

Baltimore Metropolitan Council

**PARTNERS IN PROGRESS** 



### Annual Report 2005

#### Message From the Chair



I'm proud of the good work that can be accomplished when the local leaders of the Baltimore region work together, utilizing our individual strengths to address our common challenges. Our region is an economic powerhouse with a proud past and a hopeful future full of opportunity.

The six jurisdictions that make up the Metropolitan region are distinct—urban, suburban and

rural—each with its own advantages and assets. However, you might be surprised how often our challenges intersect with each other. And, you may be even more surprised to learn that a collaborative regional approach to those challenges often provides the best solution for all of us.

The Baltimore Metropolitan Council Board is determined to work together as PARTNERS IN PROGRESS for the good of the Baltimore region, its communities, its businesses and its citizens. That principle is very much at heart of the BMC. One of the most important ingredients for future success is simple: Foster a better understanding in our communities of the benefits of regional cooperation. We will do this through real action and results. Whether BMC is protecting our drinking water, helping local law enforcement, saving taxpayers' dollars, or by simply acknowledging and addressing an important issue; citizens in our jurisdictions will know they are not alone. They will know that they have partners they can count on.

Make no mistake, with progress there will be set backs. It is a long haul. The mission of this organization is much bigger than any of the individuals who guide it, though, I will do my best to help secure our regions future. I am committed to this effort.

The simple truth is that together, we are stronger, smarter and more able to confront the common challenges that face communities across the region.

James T. Smith, Jr. Baltimore County Executive and BMC Chair





#### The BMC Mission

The Baltimore Metropolitan Council is committed to identifying regional interests and developing collaborative strategies, plans and programs which will improve the quality of life and economic vitality throughout the region.

#### Who We Are

BMC is the organization of the region's elected executives. The BMC Board is composed of the Mayor of Baltimore, the executives of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Harford and Howard counties, and the President of the Carroll County Board of Commissioners. BMC's staff works closely with the staffs of the member jurisdictions.

#### History and Background

The Baltimore Metropolitan Council carries on a tradition of formal regional planning that began nearly half-a-century ago, when the Baltimore Regional Planning Council was created within the Maryland Department of Planning. Regional planning was conducted by state government from 1956 until 1989, when the Baltimore Regional Council of Governments was created as a separate organization. In 1992, recognizing the need for a smaller, more efficient organization, the region's elected executives dissolved BRCOG and created BMC as a private nonprofit organization.

#### Partners in Progress

The Board members have become real partners for progress, working to improve the quality of life in the Baltimore region. Over the years they've taken on such issues as the environment, emergency preparedness and public safety, in addition to regional transportation planning. BMC also works with federal and state agencies, representatives of the business community, and community organizations. Citizens can become partners by participating in transportation planning activities and taking actions that can help improve the environment and the quality of life for all the region's residents.





# **Planning for Tomorrow**

BRTB/Transportation 2030 Transportation Summit UAWG/Emergency Preparedness Reservoir Watershed Protection Program



What will it be like to live in the Baltimore region in 10, 20 or 30 years? Where will we live? Where will we work? How will we get there?

Will this still be the "Land of Pleasant Living," or will we have to spend more and more of our time and money coping with the effects of traffic congestion and air and water pollution? How will we deal with large-scale emergencies? BMC takes these issues seriously.











The Transportation Planning Division, working with the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board, considers not only how people and goods will move within and through the region, but also what impact that will have on our air quality.

**The Urban Area Work Group** faces issues the rest of us would rather not think about, and makes sure we'll be prepared for whatever comes our way.

**The Reservoir Watershed Protection Program** works to ensure the long-term safety and quality of our drinking water.

### **BRTB/Transportation 2030**

BMC's Transportation Planning Division provides technical and staff support to the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB), the federally-recognized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Baltimore region. BMC's Board members are also members of the BRTB, along with representatives of the City of Annapolis and the Maryland Departments of Transportation, Planning and the Environment.

