding to continue to advance the progress on the trail network.

Beginning in fall 2022, BRTB will lead an effort to develop a Vision for an Integrated Regional Bicycle Network in coordination with member jurisdictions. The plan will focus on developing a regional bicycle and shared use facility network that will improve regional connectivity, safety, and mobility by increasing access to jobs and other daily activities and providing transportation and recreational opportunities.

BRTB will also continue to support the realization of the Patapsco Regional Greenway, a 40-mile, shared use trail running through the Patapsco Valley from Baltimore's Inner Harbor to Sykesville in Carroll County, by promoting coordination between jurisdictions and leading preliminary design efforts for trail segments in partnership with member jurisdictions.

## 5. Howard County Bridge Repair and Deck Replacement (BRDR)

Shaun Lehmann - This is how transportation money ought to be spent. Maintaining not expanding liabilities.

**BRTB response:** In addition to the generic BRDR projects in Howard, Baltimore and Harford Counties, there are nearly 30 individual bridge repair or replacement projects within the Baltimore region identified in the 2023-2026 TIP.

C Gelwicks - Would love it if this could also be paired with pedestrian access since it is very difficult for people walking or biking to access the shopping area.

**BRTB response:** Each bridge repair or replacement is evaluated to determine the feasibility of adding pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities. In many cases this can be accomplished through the addition of wider shoulders capable of accommodating bicycles and pedestrians. Projects that are in the beginning concept stages typically provide the public with the opportunity to provide comments on the specifics of the proposed design.

## 6. Magothy Bridge Road over Magothy River - Jon Korin

Bike Lane markings in the shoulders will fill a gap in that road which has bike lanes on either side of the bridge.

**BRTB response:** There appears to be available space on the structure to provide marked bicycle lanes. Anne Arundel County Traffic Engineering will review this request.

## 7. Parole Transportation Center

Jon Korin - The project should include shared-use paths to provide safe access to the proposed transit center on bike or foot.

Jon Mueller - It would be greatly appreciated if a dedicated bike lane could be added to Bestgate Road at least to Ridgely. The sharrows and signs do NOT slow traffic and it is extremely dangerous to ride there. I have been writing to the county about this for over 10 years. I fear for my life every time I commute to work along Bestgate from Generals Hwy to Admiral.

Steven Onken - As long as a "multi-modal transportation center" includes bike lanes along Bestgate, I'm all for it! We need to take a hard look at making biking more practical throughout Anne Arundel County. Just came back from 10 days in Europe and they are WAY ahead of the curve on making walking and biking a priority!!!

**BRTB response:** Per the County's Bicycle Map and the recommendations of the Parole Mobility Study, shared-use paths are planned along Housely, Bestgate and Generals Highway leading to the Parole Transportation Center. While "offsite" access improvements were included in a RAISE Grant application, they would likely be part of a separate construction project.

Additionally, there is a small segment of Bestgate Road that currently has an existing shared-use path.

#### **8. Snowden River Parkway: Broken Land Parkway to Oakland Mills Road**

Shaun Lehmann - Why in a community which is actually bikeable and walkable are we expanding lanes for cars? Build the multi-use lanes for bikes and pedestrians. Improve intersections with traffic circles....don't overbuild and load up on liabilities you won't be able to maintain in the future.

C Gelwicks - While there is some congestion during rush hour, it is otherwise not a problem. What this stretch really needs is the multi-use pathway. There are bus stops along this stretch with no sidewalk to get to any of the stores. Safe ways to cross SRP are also missing. Nix the third lane and focus on the multi-use path instead.

Jerardo - It is unnecessary and reckless to continue to widen roads when this funding could be used to alleviate congestion via transit and bike/ped facilities. The planned shared use path should stay, however, the road widening should not.

**BRTB response:** Howard County feels this improvement best serves a range of transportation functions and is being designed to meet both current and projected traffic demand, and will be delivered in phases based on both demand and available funding. The project is not proposing to change the current signal based intersection design approach since the county has already invested in this more cost effective approach.

