

COG QUARTERLY



Baltimore Metropolitan Council

CONNECT THE

L • O • T • S

ANNAPOLIS TRANSIT / CHARM CITY CIRCULATOR / CARROLL TRANSIT SYSTEM

HARFORD TRANSIT LINK / QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY RIDE

REGIONAL TRANSIT AGENCY OF CENTRAL MARYLAND

This year, BRTB continues its work to improve transit in the Baltimore region by bringing together **Local Operating Transit Systems (LOTS)** from around the Baltimore region to better coordinate with one another. Coordination will include alignment with the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) routes, as well as other issues of shared interest.

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BAY-CATION

It's hard to believe that we're headed into the fall already! Perhaps there's time this **Labor Day weekend** for one more trip to the Eastern Shore? BMC provides data from Labor Day weekend 2016 to show you the best time to travel during the holiday.



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ASK AN EXPERT

We sat down with Franklyn Baker, president and CEO of the **United Way of Central Maryland**, to learn more about the organization's continued efforts to stabilize and improve access to quality education, employment, health and housing for the Baltimore region.



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IN DATA WE TRUST

An open data site is a portal that allows members of the public to easily search for and download information. BMC is leveraging this technology in its new **Regional Geospatial (GIS) Data Center**.



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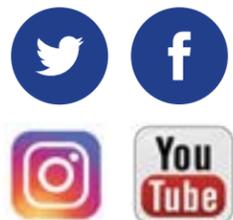
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COG Quarterly is a digital publication of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council. For more information, please email staff at COGquarterly@baltometro.org.



COG Quarterly, as a digital publication, intends to be interactive. So when you see text that is **blue** or **orange**, it contains a hyperlink to more information for you. Click away!



INTRODUCTION

Connecting regional, state initiatives is key to success

This year, the **Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)** turns 25 years old. As a regional planning organization, we spend most of our time looking into the future, but this anniversary is an opportune time for us to take a moment and look back. The last quarter century has been a time of tremendous growth and rapid change for our region. Our population has grown by 13 percent, companies have found their niches in an increasingly technology-driven economy and our *new* football team has won two Super Bowls.

Like every office in the region, BMC has changed with the times. On the technological front, we have stayed ahead of the curve with GIS and analytic capabilities. We have expanded our public policy portfolio to include new areas from housing policy to energy purchasing. Even our footprint has expanded with the addition of Queen Anne's County to our member jurisdictions.

What has not changed, however, is the service we provide to the region. Our mission, steadfast since our founding, is to identify mutual interests and to develop collaborative strategies that help improve our region's quality of life and economic vitality. In short, we remain a resource for the region.

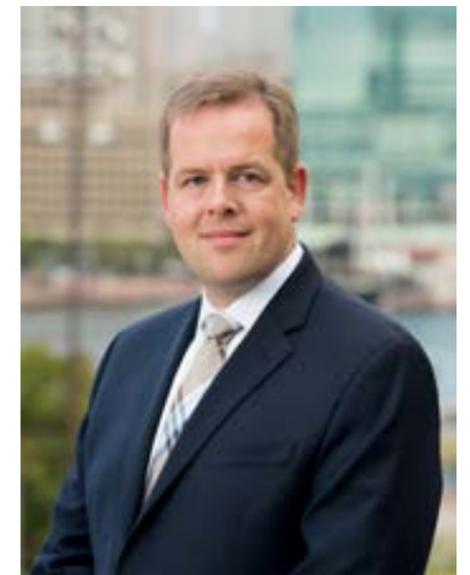
Our Summer 2017 issue of COG Quarterly, particularly our cover story "Connect the LOTS," exemplifies what

all can be achieved through regional coordination. As the **Maryland Transit Administration (MTA)** works to implement BaltimoreLink, our region's updated and improved bus plan, BMC is helping locally operated transit systems (LOTS) maximize the benefits of these changes. By supporting our LOTS with planning and operational assistance, BMC is helping our local partners to provide critical services to transit dependent populations outside of MTA's core service area.

On the national front, BMC's housing policy coordinator participated in an exclusive event in Minneapolis to share with other planners the Baltimore region's strategy to create affordable development. The event, sponsored by the **Brookings Institute**, brought together housing thought leaders from across the country to share their best practices and to learn from the great work of others.

Locally, our procurement officer got her hands dirty (figuratively) during a **Waste Management** recycling plant tour, and found some additional areas of savings for our jurisdictions. Our procurement team also held a critical meeting with local public safety officials to begin the work of transitioning our region to next generation 911.

As always in COG Quarterly, we are lucky to hear from a regional thought leader in



our "Ask An Expert" section, and in this issue we have an inspiring discussion with Franklyn Baker, president and CEO of the **United Way of Central Maryland**. The United Way funds countless programs and projects throughout our region and works closely with our members to improve the lives of all of our residents.

Finally, we're thrilled to announce that we had a record-breaking Bike to Work Day 2017, with more than 2,300 registered cyclists at 38 events around the region! In addition to another successful Bike to Work Day, our partners in Howard County unveiled a comprehensive bikeshare pilot program in downtown Columbia.

Thank you for your interest in BMC and our work. Please let us know if you have any comments or story suggestions by emailing us at COGquarterly@baltometro.org.

Sincerely,

Michael B. Kelly,
Executive Director



Brookings Institute's Twin Cities event addresses strategies to finance affordable housing development



Brookings Institution Vice President Amy Liu (center) and Maryland DHCD's Gregory Hare (second from left) hear about the Twin Cities' experience coordinating a consolidated RFP with their state housing agency at the "Communities of Practice" in Minneapolis in June. Photo: BMC

BMC, and local and state housing leaders joined counterparts from Chicago, Kansas City, and the Twin Cities on June 26-27, as the Brookings Institution held its second "Communities of Practice," hosted at the McKnight Foundation in Minneapolis. Brookings hosted the first event in Washington, D.C. in January.

This recent gathering focused on the challenge of financing affordable housing development, with attendees listening to strategies pursued in each other's regions. The [Brookings' Metropolitan Policy Program](#) has long highlighted regional initiatives from across the country.