Because the Baltimore region does not meet federal clean air standards, the BRTB is charged with updating the long-range transportation plan every three years. In 2001, work began on Transportation 2030, or T-2030, which will serve as a blue-print for the region's transportation system over the next quarter-century.

#### **Developing The Plan**

Developing T-2030 required a two-pronged approach.

- The BRTB sought input from the public, business and industry representatives, and groups with special concerns to understand their needs.
- BMC developed and analyzed data to compare and evaluate the impact of proposed transportation improvements in the region.

In keeping with the federal Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, known as TEA-21, the BRTB addressed seven principles in developing T-2030:

- Support economic vitality and global competitiveness;
- S Increase safety and security for all users;
- Increase accessibility and mobility for all users;
- S Protect and enhance the environment;
- S Enhance the integration and connectivity between travel modes;
- S Promote efficient management; and
- S Emphasize the preservation of the existing system.

In addition, T-2030 was required to be consistent with local land use plans, and federal air quality standards, and fall within the federal, state and local budgets that are expected to be available during the plan period.

The BRTB sought the involvement of the public in every phase of plan development. The Citizen's Advisory Committee, or CAC, met monthly and members presented formal comments to the BRTB. In addition, public outreach included coverage of the plan in the *BRTB Notes* newsletter, meetings with community groups, regular updates by e-mail, and the availability of plan materials on the BMC web site

#### Transportation 2030

The final plan, including a package of projects and activities known as the Preferred Alternative, was adopted by the BRTB in December, 2004. In developing the Preferred Alternative, the BRTB considered a wide range of scenarios, from doing nothing to doing everything.

The end product includes investments in both infrastructure improvements and support activities. More than two-thirds of the nearly \$26 billion plan is allocated for operating and maintaining the transportation system. \$6.7 billion is earmarked for capital projects submitted by the local jurisdictions and Maryland Department of Transportation, while \$239 million is set aside for Transportation Demand Management strategies, such as commuter assistance programs and alternative/clean fuels technology.

All of the capital projects submitted for inclusion in T-2030 underwent technical and policy evaluations. The projects included in the Preferred Alternative were considered to be of the highest priority in implementing the region's transportation goals. Infrastructure improvements include adding lanes to existing highways, adding or replacing interchanges, adding commuter rail capacity, adding an east-west component to the Baltimore transit system, and building new bicycle and pedestrian facilities.



Former Congresswoman Helen Bentley chatted with George Schoener, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, U.S. Department of Transportation, at BMC's Regional Transportation Summit.

#### **Transportation Improvement Program**

The Transportation Improvement Program, which is generally updated annually, is a translation of recommendations from the long-range transportation plan into a short-term program of improvements. The TIP lists federally funded projects and regionally significant, non-federally funded projects planned for implementation over the next five years. The BRTB adopted the TIP for 2005-2009 in July of 2004.

#### **Regional Transportation Summit**

On September 22, 2004, BMC, the BRTB and the Greater Baltimore Committee, in conjunction with the BWI Business Partnership and Baltimore and Howard County Chambers of Commerce, presented a forum on the importance of transportation investment to economic development in the region. An audience of approximately 120 business, government and community leaders gathered at Baltimore's World Trade Center to hear federal and state officials and business leaders address this vital issue.

All of the participants underscored the importance of transportation in connecting workers with jobs, and products with markets. They urged the business community to take advantage of the transportation infrastructure in developing their business plans, and to support our local delegation in the Maryland General Assembly in securing transportation funding for the Baltimore region.



### **Emergency Preparedness**

Emergency Preparedness means being ready to handle any kind of unplanned event that disrupts everyday life, from brief power outages to floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, blizzards, epidemics, hazardous materials incidents, and terror attacks.