This project will also include a shared-use-path and bus stop improvements that will be delivered as part of the county project as well as private sector development projects on the corridor.

#### **9. MD 2: US 50 to Arnold Road**

Jon Korin - There should be a shared-use path instead of sidewalk from the B&A Trail to Rt. 2.

**BRTB response:** This project is in the beginning of concept design which provides the public with the opportunity to provide comments on the specifics of the proposed design during the process. Options for connections to the B&A Trail will be evaluated.

Anonymous - This project does not address the failing intersection of MD 2 @ College Parkway.

**BRTB response:** The current project will take improvements to 30% design by summer 2023. MDOT SHA's Transportation System Management and Operations (TSMO) System #3 does include the MD 2 corridor from US 50 to MD 100 and MDOT SHA, in partnership with Anne Arundel County, will continue to address issues and develop solutions for segments along MD 2.

#### **10. MD 3: Waugh Chapel Road/Riedel Road to MD32/I-97 - Steven Onken**

I travel this route every single day! A third lane would be hugely beneficial in alleviating some of the bottlenecks along that stretch of Route 3.

**BRTB response:** Thank you for your support of this project which does include a third through lane in each direction. Currently this project is only funded for 30% design while funding for final design and construction is waiting to be identified.

## **11. US 1: Bridge Replacement over CSX - Abraham Drude**

Consider extending the bike lane from the Halethorpe Marc Station on US 1, on to the bridge, and up to the Guinness Brewery. That would add an extremely valuable element of accessibility and even touristy appeal to the location/area. The possibilities that could lay a foundation for could not be overstated.

### **Nearby on US 1**

The bike lanes at the Halethorpe Marc Station and along that entire section of US 1 are not...safe. The biggest issue I've found is the fact that the bike lanes are between the road and shoulder. That dynamic implies the bike lane acts as a buffer for parked cars, which essentially makes the safety of cyclists, of people, less valuable than a parked car. Worse yet there's no buffer for the bike lane itself, all it has is the 4 inches of a painted lane line for a 40 mph road. This flaw in the design language absolutely discourages people from using the bike lanes.

**BRTB response:** The original structure, built in 1930, was rated in poor condition. The new structure includes wider lanes and 8 foot shoulders allowing cyclists to more safely travel along US 1, which is a "share the road" facility.

Due to the increased pedestrian activity associated with the Guinness Open Gate Brewery, the extension of sidewalk from Clark Boulevard to the Brewery was added to the project.

MDOT SHA considers access and mobility for all users in the design of projects. Your comments will be forwarded to the MDOT SHA District 4 office which will reach out to discuss your safety-related concerns along US 1.

MDOT MTA notes this refers to infrastructure off of MDOT MTA property, therefore there is a limit to their role. MDOT MTA does support bike connections to all of their rail stations, including MARC, and tries to support that connectivity with bike parking, and with the expanding ability to bring bikes on the train. MDOT MTA participates on the BRTB's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Group and also on the Patapsco Regional Greenway planning team.

BRTB continues to support the realization of the Patapsco Regional Greenway (PRG), a 40-mile, shared use trail running through the Patapsco Valley from Baltimore's Inner Harbor to Sykesville in Carroll County. BMC recently led preliminary design of the PRG trail segment from Elkridge to Guinness Open Gate Brewery. BMC is also embarking on preliminary design of the PRG trail segment from Guinness Open Gate Brewery to Southwest Area Park which will include analysis of connections to the Patapsco Light Rail Station.

## **12. I-695/I-70 Interchange - Rolf Sjogren**

This does not need to be re-built, to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars. The only thing that might possibly make a difference on the Beltway is if you built a fast, convenient transit option paralleling it, with parking lots at each stop. Another main cause of congestion on the Beltway is actually the non-enforcement of the speed limit (speed cameras please!), so there are fender-benders which tie up traffic almost on a daily basis. You could build a fast busway (just small stations & parking lots next to major arteries' crossing it).