Dan Pontious, BMC housing policy coordinator, updated the other participants

on Baltimore's new [Regional Project-Based Voucher \(PBV\) program](#), which already reflects inter-metro area collaboration, since it was modeled on Chicago's Regional Housing Initiative. Tiffany Smith, of the [Howard County Housing Commission](#), also shared the agency's innovative strategies for creating its own internal affordability subsidies within its portfolio of rental housing.



Also representing the Baltimore region were Amy Wilkinson, of the [Housing Authority of Baltimore City](#), Kathleen Koch, of [Arundel Community Development Services](#), and John Maneval and Gregory Hare, of the [Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development](#).

Elizabeth Kneebone, a Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program fellow, worked with consultant Robin Snyderman to have participants from each of the four metro areas highlight practices that could be helpful to the others.

The Kansas City region shared its [Planning Sustainable Places Program](#), funded by the transportation departments from both states in its metro area: Missouri and Kansas. The region's metropolitan planning organization (MPO), the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), manages a competition every two years where local governments apply for and win funds to plan an improved future - often a new, desired form of development. MARC programs approximately \$50 million in federal transportation funds every two years, and has allocated between \$825,000 and \$1.8 million each cycle for planning projects. Over the years, participants in this planning program have become more successful at securing capital transportation funds through the programming process.

The Chicago region highlighted its [Opportunity Investment Fund](#) - a new fund designed to help developers purchase existing housing in high opportunity areas,



The Howard County Housing Commission's Tiffany Smith (second from right) and BMC's Dan Pontious (center) share innovative housing initiatives in the Baltimore region with agency leaders from other metropolitan areas at Brookings' "Communities of Practice" in Minneapolis in June. Photo: BMC

while securing a commitment to attach project-based vouchers to 20 percent of the rental homes in those properties. A main goal of this new fund, seeded by a grant from the U.S. Treasury's [Capital Magnet Fund](#) to the [Community Investment Corporation](#), is to provide opportunities for low-income people in safe communities served by high quality schools and job growth.

The Twin Cities region highlighted the [Consolidated Request for Proposals \(RFP\)](#) program that local governments and public housing authorities coordinate

with the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA). The consolidated state RFP helps coordinate local and regional housing funding with the State's allocation of Low Income Housing Tax Credits and other subsidies. It also often helps local housing agencies efficiently receive the benefit of reviews that can be required by various housing programs.

BMC and other area representatives will participate in the next "Communities of Practice" convening in Chicago in November. ■



Round 9 forecasts in development; BRTB scheduled to vote in July 2018

Much of BRTB's technical work is accomplished through the use of a travel demand forecasting model that simulates traffic volumes on the region's transportation network. The model can be used to perform analyses that help to inform transportation infrastructure investment throughout the region.

The [Cooperative Forecasting Group \(CFG\)](#) develops a set of population, household, and employment control totals and small area forecasts for BRTB to use for transportation and air quality planning. The data set is utilized internally as an input to the travel demand model and for air quality conformity testing, and is available to federal, state and local government agencies, as well as the general public.

Created in 1978, the CFG membership includes representatives from the BRTB's jurisdictions. Representatives from state agencies, the [Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments \(MWCOCG\)](#) and BMC staff also participate in the deliberations of the CFG.

The local planning agencies on the CFG develop their own estimates and forecasts of population, households and employment based upon local comprehensive plans, adopted zoning maps and regulations, and an inventory of residential holding capacity. The allocation of employment to the small area and its distribution across industry sectors is based largely upon an inventory of employers across the region. The forecasts developed by the local jurisdictions are submitted to BMC staff for review of quality control and consistency, and ultimately go to the BRTB

for its endorsement as the official regional forecasts.

New forecast rounds are developed on an as-needed basis, but are generally triggered by the update of major planning documents by the local jurisdictions, significant unforeseen demographic shifts, and the availability of small area data. The CFG can update the cooperative forecasts annually to account for unexpected changes when a complete new round of forecasts is not warranted.



The CFG meets bi-monthly to review changes in local land use patterns, to discuss socio-economic trends, newly released [U.S. Census Bureau](#) figures and other indicators, and to make adjustments to existing forecasts to reflect new development, changing market conditions, and changes in local policy.

In August 2016, the BRTB endorsed the latest forecast data set, Round 8B, which includes population, households, and employment estimates and forecasts for the 2010-2040 time-period. The data is available at the regional and jurisdictional

levels, as well as small geographies including 94 regional planning districts and 1,391 transportation analysis zones.

The Round 8B forecasts are updates to the Round 8A cooperative forecasts that the BRTB endorsed in June 2014. Significant adjustments accounted for in Round 8B were the inclusion of the [Port Covington](#) and [Tradepoint Atlantic](#) developments, and the addition of the urbanized portion of [Queen Anne's County](#).

The CFG is currently developing a new round of forecasts, Round 9. The call for a new round of forecasts was precipitated by the fact that several local jurisdictions have completed comprehensive rezoning and master plan updates since the Round 8 series of forecasts began in 2013. The new round of forecasts also provides the opportunity to recalibrate the data set to a base year of 2015 and to extend the horizon year to 2045.

The local jurisdictions have submitted their draft control totals for the Round 9 forecasts (with the exception of Carroll County). The local jurisdictions have a deadline of November 30 to finalize their forecasts (at the jurisdictional and TAZ levels) and submit them to BMC. The Round 9 forecasts are on schedule to go before the BRTB for endorsement in July 2018, and will serve as inputs into the air quality and travel demand modeling efforts of the forthcoming long-range plan, *Maximize 2045: A Performance-Based Transportation Plan*. ■



BMC hosts fourth "What's on Tap" event, highlighting data, apps and analytics



The Baltimore region is a large and complex area that covers more than 1.6 million acres, houses 2.7 million residents and is home to 1.7 million jobs. From 2010 to 2040, the region's population is expected to grow 14 percent, while employment growth is projected at 27 percent. This growth will strain the region's transportation network. BMC hosted "What's on Tap: Data, Apps & Analytics" on Tuesday, June 20, 6 p.m., at the Diamondback Brewing Company. "What's on Tap: Data, Apps & Analytics" featured speakers: Michael Pack, director of the [Center for Advanced Transportation Technology \(CATT\)](#) Laboratory at the University of Maryland (top photo), and Katherine Klosek, senior implementation advisor at [GovEx, a division of Johns Hopkins University's 21st Century Cities Initiative and What Works Cities](#). The "What's on Tap" speaker series is a forum to discover, understand, and share knowledge of current and emerging issues, solutions and innovations that can foster a better Baltimore region. Photos: (Above) BMC; (Page 6) Courtesy of SHA.