Since 9/11, BMC has worked to ensure that the Baltimore region as a whole is prepared to respond to both natural and manmade disasters. The Board of Directors convened a Regional Emergency Preparedness Task Force to consider nine areas: sheltering; water supply safety; interoperability of communications systems; debris management and disposal; transportation, including evacuation plans; public health; fire; police; and public information. The committees reported their findings to the BMC Board of Directors in October, 2002

#### Urban Area Work Group

In 2003 the Urban Area Work Group was created to coordinate emergency preparedness activities in the Baltimore region. The

UAWG includes committees of fire, police, emergency medical services and public works personnel from BMC's member jurisdictions.

One of the UAWG's responsibilities is to assess the region's needs and recommend equipment acquisitions that are eligible for federal reimbursement. The UAWG's initial focus was on radio communications infrastructure, hardware and software; mobile emergency generators to serve as power backup for critical infrastructure; and a decontamination vehicle for each jurisdiction.

#### **Radio Communications**

In February 2005, the UAWG unveiled the Central Maryland Area Radio Communications system, which enables any emergency responders from any of our jurisdictions to talk directly using special 800-mHz radios. The UAWG allocated \$700,000 to purchase 284 radios for use in Annapolis, Baltimore City, and Baltimore, Carroll and Harford counties. Howard County purchased radios with its own funds. An additional \$200,000 was used to deploy infrastructure in Central Maryland and connect sites to Maryland Emergency Management Agency and local dispatch centers. Funding for both projects was provided through an Urban Area Security Initiative grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Domestic Preparedness.

#### Community-Based Critical Infrastructure Protection Grant Program

In the fall of 2004, the UAWG launched a program of grants for community-based, non-profit groups considered to be at risk of a terrorist act. Eligible organizations were encouraged to apply for funding for security enhancements such as closed-circuit television systems, vehicle barriers, lighting, fencing, personal identification systems, and bullet- and bomb-proof glass.

The UAWG awarded a total of \$1,006,204, which was shared by 29 applicants throughout the region. The maximum amount awarded to any one applicant was \$50,000.

#### **Other Activities**

At the direction of the BRTB, BMC is engaged in developing the Baltimore Regional Protective Action Plan. This 18-month project began in July 2004, and is examining the possible outcomes of incidents involving rail, shipping, freight movement, bio-hazards, transit, air travel, and an extensive power outage resulting in the disruption of telecommunications and traffic signals.

BMC also facilitated the procurement of a regional emergency incident management software system. This software will enable first responders to coordinate their activities.



#### **Reservoir Watershed Protection Program**

For more than 25 years, BMC and its predecessor organizations have worked to protect one of our region's natural treasures – our water supply.

The Loch Raven, Prettyboy and Liberty Reservoirs together provide high-quality water for approximately 1.8 million people in Baltimore City and the five surrounding counties. In addition, more than half the homes and several communities in the 467-square-mile reservoir watershed area depend on wells that draw from the watersheds' groundwater.

Our watersheds are truly a regional resource. The majority of the reservoir watershed land is in Baltimore County. Much is in Carroll County. Very small portions are in Harford County and southern Pennsylvania. Only six percent of the watershed land is owned by Baltimore City, which operates the water system.

In addition to being a valuable water supply source, the reservoirs and their tributary streams offer extensive recreational opportunities and provide extensive and diverse habitats for fish and other wildlife. The reservoirs are aesthetic and recreational treasures.

#### Protecting the watersheds

In the 1970s, all three reservoirs were found to have high levels of phosphorus and excessive sedimentation. A coordinated effort had to be taken to correct the problems and strive for continual improvement in the reservoirs' water quality.

In 1979, a Reservoir Agreement was drafted to deal with high

levels of phosphorus and excessive sedimentation in the reservoirs. That agreement evolved into the 1984 Reservoir

Watershed Management Agreement, signed by Baltimore City, Baltimore and Carroll counties, Baltimore County Soil Conservation District, Carroll Soil Conservation District, the Maryland Departments of Agriculture and the Environment, and BMC's predecessor organization. The agreement was updated and reaffirmed by the same signatories in 1990, and again in 2003. The Reservoir Watershed Protection Committee is currently working on a new agreement and accompanying action strategies. This initiative is to be completed by October, 2005.