**BRTB response:** This project is part of Governor Hogan's Traffic Relief Plan to improve traffic operations in the Baltimore region. The I-695 and I-70 "Triple Bridges" interchange was constructed in 1965 and carries much more traffic than the original design intended resulting in congestion and travel delays. While the bridges within the interchange remain structurally sound, they are nearing the end of their structural life and need to be replaced. Due to the unique configuration of the interchange, which stacks three levels of

roadways and bridges one on top of one other, it is not possible to make the necessary improvements without impacting the entire interchange.

Congestion on I-695 primarily is due to increased demand during peak travel times. MDOT SHA is currently modifying and repurposing the existing shoulders on the Inner and Outer Loops of the Beltway between I-70 and MD 43 to create an extra travel lane in each direction to alleviate recurring and non-recurring (incident related) congestion.

### **13. I-695: I-70 to MD 43 - Jerardo**

With an estimated cost of \$180 million why does the state insist on building more and more lanes? More lanes do not fix traffic this induced demand is seen in cities across the country (LA, Houston, Dallas, etc.). This would only serve to cause more congestion and more pollution during a climate crisis. Funding has to be redirected from road widening projects like this to more robust public transit.

**BRTB response:** Using the shoulders on I-695 during peak travel hours is an example of how MDOT SHA has begun to emphasize operational approaches to addressing traffic congestion, as opposed to the traditional approach of adding lanes. This project will modify and repurpose existing shoulders on the Inner and Outer Loops of the Baltimore Beltway (I-695) during peak travel times, in lieu of roadway widening. Part-time shoulder use (PTSU) is a Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) strategy that utilizes technology-based solutions to optimize the performance of existing facilities in a cost-effective manner. Retrofitting shoulders for part-time use preserves the shoulder during most hours of the day and is not a permanent conversion of the shoulder to a full-time travel lane.

### **14. I-95 Express Toll Lanes Northbound Extension - Corey**

We are easily spending 1.1B (nearly a quarter of all funding in the Baltimore region) on Lexus lanes but can't build proper DC-like transit? Our streets could be as bike friendly as Amsterdam with that kind of money. We could build the entire red line, transforming the region with that kind of money.

**BRTB response:** Regarding the I-95 Express Toll Lanes, nearly seventy percent of the funds under the highway capacity category in the TIP go to this one project being advanced by the Maryland Transportation Authority using Toll Revenues. This project is in the TIP for air quality purposes only.

The I-95 corridor is a major East coast trade and travel corridor and in this region supports multiple activity centers, distribution facilities, airports, and the Port of Baltimore.

### **15. Transit for Baltimore City Students - Zen Zineer - Associated Student Congress of Baltimore City (ASCBC)**

There doesn't seem to be a prioritization of mass transit, to help improve transportation for students. Helping improve travel times and routes for students is a must. We believe that increased investments in city transportation will not only ensure safety in our transportation, but also create less traffic and simpler transportation options for students. Revisiting the idea of a student metro transit council for feedback on these expanding options would be equally powerful and help improve transportation in the city.

**BRTB response:** MDOT MTA is currently working with Baltimore City Public Schools and the Fund for Educational Excellence to establish a Youth Advisory Council starting in the 2022-2023 Academic Year.

### **16. Transit and Bike/Pedestrian - Melanie S**

Comprehensive commuter rail to all the major outlying burbs. More inner city dedicated right of way fixed transit. IE, more trains. Streetcars! There are like 3 bike lane proposals in this document in Baltimore City, and none of them are particularly impressive - if we want biking to be first class the way the Complete Streets ordinance ordains, we need protected bike lanes that let people get across most of the city.

**BRTB response:** The draft 2023-2026 TIP is the list of regional transportation projects requesting federal funding in the near term. The BRTB recognizes that the framework of the TIP does not help the public to identify other important transportation priorities. To plan for future transit options, the [Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan](#), prepared by MDOT MTA, identifies short-, mid-, and longer-term opportunities to implement transit along 30 regionally significant corridors. There is a multi-agency team in place to implement recommendations from the plan. In addition to the east-west and north-south corridors MDOT MTA is currently advancing, the BRTB is currently conducting a pilot transit feasibility study for a mid-opportunity corridor identified in the RTP from BWI to Columbia. Potential transit modes will be identified in each of these studies based on ridership, connections to employment and other factors. Funding was approved in the BRTB's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to conduct additional feasibility studies at the conclusion of the pilot study.