BIKE/PED

Howard County Bikeshare launches 70-bike, seven station program in downtown Columbia



Howard County Executive Allan H. Kittleman (center) launches Howard County Bikeshare on Thursday, July 6. Pictured with Kittleman are (left to right): Steve Snelgrove, Danielle McQuigg, Mary Kay Sigaty, Nikki Highsmith Vernick, Greg Fitchitt, Loomis Zayzay, Barbara Nicklas, Jane Dembner, Braunyno Ayotte, and Chris Eatough. Photo: Courtesy of Howard County

Howard County residents and visitors now have a new way to get around downtown Columbia.

With the support of multiple community stakeholders, Howard County Executive Allan H. Kittleman launched **Howard County Bikeshare** on Thursday, July 6.

Bikeshare systems provide a fleet of public bicycles at automated, secure docking stations, located throughout a community, to accommodate point-to-point trips. They are considered the fastest growing form of public transportation, with more than 30 new systems nationally since 2010, providing more than 36 million trips.

“Bikeshare connects people and places and makes the journey as good as the destination,” said Chris Eatough, bicycle and pedestrian coordinator for Howard County. “Howard County Bikeshare fits in perfectly with the development of Downtown Columbia and Oakland Mills as a vibrant, healthy, sustainable community. Thanks to Howard County Executive, Allan Kittleman, and all the community partners for making this possible.”

The pilot program includes a network of seven bikeshare stations with 70 bikes for short-term use to members. Howard County Bikeshare selected **Bewegen Technologies** as its vendor for its world class technology, featuring GPS equipped,

electric assist bikes. Bewegen Technologies also is the vendor for the **Baltimore Bike Share program**. The system includes both traditional and electric assist bikes. Electric assist bikes are operated exactly like a normal bike but include a background power source that helps riders as they pedal.

The stations are located strategically throughout Downtown Columbia at **Howard County General Hospital**, **Howard Community College**, the Columbia lake front, the **Mall in Columbia**, the One Merriweather office building, **Oakland Mills Village Center** and Blandair Park.



BIKE/PED

The six-year pilot bikeshare program is supported by a number of community partners including the **Horizon Foundation**, **Columbia Association**, the **Howard Hughes Corporation**, Howard County General Hospital, Howard Community College, and **General Growth Properties** (the Mall in Columbia). These supporters provide funding and license agreements, allowing space to install bikeshare stations. The county will evaluate the success of the bikeshare program after the six-year pilot concludes and will determine at that time whether it will continue or expand.

Howard County Bikeshare offers several levels of membership, including \$85 for a yearly pass, \$15 for a monthly pass, and \$2 for a single trip “Go Pass.” Cyclists can purchase passes at the Bikeshare stations, or Online at www.HowardCountyBikeshare.com. There also is a companion app that cyclists may also download from [iTunes](https://itunes.apple.com) or [Google Play](https://play.google.com). ■



Howard County Bikeshare will connect downtown Columbia through a system of 70 bicycles and seven stations. Photo: Courtesy of Howard County



Cyclists test out the Howard County Bikeshare bicycles around Lake Kittamaquidi in downtown Columbia. Photo: Courtesy of Howard County

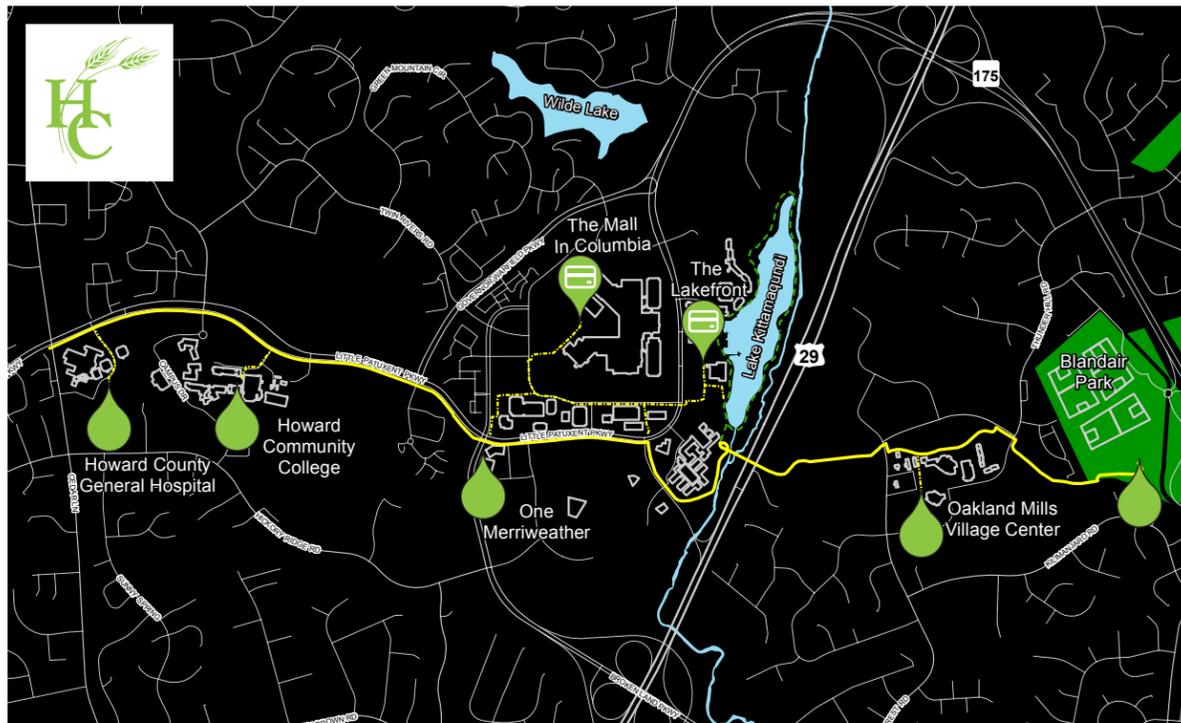


HOWARD COUNTY BIKESHARE

POWERED BY THE HORIZON FOUNDATION

System Map

See full detailed map at www.howardcountybikeshare.com



MAP LEGEND

-  Bikeshare Station
Pay by App
-  Bikeshare Station
Pay at Kiosk
-  Route to
Bikeshare Stations
-  Downtown
Columbia Trail
-  Lake Kittamaquindi
Loop