Baltimore County Executive Jim Smith, Baltimore County Councilman Bryan McIntire, Mayor Martin O'Malley look on as Carroll County Commissioner Julia Gouge signs the 2003 Reaffirmation of the 1984 Reservoir Watershed Management Agreement.



# **Measuring Change**

Community Profiles Building Permits Data System Building Permits Data Online Regional Economic Indicators Regional Information Center



In order to plan effectively for tomorrow, it's important to know where we were yesterday and where we are today.

For example, in 1970 Baltimore City accounted for almost half the region's jobs, and most employees traveled from the surrounding areas to downtown jobs.

Since then, residential and commercial development in the surrounding counties has led to massive changes.

# 5

According to Census 2000, about 170,000 workers commuted from the region's counties to jobs in the city, while about half that many city residents commuted to jobs in the counties.

Almost 115,000 workers commuted to jobs in Baltimore County from Baltimore City and the region's other counties.

Meanwhile, 135,000 residents of the Baltimore region commuted to jobs in Western Maryland, Pennsylvania, Washington DC and its suburbs, and Northern Virginia.

#### **Community Profiles**

Anyone seeking demographic information at the community level can visit BMC's web site for data on all 94 regional planning districts (RPDs) in Baltimore City and the five surrounding counties. BMC has organized data in tabular form from the Census, its own Building Permit Data System and employment database, and socio-economic projections from the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board's Cooperative Forecasting Group.

Data headings include population, households, housing, labor force, employment, education, income, major employers, residential and commercial development and socio-economic projections. Population, household and housing data are also broken



BMC collects and analyzes data from a number of sources, including the U. S. Census and local building permits, to support transportation planning – but the information produced has implications far beyond transportation.

down by census tract within the RPD. Detailed maps showing census tracts and transportation analysis zones (TAZs) accompany the data, along with a representative photograph of each community.

While Community Profiles are a useful tool for planners and policymakers, the resource has wider applicability. The Profiles provide invaluable information for businesses that may be looking to relocate or expand operations in the Baltimore region, and should also prove to be a useful research tool for residential and commercial developers, and marketing firms.

#### **Building Permits Data System**

Every new construction project or any significant improvement to an existing structure requires a building permit issued by the local government – the county or an incorporated municipality. In the Baltimore region, permits are issued by the six major jurisdictions plus the City of Annapolis; Mount Airy in Carroll County; and Aberdeen, Bel Air and Havre de Grace in Harford County.

For over three decades, staff of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC) and its predecessor organizations have compiled the region's building permit information and organized it into a standardized database. The resulting information provides a continual record of plans for new and renovated residential, commercial/industrial and institutional building projects. The BMC staff itself makes use of this information as a leading indicator of new regional development patterns.

Because of the interest in this information on the part of many other users – real estate market analysts, economic development professionals, specialty contractors, consultants and academic researchers – BMC makes the data available printed in reports and a searchable electronic database.

A summary of planned building activity across the Baltimore region is compiled monthly from the building permits received and processed by the BMC staff. Quarterly and annual reports include analysis of regional trends, supported by maps and charts highlighting notable development activity during the reporting period. These printed reports are available through annual subscriptions. Single reports are available for purchase through the Regional Information Center.

#### **Building Permits Data Online**

In 2002, BMC launched BPDS Online, making it possible for users to search for building permits from any computer anywhere, at any time of night or day. New permits are added to the database weekly, as soon as the latest permits issued by local jurisdictions have been processed. Building Permits Online allows the user to generate custom reports by selecting specific types of construction projects, time frame, geographic area and estimated cost of the proposed project. Building Permits Online is a subscription service.