The TIP includes multiple projects throughout the region that include bicycle compatible shoulders, shared use paths, and/or separated bicycle facilities and many bridge projects that include shoulder width determination to be completed during design. As bridges are replaced, MDOT SHA evaluates bridges for upgrades to include sidewalks and bicycle facilities.

Another place in the TIP to look for bicycle projects is under MDOT SHAs Transportation Alternatives Program. A number of bicycle projects are also under consideration for the Transportation Alternatives Program with bicycle and pedestrian projects funded in previous years including the MDOT MTA led Patapsco Pedestrian Bridge Connection that includes \$780,000 to design a bicycle and pedestrian connection between Cherry Hill and the Patapsco Light Rail Station that borders Southwest Area Park. While the TIP is specifically to identify requests for federal funding, another source of funding outside the TIP is the MDOT SHA managed Kim Lamphier Bikeways Network Program.

The BRTB is committed to improving bicycle and pedestrian safety and access across the region. There are a number of bicycle projects in the planning stage with support in the current UPWP including the Concept Plan for Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements Along US 40 (Pulaski Highway) in Harford County and the preliminary design of the Patapsco Regional Greenway (PRG) from Guinness Open Gate Brewery to Southwest Area Park.

**17. Overall policy and project selection** – letter jointly submitted by the following organizations: 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, Maryland/DC, Audubon Mid-Atlantic, Baltimore MARC Riders, Bikemore, Cedar Lane Environmental Justice Ministry, Central Maryland Transportation Alliance, Clean Water Action, Climate Reality, Baltimore Area Chapter, Coalition for Smarter Growth, Downtown Residents Advocacy Network (Baltimore), Howard County Climate Action, Indivisible Howard County, Labor Network for Sustainability, Maryland Nonprofits, Maryland Sierra Club, Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing, The Fund For Educational Excellence, Transit Choices

As highlighted in our 2021 letter, many of the elected officials who serve on the Board have expressed a desire to invest in a multi-modal transportation system that reduces our dependence on cars. Unfortunately, the reality continues to fall short of the rhetoric as evidenced in the regional spending priorities the BRTB approves each year.

We ask the BRTB to remove from the Draft 2023-2026 TIP the four highway capacity projects listed in Table II-2.

The two largest sources of flexible federal funds are the National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) and the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG). However, according to the tables summarizing federal aid for each fiscal year from FY 2023 through FY 2026, there are zero NHPP or STBG funds being flexed to transit.

**BRTB response:** While there are a number of highway expansion projects in the TIP, it is a far cry from just 5 or 10 years ago. There has been a steady shift toward an equitable, multi-modal transportation system for a number of years that is supported by a wide range of state, regional and local planning studies. That said, there is much progress still to be made. Planning studies are underway that will ensure transit capacity projects are included in upcoming TIPs. To plan for future transit options, the Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan, prepared by MDOT MTA, identifies short-, mid-, and longer-term opportunities to implement transit along 30 regionally significant corridors. There is a multi-agency team in place to implement recommendations from the plan. In addition to the east-west and north-south corridors MDOT MTA is currently advancing, BRTB is currently conducting a pilot transit feasibility study for a mid-opportunity corridor identified in the Plan from BWI to Columbia. Potential transit modes will be identified in each of these studies based on ridership, connections to employment and other factors. Funding is approved in the BRTB's Unified Planning Work Program to conduct additional feasibility studies at the conclusion of the pilot.