Record-breaking number of registered cyclists participate in region's 20th annual Bike to Work Day



Approximately 2,300 registered cyclists attended 38 Bike to Work Day events around the Baltimore region on Friday, May 19. Bike to Work Day participation has steadily increased in the last five years with more than 1,800 people riding in 2016, 1,500 in 2015, and 1,200 in 2014. This year marked the 20th anniversary of Bike to Work Day in the Baltimore region. To celebrate, BMC worked with Baltimore City, the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) and AAA Mid-Atlantic to hold a press conference at City Hall on the morning of Bike to Work Day (top photo). Throughout the region, groups, big and small, came together to promote the benefits of commuting to work by bike. Photos: Courtesy of Baltimore City Department of Transportation (top), Charlie Murphy, Catonsville Bike to Work Day coordinator (right), and Anne Arundel County Transportation Division (bottom).

Waste Management tour helps procurement officials better understand potential recycling cost savings

Informational sessions, intended to improve the strategy used when contracting for commodities or services, are a bonus activity for Baltimore Regional Cooperative Purchasing Committee (BRCPC) members.

The deeper the understanding a buyer has about the industry and market with which they are working, the better they can develop solicitation and contract language that attracts the best contractors and prices, or increases rebates. The latter is the case with recycling of profitable waste. A tour of the Waste Management facilities in Elkridge produced some interesting results that could improve the effectiveness of recycling programs in the Baltimore region. This program includes single stream and cardboard recycling.

Programs across the region attempt to maximize the benefits of recycling by separating reusable material from that which must go to the landfill. Reusable material is resold by Waste Management, allowing the company to offer a rebate to the county from which it is collected.

“There are many ways to recycle,” said Alan Wilcom, recycling program manager in Howard County. “The placement of clear recycling instructions on more than 80,000 carts deployed across the county is key to our success, and generates a significant rebate.”

Other communication channels include direct mail, advertisements, transit ads, banners and the repeated message “If in doubt - leave it out!” A successful communication program has led to the

recycling of 30,747 tons of recyclables and an FY 2017 rebate of \$483,000.

Anne Arundel County is another jurisdiction that receives a significant rebate. Richard Bower, recycling and waste reduction manager, attributes his success to constant contact through direct mailers, radio, TV and Pandora Internet radio advertisements, and presentations at community forums. Anne Arundel’s program recycled approximately 66,000 tons of trash through more than 133,000 containers both curbside and central

“There are many ways to recycle,” Wilcom said. “The placement of clear recycling instructions on more than 80,000 carts deployed across the county is key to our success, and generates a significant rebate.”

recycling centers for an FY 2017 rebate of more than \$900,000. Bower also credits to program’s success to the community, which has embraced recycling, and other environmental programs due to their proximity to the Chesapeake Bay.

A recent tour of the Waste Management recycling facility displayed a complex arrangement of equipment designed to sort waste received into recyclable categories that are much like the categories shown in the sample label provided by Howard County. Once the recycled material is sorted and packaged, it is then ready for sale. The quality of the material for sale will drive the price received.

Not every year is as good as FY 2017 because of the volatility of the market, Wilcom said.

“In 2015, Howard County received no rebate because the market crashed for this recyclable material,” he said. “It was still recycled but the profit was not enough to garner a rebate.”

Touring the facilities with Eric O’Connell, operations supervisor for Waste Management, revealed some other reasons to recycle properly. At the top of the list

are safety and efficiency. Sorting recycled trash is partially a manual operation where sorters scan conveyor belts to pull waste that cannot be recycled in Waste Management’s operations. Some materials thrown in the recycled bins can be dangerous to handle resulting in cuts or allergic reactions that put employees at risk. Others slow down production, or cause the equipment to malfunction. All of this affects the efficient operations of the plant.

As a result, Bower plans to ask residents in Anne Arundel County to place recyclable materials in the cart, loose rather than bagged. This will reduce the recyclable material that must be manually sorted. The total amount of recyclable material collected will increase the county’s rebate. ■

Procurement officials weigh benefits of joint contract as region, state migrate to Next Generation 911 services



On June 28, the Baltimore Regional Cooperative Purchasing Committee (BRCPC) hosted a meeting of key stakeholders to explore the opportunity for a cooperative procurement as the Baltimore region and state migrate to Next Generation 911 network service.

BRCPC met with Ross R. Coates, manager of the Harford County 911 Call Center and chairman of the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) work group; PSAP representatives; the consulting firm, Mission Critical Partners; Scott Roper, executive director for the Maryland Emergency Numbers Systems Board; and county and city procurement representatives from all around Maryland.

Previously, the PSAP work group met on several occasions to discuss Verizon’s decision to leave the 911 call center network business, and the need to migrate to Next Generation 911 network services. However, Verizon’s decision to leave the market is not the only reason that migrating to the NG911 platform is necessary.

According to Mission Critical Partners, consultant for this migration effort, Next Generation 911 implementation will:

- “Increase compatibility with emerging communications technologies,
- Enhance the flexibility, reliability and survivability of 911 systems during major disasters,
- Improve emergency response for the public and emergency responders; and
- Reduce the overall cost of operating the 911 system.”

Running in parallel with these benefits are challenges.

The challenges identified by the PSAP work group include coordination, collaboration and funding. Funding being the most immediate concern, the PSAP work group approached BRCPC’s leadership to facilitate discussions with all of the county and city procurement representatives

for the State of Maryland in an effort to explore the opportunity for a cooperative procurement.

Never has there been a more unified and concerted push on the part of an operational group, such as the PSAP directors, to work together on a procurement of this scale.