#### **Regional Economic Indicators**

BMC is currently updating the 2001 edition of Regional Economic Indicators, the most comprehensive collection of demographic and economic data on the region available. Regional Economic Indicators includes valuable statistics on population and housing, employment and income, transportation, business conditions and government finances for the region as a whole as well as for individual jurisdictions.

#### **Regional Information Center**

The Regional Information Center at BMC, a branch of Baltimore City's Enoch Pratt Free Library system, is a repository for regional and urban planning materials with a focus on local demographic information, economic development, transportation planning, land use and environmental issues. The Center is open to the public by appointment between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on weekdays. Frequent users include small and large businesses; non-profit organizations and community groups; government agencies; students; and the media. In Fiscal Year 2005, the Regional Information Center responded to more than 2,300 requests for information from walk-in visitors, e-mail and telephone.

Contact the Regional Information Center at 410-732-9570 to request information or make an appointment.

#### www.baltometro.org

If you have a question about the Baltimore region, BMC's web site is a good place to start looking for an answer. In fact, the site contains so much information that it went through a complete restructuring and redesign in the last half of Fiscal Year 2005. Visitors can look at bidding opportunities for vendors, register for free RideShare matching services, access economic and demographic data, view transportation planning reports and documents, learn about air quality, check out job openings, find links to the web sites of local governments and other organizations, and much more.

In Fiscal Year 2005, the BMC web site recorded almost 200,000 visits, 26 percent more than in the previous year. Visitors spent more time on the site, as well. Page views within the site increased by nearly 50 percent, from 277,222 to 409,314.

The areas receiving the most visits were Cooperative Purchasing, RideShare, Community Profiles, Bicycle Commuting and Maintenance, Transportation System Development in the Region, Vision 2030, Clean Commute Month, and Mapping.

# www.baltometro.org



# **Building Partnerships**

Clearing the Air Telework Partnership with Employers Environmental Justice Rating the Region



Some of the issues the region faces require collaboration beyond the confines of our member jurisdictions.

Air pollution doesn't recognize city or county lines. Commuter traffic to and from the region contributes to highway congestion.

Other organizations can lend their own perspective and special expertise as we frame questions and seek answers.



#### Ozone Exceedance Days - Baltimore Nonattainment Area

#### Clearing the Air

A little more than ten years ago, BMC and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) identified the need for a bi-regional air quality campaign. Neither Baltimore nor Washington met federal air quality standards for ground-level ozone. We agreed that we share a single "air shed" and that our populations travel freely between the two regions for employment, personal business and recreation.

In the summer of 1995, BMC and COG launched ENDZONE, a campaign to educate the public about ground-level ozone and promote voluntary actions to improve air quality. Two years later, the BMC and COG Boards chartered ENDZONE Partners as a semi-independent non-profit organization to formalize and expand on the initial campaign. The name was eventually changed to Clean Air Partners, recognizing that both Baltimore and Washington would fail to meet new EPA standards for fine particulate matter. Since the beginning, BMC has provided staff support and leadership to this bi-regional initiative. BMC works closely with the Maryland Department of the Environment to coordinate Baltimore's Air Quality Action Days program, which enlists businesses to provide air quality information to their employees and also to alter their own day-to-day activities to reduce air pollution.

In the past ten years, the number of Code Red days, when the region violated the EPA standard for ground-level ozone, has declined. Although ozone levels tend to be higher in hot, humid summers and lower in cool, rainy summers, the overall trend is still downward. The hot summer of 2002 was similar to the summer of 1988. In 1988, there were 36 days when ozone levels exceeded the health-based standard in the Baltimore region, while there were only 16 exceedance days in 2002. During the mild summer of 2004, there was only one exceedance.

#### **Telework Partnership with Employers**

More than 3.8 million people commute to work each day in the Baltimore and Washington metropolitan region. More than 71 percent of them drive alone. Motor vehicles account for about 30-40 percent of the pollutants which can cause poor air quality and increase the number of Code Red air pollution days in the region.