Regarding the comment on no new highway projects in the last TIP, 3 of the 4 projects were included as planning studies under Anne Arundel County and continue this year under MDOT SHA. For MD 2 there is a request for a continuous third lane, but the project also adds sidewalks and a connection to the B&A Trail. Additionally, the County increased service on the Gold Line Extension which parallels MD 2. Similarly for MD 3, in addition to a third lanes there is a shared use path, sidewalks, crosswalks and improved service on the Crofton Express. For MD 214 there is also a shared use path proposed and currently transit via the South County Call N Ride. These projects, which support not just motorists but also pedestrians, cyclists and transit users, have been on the books for many years and have a commitment to move forward.

We truly appreciate your support for transit and other modes of transportation. The transit projects that were implemented this spring along MD 2 and MD 3 were sourced from the Central Maryland Transit Development Plan. Additional funding must be provided by MDOT MTA through the Locally Operated Transit System (LOTS) program for operating in order to accelerate more of the priorities within this plan and other transit plans. Capital funds are dedicated to construction projects while operating funds are obtained through separate formula authorizations and distributed based on the state's discretion. We would also encourage you to actively participate in the five-year transit development plans that are being funded through grants from MDOT MTA. These plans guide the expansion of operations and budgets at the local level.

The Maryland Department of Transportation is aware of the flexibility of certain FHWA fund sources that allows transferring between roadway and transit capital needs. MDOT strives to balance capital needs across modes and has, and will, use similar flexibility as needed on a case by case basis. MDOT, with BRTB approval, flexes millions annually from the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program to MDOT MTA and additional funds are flexed from the Transportation Alternatives (TA) program to MDOT MTA. MDOT has initiated such a transfer of STBG funds in the past and depending on the needs, MDOT could again transfer STBG funds for a significant project need in the Baltimore region.

#### **18. About direction of BRTB - Henry Cook**

I would call on BRTB to change their culture and reflect the leadership that our region needs for transportation infrastructure. Include separated bike/pedestrian infrastructure in ALL roadway projects (including maintenance projects). A moratorium on highway widening or other projects that will increase total traffic. Redesign of streets and bridges maintained to prioritize safety and access for vulnerable road users.

As a regional transportation board, there is also a decided lack of regional view for completing bike and pedestrian networks that connect residents to public transit, commercial destinations, etc. Special focus should be placed on projects that connect neighborhoods by bike/pedestrian short-cut rather than forcing

users to follow a car-based road network. Funding individual projects that do not connect to existing infrastructure does not address our region's needs.

I would like to see BRTB set goals for the organization at directing funding towards active transit options and public transit until these areas reach at least parity with automobile-based infrastructure.

Finally, I would also call on BRTB to evaluate projects with a greater focus on sustainability, financial as well as environmental. New build projects should include an anticipated annual maintenance cost projection and, if relevant, potential replacement cost at the end of useful life.

**BRTB response:** The MDOT SHA "Policy for Accommodating Bicycles and Pedestrians on State Highways", included in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Guidelines issued in May 2007, states that, "The State Highway Administration (SHA) shall make accommodations for bicycling and walking a routine and integral element of planning, design, construction, operations and maintenance activities as appropriate." It is MDOT SHA's policy that all projects on state highways are required to be evaluated for the potential to include or improve bicycle facilities to the maximum extent feasible based on design guidance provided in the Bicycle Policy & Design Guidelines released in January 2015.

There are various policies for each jurisdiction in relation to locally managed roadways.

Referring to our UPWP, or work program, we are in the second phase of developing a Climate Change Toolkit for our members, there is a task to help integrate Connected and Automated Vehicles into local planning, and an effort to streamline Electric Vehicle charging stations throughout the region. Last year the BRTB completed a study looking at possible barriers in the transportation system to supporting healthy communities. A small grant program recently funded design studies for bike and transit projects in Annapolis and Baltimore City. Additionally, the BMC just hired a planner to focus on multi-modal topics. This position will augment current staff in those areas.

Beginning in fall 2022, BRTB will lead an effort to develop a Vision for an Integrated Regional Bicycle Network in coordination with member jurisdictions. The plan will focus on developing a regional bicycle and shared use facility network that will improve regional connectivity, safety, and mobility by increasing access to jobs and other daily activities and providing transportation and recreational opportunities. During 2022, BMC purchased a sidewalk dataset covering the entire region that will be used for a variety of tasks, including major gaps that need to be addressed.