The options that the stakeholders could explore include: riding a contract let by Fairfax County; releasing a single procurement for State of Maryland localities; or bidding separately. While bidding separately is an option, it is not considered a viable opportunity to maximize all of the benefits that can be realized under a cooperative and collaborative procurement. It is anticipated that the procurement path for the Next Generation 911 network will be decided in early Fall 2017. ■

Franklyn Baker, United Way of Central Maryland

Ask an Expert showcases an innovator in the Baltimore region who is at the pulse of his or her industry through a Q&A. We sat down with **Franklyn Baker, president and CEO of the United Way of Central Maryland**, to learn more about the organization's continued efforts to stabilize and improve access to quality education, employment, health and housing for the Baltimore region.



uncertain that I could optimally leverage my training within a nonprofit. Nonetheless, I went on to make a measurable difference in the lives of others - coordinating the comprehensive services of many foster care youth, and aiding those with special needs to live fuller lives. I realized through those experiences that I had found my purpose in the workplace, and as I matriculated through various leadership roles, I discovered that understanding business and financial matters was extremely valuable.

1. You've channeled your expertise in finance into a career at nonprofits - from Greenpeace USA to Volunteers of America Chesapeake and the Children's National Health System. What draws you to the nonprofit world?

I grew up in a home that benefited from the care and services offered by several nonprofits. This left an indelible mark upon me and helped to shape my understanding of, and appreciation for, the incredible work performed within the nonprofit setting.

We were very fortunate to benefit from the work of nonprofits. For example, when my family needed technical assistance in navigating the complexities of the healthcare system, a community-based nonprofit provider was there to help. My parents also exposed my siblings and me to multiple opportunities to collect food at local farms, paint homeless and battered women shelters, and conduct landscaping work at senior living facilities. So I gained a healthy appreciation for the social impact and overall value of nonprofits.

I went on to attend **Howard University** and major in business administration, with a concentration in finance. While there, I was

2. How has your nonprofit experience helped you to set goals for the future of the United Way of Central Maryland?

As COO for Volunteers of America Chesapeake and Greenpeace USA, I was charged with anticipating and proactively positioning each organization to manage changes in both the internal and external environment. In essence, I was asked to manage operational challenges and seize viable opportunities at the "speed of change."

Walking into both organizations, there were clear historical challenges and low-hanging fruit, ripe for the picking. My approach was to critically evaluate all aspects of the business model and accompanying resources that drive execution. The two most pressing needs were revenue maximization and resource management - the two RMs to which most successful leaders pay close attention. Having effectively accomplished these tasks, I was eager

to begin the same when I joined the United Way of Central Maryland as its president and CEO.

My assessment after the first nine months is that for much of the past **92 years**, the United Way of Central Maryland has largely been viewed as a pass-through organization that galvanizes employees of large and small employer groups to donate, advocate and volunteer. To strengthen our value proposition within the Baltimore region, and both broaden and sustain our social impact, the organization must focus more on individual contributors and provide direct services where clear gaps exist in the community.

3. It's been a busy 2017 for the United Way of Central Maryland - you've moved your office to Montgomery Park, launched a pilot early warning and response education program, and celebrated the 10th anniversary of the 2-1-1 Maryland United Way Helpline.

Yes - the move to Montgomery Park reflects how we are shifting towards balancing our revitalized annual workplace campaign by engaging in outcome-focused, place-based services at multiple sites in the region. In fact, the United Way of Central Maryland will save **\$2.5 million** from the reduced lease rates during the next **10 years**, and much of these savings will be invested into our social impact work.

In October 2016, in partnership with **Johns Hopkins University**, the United Way of Central Maryland commenced a pilot education initiative called **On Track for Success**. Based in select local public schools, this early warning and response education program focuses on the ABC's - attendance, behavior and course performance. An interdisciplinary team consisting of the principal, teacher, parent and social worker meet periodically to construct and manage a plan suited to the specific student who is falling off track in one or more of the ABC's. Results to date are incredible = 54 percent of fourth-graders and 27 percent of sixth-graders show marked improvement in their ABC's at **Maree G. Farring Elementary/Middle School**. In the Fall 2017, this successful pilot program will expand to other schools in the region.

The **2-1-1 Maryland United Way Helpline** serves as the foundation to our Family Stability work, which focuses on health, housing, education and employment. Since 2007, the specialists that work within the 2-1-1 Helpline have provided aid to hundreds of thousands of people in Central Maryland - specifically, **112,000 calls answered** in 2016 - with a host of services such as housing, food, utilities, tax preparation, legal, transportation, health, etc. The 2-1-1 Helpline will soon transition to a new software platform (VisionLink) that will increase our ability to service each call.

4. You're approaching the 1-year mark at the helm of the United Way of Central Maryland. What can we expect moving forward?

Over the past nine months, I have gained helpful insights about how we should move forward. The United Way of Central Maryland has always been at the intersection of where we're needed most and what we do best.

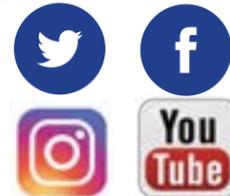
Since change (demographic, digital, globalization), dissension and lack of trust is so prevalent today, our agency must pursue a collaborative approach to fundraising and problem solving more than ever before. We must know and understand specific needs, while also having the research and relationships to meet those needs. Our job is to connect the dots.

Simply put, we can ill afford to rest on our laurels. Companies, industries, organizations everywhere are changing. There are clear trends in workplace giving. We need to build and



Let's get social!

Stay up-to-date with the United Way of Central Maryland on social media.



expand our strategies to diversify our revenue. But, we will always be a funder and a grant-maker, and we will always run workplace giving campaigns - that's part of our DNA, and it's our mission.

About six years ago, the United Way of Central Maryland pivoted from being primarily a fundraising organization to balancing both fundraising and providing family stability services. So, we will continue to expand our family stability sites (we expect to increase to 15 sites by Fall 2017). We also will go deeper to ensure that our four building blocks - health, housing, education and employment - are embedded into the delivery of services.

Ultimately, the United Way of Central Maryland will maximize its value proposition by leveraging the hundreds of partnerships, deep data collection expertise and direct service delivery experience to collaborate with and convene key public and private stakeholders in the region to achieve broad community goals.