One of the ways to reduce air pollution, and also traffic congestion, is to keep vehicles off the road. One way to do that is to take work to employees rather than make employees go to work. In this age of cell phones, fax machines and computers, telework, or working from home or another remote location, is an idea whose time has come. Employees can be productive and stay in the loop, but keep out of traffic.

BMC partners with COG and the Maryland Department of Transportation in administering the Telework Partnership with Employers, a pilot program that provides grant funding for contractors to work with private sector employers in setting up telework programs. Eligible employers may choose a contractor to evaluate their operations, make recommendations about setting up a telework program for their employees, and then assist in implementing and evaluating the success of the program.

#### **Environmental Justice**

In 2004, Morgan State University, the Greater Baltimore Urban League and BMC jointly sponsored a series of "listening sessions" to capture the transportation concerns of minority and low-income residents in the region. The listening sessions were the heart of the Baltimore Region Environmental Justice and Transportation Project (BREJTP), funded by a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The partnership scheduled the listening sessions in the early evening at churches, libraries and social services agencies in eight neighborhoods in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Columbia and Annapolis. Although the comments were often very neighborhood-specific, there were some areas of common concern:

- Parking, with large local employers and commercial vehicles putting a strain on local residential parking;
- Maintenance of streets, sidewalks, bus stops and transit stations;
- Inadequate transportation options for people with disabilities and medical patients;
- Poor bus service, and its impact on employment opportunities;
- Seed for coordination between MTA and local transit providers;
- *s* and a comprehensive regional transit map.

In November approximately 80 participants attended **Transforming Transportation: A Community Dialogue on Transportation and Environmental Justice**. Speakers included Maryland State Senator Lisa Gladding and former Governor Parris Glendening, now associated with Smart Growth America.

#### Rating the Region

BMC also collaborates with the Greater Baltimore Committee and Economic Alliance of Greater Baltimore on *State of the Region*, a compilation of data comparing the Baltimore metropolitan area with other regions. An updated edition is scheduled for release in the fall of 2005.



State Senator Lisa Gladden speaks with a resident of Cherry Hill at an Environmental Justice Listening Session.



# **Reducing Government Expense**

Cutting Electricity Costs Strategic Energy Initiative Making Bidding More Competitive



The Baltimore Regional Cooperative Purchasing Committee (BRCPC), is a standing committee of the region's purchasing officers.

By collaborating on bid requirements and contract administration, BRCPC provides cost reductions and administrative costs savings in the million dollar range each year to the regions local governments.

The BRCPC established subcommittees of experts for electricity energy, public schools and public works.

### **Reducing Government Expense**

#### **Cutting Electricity Costs**

In 2003, BRCPC awarded two contracts for the purchase of electricity, estimated to save local government a total of more than \$10 million through the fall of 2008.

In May 2004, the BRCPC awarded a 23-month, \$67.3 million contract to Reliant Energy to supply electricity for 23 local government entities. The contract with is expected to save more than \$6 million over the term of the contract, compared with the standard offer service.

In November, the BRCPC awarded a 30-month, \$61 million contract to Constellation NewEnergy to supply electricity to a pool of "P" type accounts. The new contract is estimated to save approximately \$4.8 million over the course of the contract, compared with the SOS rate.

#### Strategic Energy Initiative

These contracts achieved savings by using a large pool of accounts to purchase electricity at a deeply discounted retail rate. The BRCPC noted that many large companies achieve even greater savings by eliminating "middleman" costs and procuring electricity directly from the competitive marketplace.

At its June 2005 meeting, the BMC Board voted to secure an expert electricity consultant to advise the Baltimore-area governments on implementing a new electricity procurement strategy. The new strategy is expected to save the six local governments over half a million dollars in electricity costs in the near term. The savings are expected to grow as the energy procurement strategy is fully implemented.