## **19. Too much highway, not enough transit**

Michael Scepaniak - Strong Towns Baltimore - I'm very frustrated to see such a large percentage allocated to Highway Capacity. ...should be near zero. Instead, that allocation should go toward projects categorized as Transit Capacity. The Baltimore City East-West Bus Corridor sounds pretty substantial, but the fact that it falls under "Transit Preservation" speaks to how it will in no way move the transit needle. Maryland's transportation priorities need to be reset in a significant way.

Peter Smith - The region's transportation priorities should reflect increased emphasis in public transit and a shift away from car transportation. Accordingly, the final Transportation Improvement Program for 2023-2026 should reflect lower spending on Highway Capacity especially and Highway Preservation, and greater spending on Transit Preservation than what is proposed in the draft plan.

Brian Seel - ...how on earth, in the year 2022, are you still putting so much of the budget toward additional today capacity for mostly single occupant vehicles, instead of for mass transit, or low carbon options like walking or biking facilities.

Henry Cook - I am very disappointed that vast sums are programmed towards road and highway expansion and very, very little for active transportation network construction and maintenance. Having reviewed prior



public comment and the BRTB response, you have clearly been introduced to the concepts of induced demand and the fact that building more highways results in more traffic. Also, you are clearly aware of the climate crisis and are ignoring it by over-prioritizing private vehicle transportation at the cost of all other modes of transportation.

**BRTB response:** The draft 2023-2026 TIP does not reflect all transit investments in the region since it only includes the projects requesting federal funding in the near term. The BRTB recognizes that the framework of the TIP does not help the public to identify other important transportation priorities; many current and ongoing projects and new sources of funding are summarized below.

To plan for future transit options, the Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan, prepared by MDOT MTA, identifies short-, mid-, and longer-term opportunities to implement transit along 30 regionally significant corridors. There is a multi-agency team in place to implement recommendations from the plan. In addition to the east-west and north-south corridors MDOT MTA is currently advancing, BRTB is currently conducting a pilot transit feasibility study for a mid-opportunity corridor identified in the Plan from BWI to Columbia. Potential transit modes will be identified in each of these studies based on ridership, connections to employment and other factors. Funding is approved in the BRTB's Unified Planning Work Program to conduct additional feasibility studies at the conclusion of the pilot.

BMC staff is also reviewing projects for the fiscally constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan. An unprecedented 60 transit projects were submitted of high, medium and lower priorities by BRTB members and MDOT MTA. These candidate projects will be evaluated using updated selection criteria prepared by BMC staff and approved by the BRTB. We welcome your participation in the preparation of [Resilience 2050: Adapting to the Challenges of Tomorrow](#) preparation activities.

The Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Transit Priority Project – or RAISE Project for short – is a collaborative effort between Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA) and Baltimore City Department of Transportation (BCDOT). The RAISE Project proposes enhancements to the CityLink Blue and CityLink Orange lines to provide faster, more reliable transit and improved pedestrian safety along the 20-mile corridor extending from the Western terminus of CMS in Baltimore County through Baltimore City and ending at the Eastern Terminus of Fox Ridge in Baltimore County. The Project will enhance access and mobility to essential services, jobs, health care, and schools along the corridor. It will evaluate more than 10 miles of Dedicated Bus Lanes (DBLs), Transit Signal Priority (TSP), real-time signage, upgraded bus shelters, enhanced pedestrian and bicycle safety, and installation of additional electric vehicle charging stations along the project corridor. The ongoing \$50 million RAISE Project is financed through a combination of Federal, State, and local funding.

In addition to the RAISE grant, MDOT MTA has announced the launch of its Fast Forward: Customer Experience Enhancement Project, a \$43 million initiative funded by the passage of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. Fast Forward is a wide-ranging effort that focuses on improving transit reliability, travel times and customer safety and access, with the overall goal to enhance the MDOT MTA passenger's complete transit experience from door to door.