5. How does the United Way of Central Maryland's work complement BMC's?

Our work complements BMC's in a number of ways. BMC uses socioeconomic analysis and forecasting in studies of transportation planning and environmental planning regionally. In January 2017, the United Way of Central Maryland, along with nine other United Way agencies, released the **Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed (ALICE) report**. This report highlights

the plight of those working Marylanders who earn above the federal poverty level, but not enough to make basic ends meet in the core expense categories of housing, food, healthcare, childcare, transportation and taxes. More than 35 percent of workers in Maryland meet the ALICE criteria.

Like BMC, the United Way of Central Maryland, in partnership with our community partners, leverages data to support decision-making related to where we devote resources and serve client needs. This intelligence periodically informs how we advocate for governmental and corporate support.

6. You're also a Baltimore's Promise board member - how does its mission to coordinate initiatives geared toward childhood education make Baltimore a better region?

This collaboration is dedicated to improving outcomes for Baltimore City's youth using a cradle-to-career continuum approach. If some of its ambitious goals for the city's youth are met in the next several years, Baltimore will be well on its way toward becoming a much better region. These goals include: healthy births, kindergarten preparation, and grade-level achievement.

Some of the biggest obstacles include population and economic decline, loss of corporate headquarters as well as high rates of poverty and crime. So far, the board members have demonstrated a clear commitment to achieving short- and long-term objectives. ■



Open data site provides partnering organizations with easy access to geospatial information



In the world of modern transportation planning, digital data is at the heart of much of the work.

Data - meaning networks, statistics, geospatial layers, and more - creates a quality, evidence-based product for planning initiatives such as travel demand models, transit analysis, and even locating Bike to Work Day events around the region. Taken as a whole, this data and the resulting analysis becomes a library of information about the region.

An Open Data site is a portal that allows members of the public to easily search for and download information. BMC is leveraging this technology in its new [Regional Geographic Information System \(GIS\) Data Center](#). This website will centralize GIS data created by BMC and make it available to a wide audience, much like the open data website that the Washington, D.C. region uses.

“The Transportation Planning Board’s [Regional Transportation Data Clearinghouse \(RTDC\)](#) has evolved

over the years to an Online application leveraging the ArcGIS Open Data solution,” said Charlene Howard, principal GIS analyst with the [Metropolitan-Washington Council of Governments \(MWCOC\)](#). “We developed the RTDC to improve access and data sharing between TPB members, jurisdictional partners, as well as other interested parties.

“Open Data allows us to fulfill this mission—users can explore our data on their own and download what they need, or consume our services in their own maps and apps.



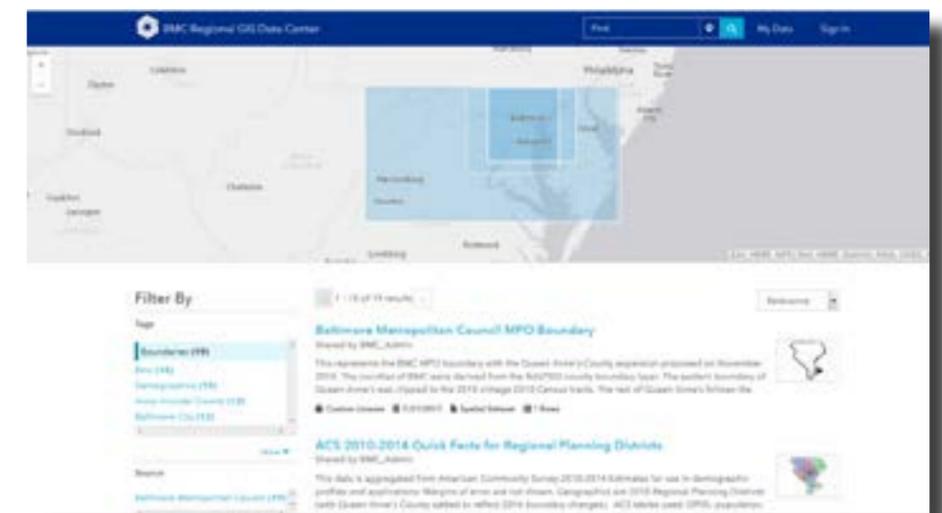
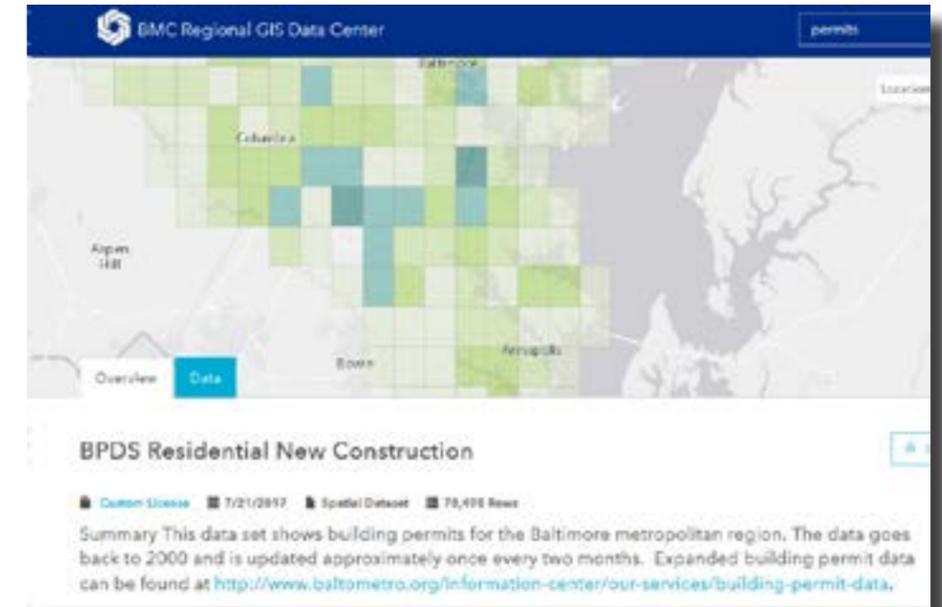
It allows us to share the data we want how we want.”