#### Making Bidding More Competitive



The BRCPC also realized significant savings in 2004 on items such as copier paper and fuel oils through online reverse auctions.

In a reverse auction, buyers and sellers swap roles. Vendors bid

against each other online in real time, hoping to make the best offer. The vendors have reviewed the bid specifications in advance, and have been pre-qualified. When they log in to the auction website, they're prepared to be competitive, eventually shaving off tenths and even hundredths of a cent per unit to make the winning offer. When a large quantity is involved, those tiny increments add up to real savings for the buyers.

The first reverse auction took place in November of 2003 for 1.25 million reams of copier paper in a variety of sizes and colors. The bidding began at \$2.50 per ream for 20 lb. white 8 ½" by 11" paper, and dropped to \$1.649 by the time the dust settled. The Baltimore area school systems saved a total of \$142,528 overall. BRCPC credits about three percent of the savings to the reverse bidding process.

The process was so successful that BRCPC followed up with a reverse auction for fuel oils on July 7. Bidding was highly competitive and, once again, the savings exceeded expectations.



# **Engaging** The Public

Get Involved Take Action



What does BMC have to do with ME?

We complain about traffic, but don't know what to do about it.

We think it might be nice to walk to local shops and services without having to risk life and limb crossing busy streets.

We fret about the rising cost of gasoline and wish we could do something about that, too.



#### Be Part of the Process

Transportation planning impacts everyone. If you walk, ride a bike, drive a car, or take a bus, train or airplane, you are affected by transportation planning. And, although most people don't think about it, almost all of the things you buy at a store are delivered by trucks,

trains or air cargo.Regional transportation planning should reflect how transportation impacts you, your neighbor, and everyone else in the region.

#### Come to Meetings

BRTB meetings are open to the public, and each meeting includes a period for public comments. This is an opportunity to voice your transportation concerns directly to the region's elected executives. The meeting schedule and agendas are posted on the BMC web site.

Another way to get involved is by attending meetings of the Citizens Advisory Committee to learn about current issues. Members of the CAC are appointed by the BRTB to make sure that all geographic areas of the region and diverse points of view are equally represented. You can attend as a guest and participate in discussions as time allows. You can also talk to members of the CAC to get their perspective on issues.

#### Read All About It

Even if you can't attend a BRTB or CAC meeting, you can stay connected via B'More Involved, BMC's free electronic newsletter filled with helpful information on transportation planning, citizen involvement, and environmental justice. This important information is e-mailed to subscribers 2-4 times a month and is a great way for you to learn more,stay up-to-date on important events and news, and of course find out how you can be more involved. Visit www. baltometro.org to subscribe. BMC also publishes BRTB Notes, a free newsletter with more detail about all the work that goes into developing the transportation plan. BRTB Notes are also available online.

#### Freight Movement Task Force

The Freight Movement Task Force, an Advisory Committee to the BRTB, provides the freight movement community with a voice in the regional transportation planning process. The group meets quarterly and makes recommendations for the efficient, effective, environmentally-sensitive and safe movement of freight. Members include trucking firms, railroad operators, port operators, airport operators, freight shippers and receivers, local and national interest groups, economic development organizations, academics, MDOT, the Maryland State Police, U.S. Department of Transportation, and BMC.

In Fiscal Year 2005, the group endorsed traffic studies at the intersection of Boston and Ponca Streets in Baltimore City, and in the vicinity of the Maryland Food Center Authority in Hunt Valley, Baltimore County.

#### Bike To Work Day/Clean Commute Month

For the ninth consecutive year, BMC and the BRTB promoted clean commuting in May. The calendar of events focused on alternatives ranging from bicycling and carpooling to clean fuel technologies.