There are three ongoing Fast Forward corridors:

- Charles & Light Street Bus Lane Pilot (Conway St. to Saratoga St, and Pratt St. to Lombard St.)
- Harford Avenue Bus Lane Pilot (Forrest Ave. to Biddle St.)
- York Road Bus Lane Pilot (Radnor Ave. to Bellona St)

MARC Updates

- Riverside Heavy Maintenance Building - Construction on the MARC Riverside Heavy Maintenance Building is now under way. This will free up existing shop space for PMs and repairs, improve operational efficiency and reduce rolling stock downtime

- Martins Yard Expansion - Supports future service expansion and other major projects including the replacement of the B&P Tunnel
- Frederick Douglass Tunnel - Replacement program will triple capacity and increase travel speeds

Recent Earmarks include:

- \$6 million for Baltimore Penn Station Facility Improvements - Complements the Amtrak and Penn Station Partners projects that will enhance platform access, station capacity, and passenger amenities, while restoring the historic Baltimore Penn Station building and complex to a State of Good Repair
- \$1 million for Electric Locomotives -Specification development for replacement of MARC's six HHP-8 electric locomotives, which are now approximately 21 years old and need to be planned for replacement as they reach end of life. MTA intends to procure rolling stock that will allow for MARC run-through service into Virginia

Run-Through Service & Closing the Gap

- Service to Delaware – The goal to extend MARC service 20 miles from Perryville, MD to Newark, DE. Proposed pilot service of 2 AM and 2 PM trains from Perryville to Newark
- Service to Virginia – The goal is to extend MARC service 8 miles from Union Station in DC to Alexandria, VA. Proposed pilot service of 2 AM and 2 PM trains in Alexandria, VA

Please refer to [Maryland's Consolidated Transportation Program](#) (CTP) for a full picture of MDOT MTA's six-year capital budget from FY 2022-FY 2027, beginning on pdf page 167. The backbone of the CTP is state funding and there is considerably more funding for transit than the federal funding that appears in the TIP.

## **20. Parole Transportation Center - Steven Onken**

On the map, the area noted as "low income region", bounded by I-97, Rte. 50, Chesterfield, Hawkins, and Bacon Ridge ranch. Twin Hills, The Ridges, Ashers Farms, Crosspointe, North River Forest, Hidden View Farm, are ALL comprised of homes in the 600-800K range!!! How can this possibly be a "low income region"?!?

**BRTB Response:** The BRTB defines low-income as the population with incomes at or below 200% of the poverty level. The primary data source for data on low-income persons is the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). According to the latest 5-year ACS estimates, 21.4% of the population in the Baltimore region has an income at or below 200% of the poverty line. The BRTB uses a geography called a Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) to model travel behavior. They are constructed using Census Block units and are smaller than Census Tracts. We identify low-income TAZs through the use of a regional threshold. A TAZ is identified as a low-income area if it has a concentration of low-income population (below 200% of the poverty level) greater than the regional average of 21.4%. So any TAZ where more than 21.4% of persons are estimated to have incomes below 200% of the poverty level will be considered low-income.

While this method is useful, it does include assumptions that can have significant margins of error associated with them. Part of this is because the data we rely on from the Census Bureau is provided at the Census Block Group level, which are smaller geographic areas than Census Tracts. Margins of error tend to be larger in smaller geographic areas. TAZs can be even smaller geographies than Census Block Groups, requiring a method to apportion Census Block Group data to the TAZ level. Apportioning data from the larger geographic units (Census Block Groups) to smaller geographic units (TAZs) can introduce error as well. This can particularly be the case for areas where the population of low-income persons is very near the regional average, because that makes it more likely that the margin of error will span the threshold for being considered a low-income area. This is the case for the area you identified when you look at the

Census Tract level data. Every method requires some simplifying assumptions, and we chose ours based on prior work at the BRTB and based on the methods trusted at other organizations doing similar work. However, you may find some inconsistencies when looking at individual TAZs. When you look at the region or a county, you're likely to have a reasonably accurate picture of where low-income populations live.