Users can search BMC’s website for data by category, or using a general search. The website provides many resources for data-driven decision making, including transportation projects, neighborhood statistics, building permits, and traffic counts. More data will be added in the coming months.

The Regional GIS Data Center will be useful for transportation planners, local government, researchers, and community activists; however, anyone can take advantage of this resource. Users can preview or map the data directly on the website, or download for use in GIS software. While the intent of the data center is to make the data available for use with GIS systems, the layers are also available in spreadsheets, Open Source, and Google-friendly formats to maximize the utility of the data. In addition, the data is available through an application programming interface (API) so it can be added directly to web applications. The API includes both proprietary and open source formats.

“Annapolis Mayor Michael Pantelides is always challenging us to find new and innovative ways to gather and disseminate updated information to our residents,” said Shawn Wampler, GIS coordinator for the [City of Annapolis](#).

“It allows us to share the data we want, how we want,” said Charlene Howard, principal GIS analyst with MWCOC.



“Having an open data portal that provides authoritative, updated information gives local governments the confidence that the data they are using and sharing with others is the most up-to-date and accurate information available.”

The data center will allow BMC to make geospatial data available to as broad an audience as possible and allow the

organization to support the state’s goal of more transparent organizations. The technology makes sharing and maintaining data easy and it can be scaled up as more regional data products are created. Making regional data available to everyone is an investment in effective planning decisions that enables BMC to work with local governments and the community to build a brighter future. ■

CONNECT THE L • O • T • S

ANNAPOLIS TRANSIT / CHARM CITY CIRCULATOR / CARROLL TRANSIT SYSTEM

HARFORD TRANSIT LINK / QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY RIDE

REGIONAL TRANSIT AGENCY OF CENTRAL MARYLAND

In May 2017, [Harford Transit Link](#) launched the Route 8 Silver Line, connecting the residents of the U.S. 40 corridor to job opportunities in Perryman and the Riverside Industrial Complex, where heavy-hitters such as McCormick & Company, Frito-Lay, Coty, Clorox and Sephora conduct business.

“Economic development is a major goal in Harford County,” said Robert Andrews, administrator of Harford Transit Link. “We’re very serious in our efforts to try to link eligible job seekers with potential employers.”

The new route is a successful example of how Harford Transit Link, as a [Locally Operating Transit System \(LOTS\)](#) provider through the [Harford County Office of Economic Development](#), is working to better connect its residents to opportunities throughout the Baltimore region.

“As our suburbs grow and job centers continue to pop up outside of traditional urban areas, our LOTS are being asked to do more to connect our region’s residents to employment and essential services,” said Michael Kelly, executive director of the [Baltimore Metropolitan Council](#). “This year, BMC will work with our partners to identify gaps between local and state transit systems and help craft solutions that better connect our region’s residents to the places they need to go.”

The [Maryland Transit Administration \(MTA\)](#) spent 16 months on a process to revamp its regional bus system. BaltimoreLink officially launched in June 2017. It replaces a bus system that went largely unchanged for decades. Last year, the [Baltimore Regional Transportation Board \(BRTB\)](#), through BMC’s staff, worked with the MTA to analyze its proposed routes in order to align them with riders’ needs.

This year, BRTB continues its work to improve transit in the Baltimore region by bringing together LOTS from around the Baltimore region to better coordinate with one another. Coordination will include alignment with the MTA routes, as well as other issues of shared interest.

In Fiscal Year 2018, BMC will conduct a study to better connect MTA and LOTS transportation routes. The study will: identify proximate stops that could become shared stops; examine route schedules and look for ways to make adjustments to facilitate transfers between systems; and examine ways that route and schedule information might be presented that would be stop-specific, rather than system-specific.

“Transit in our region is more than just the MTA. LOTS are under-appreciated transit systems that need to be better understood by the public,” said Todd Lang, transportation director for BMC. “Local governments are stepping up to provide residents and commuters around the region with more transit choices.”

The [City of Annapolis](#), [City of Baltimore](#), [Anne Arundel](#), [Harford](#), [Howard](#) and [Queen Anne’s](#) counties, and BMC will fund the study, which has a budget of \$280,000. Milestones throughout the year include hiring a consultant to conduct the study; developing the scope of work, project goals, parameters and data needs; producing graphics and charts aimed to provide the public with information and collect feedback; and finally preparing revised route maps and schedules as needed.

“This is a rapidly growing part of the state. We need to service the region, particularly our suburban communities, with transit systems that do not stop at the county lines, because our residents’ lives don’t stop there,” said Mark Pritchard, who served as the general manager of the [Regional Transportation Agency of Central Maryland \(RTA\)](#) until he retired on August 18. “More planning between the MTA and LOTS could lead to better integration.”

While other LOTS in the Baltimore region serve a singular city or jurisdiction, the RTA provides fixed route and paratransit services to some of the more urban and suburban areas of Anne Arundel, Howard and Prince George’s counties, as well as the [City of Laurel](#).

RTA has a fleet of 69 vehicles that served a ridership of 1.5 million, with a \$15.4 million budget in 2016. RTA’s operating funding is a combination of local, as well as state and federal grant funds from MTA. Grant funding has stayed close to the same for several years, Pritchard said.

“I am advised that this same LOTS operating funding administered through MTA has remained unchanged for 10 years,” he said. “This has required significant increases in local funds from the counties and local jurisdictions as they make up the difference between increased expenses and essentially flat revenues from state and federal funding sources.”



About 70 percent of the RTA’s service is in Howard County, Pritchard said. So the RTA plays a major role as Howard County goes through the process of developing its next [Transit Development Plan \(TDP\)](#), a document that lays out the transit-specific goals in a jurisdiction for the next five years.

“We serve as an operator that touches and connects two large regions - Baltimore and Washington, D.C.,” Pritchard said. “We’re still a new organization, but I’m excited about how we’re working to connect our ridership to important destinations.”

The Central Maryland TDP, a regional plan being developed jointly by Howard and Anne Arundel counties, focuses on improving service reliability for riders in several ways. Howard County has invested in three electric battery-powered buses through a Federal Transit Administration grant, and seven heavy-duty transit buses. Seven more vehicles are scheduled for purchase in FY 2018. In addition, the procurement of an updated automatic vehicle location system will make it easier for transit staff and riders alike to receive up-to-the-minute information on the location of buses.