Clean Commute Month 2005 kicked off with Bike to Work Day rallies in Baltimore City, Annapolis, Towson and Bel Air. BMC staff promoted Clean Commute Month at the Towsontown Spring Festival, Flower Mart, and in visits to employers. Commuter Thank You events at area park and ride lots rewarded carpoolers and transit users with morning refreshments. Clean Commute Month activities continued into June, with Clean Car Clinics in Catonsville and Aberdeen. All during May, morning commuters heard Clean Commute messages on local radio stations.

#### Walkable Communities Workshops

In March 2005, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Group to the BRTB coordinated a series of Walkable Communities Workshops with funding from the Maryland Highway Safety Office. During each workshop, trainers delivered a presentation on the elements and benefits of walkable communities and solutions to common problems. Then the trainers led a walking tour of the study area, encouraging participants to understand the pedestrian's point of view. After the walkabout, participants shared their impressions of the walk, and offered suggestions for improving walkability.

#### RideShare

BMC, with funding from the Maryland Transit Administration, administers RideShare programs for Baltimore and Carroll counties. RideShare is part of a network that stretches from the Pennsylvania line into Northern Virginia, and maintains a computerized database of commuters in search of carpools. Applicants provide information about where they live, where they work, and their work schedules. The computer works its magic and provides a list of potential matches. Applicants contact each other and make their own ridesharing arrangements. RideShare also provides information about transit services and assists employers in developing commuter option programs.

In Fiscal Year 2005, RideShare assisted nearly 6,000 commuters, including RideShare applicants and those seeking information about transit. Visits to metrorideshare.com and applicants for carpool matching increased by 50 percent between the last quarter of FY 2004 and the end of the first quarter of FY 2005, and the numbers continue to grow. RideShare advertises its services on local radio stations, and in the spring of 2005 published its second issue of Way to Go, a supplement to Style magazine featuring articles on commuting options.

# TAKE ACTION



## **Board of Directors**



Julia W. Gouge, Vice Chair

President, Carroll County Board of Commissioners

Julia W. Nouge



Janet S. Owens Anne Arundel County Executive

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James M. Harkins Harford County Executive



James N. Robey Howard County Executive



Martin O'Malley Mayor, Baltimore City





James T. Smith Jr., Chair Baltimore County Executive

## **Fiscal Year 2005 Budget Highlights**

### **Expenditures:** \$4,116,961



**Transportation Planning Programs** \$2,123,941



**Direct Contributions to Local Governments** \$528,375

**Direct Services to Local Governments** \$176,475

### **Revenue Sources** \$4,164,685

Federal and State Transportation **Planning Grants** \$3,401,105

Local Government Contributions \$490,080

**Special Grants** \$170,000



#### A Note from the Executive Director

Fiscal 2005 has been a challenging and rewarding year for the Baltimore Metropolitan Council. In January of this year, the BMC board appointed me Executive Director. Looking back, I'm excited by what we have accomplished in such a short period of time.

Through our own business practices and efficiency, BMC has achieved sound financial footing. We are now working to elevate our profile as a premier regional organization by continuing to serve our member jurisdictions and offering a productive forum for problem solving that is focused on real results.

We are also working to increase our value to the private sector by offering specialized services, including custom mapping and geo-coding, statistical analysis, demographic and economic forecasting, as well as technical support for strategic planning.

As you can see from these pages, long-range transportation planning is at the organization's core. However, the breadth of our collaborative involvement in regional issues extends well beyond transportation, into areas such as the environment, public safety, government efficiency and the regional economy.

It is my hope that in the months ahead, more people throughout the Baltimore region -- in both the public and private sectors -- will look to our organization as an informational and action-oriented resource. With our talented and dedicated staff, I am certain we can make it happen.

Larry W. Klimovitz



**Special Contracts** \$103,500

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### How Can BMC Help You?

Comprehensive Support for
Strategic Planning
Custom Mapping
Geographic Coding
Statistical Analysis
Demographic/ Economic Forecasting

# www.baltometro.org

**BMC** 2700 Lighthouse Point East, Suit 310 Baltimore, MD 21224-4774 410 732 0500