“We want to provide a more effective service,” Pritchard said. “It’s been our job, our role, to recommend and advocate for that.”

Likewise, the [Annapolis Department of Transportation](#) is about to embark upon its next TDP. Route expansion is expected to be a major goal of the plan, which is scheduled for completion by the end of the year, said Rick Gordon, director of the Annapolis Department of Transportation.

“Annapolis is an old and small city with limited parking, so we’re pretty loaded down with people coming and going through the state capital,” Gordon said. “Our customers are asking for expanded routes.”

The 17-vehicle fleet served a ridership of 444,635 with a \$4.8 million budget in 2016.

“I think the biggest challenge we face is vehicle replacement,” Gordon said. “Annapolis has several vehicles that have reached the end of their life, but do not meet the mileage requirement to retire them.”

These vehicles were sold/transferred to the city at a time when the need was critical. At their age, parts are in short supply and maintenance costs are high.

Annapolis DOT also is familiar with budget limitations. Its total operating budget for fixed route and ADA services has been flat for several years, Gordon said. However, the agency have seen an increase in its preventative maintenance grant, while some core programs have seen significant increase in the past five years.

Annapolis DOT has big plans for meeting its riders' needs. Route expansions would connect Annapolis riders to the [Westfield Annapolis Mall](#), [Fort George G. Meade](#) and the [Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport](#), he said. By expanding those routes, too, riders could then connect to other state and local transit systems.

In addition, new signage at bus stops, as well as the installation of [TripSpark](#) electronic fare boxes, have served to improve the rider experience.

For Queen Anne's County, the [County Ride](#) LOTS must be able to connect an aging population to their medical appointments, said Anne Van Benschoten, transit administrator for Queen Anne's County. In 2016, County Ride provided paratransit, medical transportation and public transit routes to Queen Anne's, Talbot, Kent and Anne Arundel counties with a fleet of 19 vehicles, ridership of 26,924 and budget of \$705,729.

“We would like our residents to have access to fast, efficient and cost-effective transit that can take them from the edges of Cecil County all the way down to Washington, D.C.,” said Robert Andrews, administrator of Harford Transit Link.



“I have noticed that our expenses have increased and our ridership has increased over the last two years,” Van Benschoten said. “Our funding from the state and federal grants have been level funded for the last few years, which caused us to rely more on our local government to help with the increases in expenses.”

Like Howard County and Annapolis, Queen Anne's County will complete its TDP by the end of 2017. Ridership needs include connecting residents to services across the Bay Bridge, such as other BaltimoreLink routes, or the [Charm City Circulator](#) fixed-route system, that will get them to medical appointments in Baltimore City, Van Benschoten said. The Charm City Circulator is a 30-vehicle free

bus system that boasted a ridership of 3.22 million on its four color-coded routes in 2016.

“Without County Ride, many of our clients would have no way to get to Baltimore City,” she said.

By working through the BRTB, Queen Anne's County is able to coordinate with Annapolis transit, MTA and Baltimore City. BMC's LOTS forum also fosters cooperation among jurisdictions as they work to address residents' needs, Van Benschoten said.

“I think it's important for us to come together and work together. There's power in numbers,” she said.

That coordination also could complement [Baltimore CountyRide](#), which does not provide an open door fixed-route system, but does provide specialized transportation services to: Baltimore County residents 60 years of age or older; persons with disabilities, ages 18 to 59; and rural residents of all ages. Customers use it to get to medical appointments and run errands.



The [Carroll Transit System \(CTS\)](#), a nonprofit, continues to develop and enhance the public transportation system for Carroll County residents. CTS provides reserved demand response services, shuttles and agency transportation, Monday through Saturday.

From Centreville to Columbia and Annapolis to Aberdeen, LOTS providers share a central guiding purpose - to manage a transit system that is reliable and meets the needs of their respective ridership. In Harford County, that means learning and innovating.

In 2016, Harford Transit Link provided fixed route and paratransit services to Harford and Cecil counties with a fleet of 43 vehicles, ridership of 359,269, and budget of \$6.3 million. Harford Transit Link recently installed a new transit management system, intended to help the LOTS better monitor operations, while serving as a communications portal to riders. The system has an application that riders can download to track transit vehicles in real-time, Andrews said.

In addition, the procurement and installation of a new video camera system will serve to better protect riders and drivers, while the construction of new bus shelters, with the first being erected at the Aberdeen Amtrak/MARC station, will improve the rider experience, Andrews said.

“Our goal is to match our systems to the needs of our residents,” said Andrews, who also serves as a BRTB representative of public transportation. “We would like our residents to have access to fast, efficient and cost-effective transit that can take them from the edges of Cecil County all the way down to Washington, D.C.” ■





B'more Involved promotes civic engagement in our region's transportation, planning, environmental justice and equity. This important information is a great way for you to learn more, stay up-to-date on important events, news, and, of course, let you know how you can B'More Involved!

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BRTB seeks comments on funding for I-695 drainage improvement project in 2018-2021 TIP



The Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB) welcomes comments on funding updates to the 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the I-695, at Cromwell Bridge Road, drainage improvement project through Monday, September 25.

The BRTB is scheduled to vote on the TIP amendment on **Tuesday, September 26**, at 9 a.m.

The 2018-2021 TIP is the list of regional transportation projects requesting federal funding in the near term. It includes

25 SEPT [Public Comments Due](#)
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
1500 Whetstone Way, Suite 300
Baltimore, MD 21230

more than **\$3 billion** in proposed federal, state and local money for highway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian projects during the next four years. The funding goes towards maintaining, operating and expanding the transportation system. The TIP is fiscally constrained.

Updates occur in the 2018-2021 TIP because of changes to project scope and funding or changes to federal documentation policies. Public comment periods and meetings aim to keep communication open regarding these changes.

[Learn more about the proposed amendment to the 2018-2021 TIP](#)



Transportation affects all of us. By getting involved in the BRTB's planning process, you can help to shape the future.

The BRTB meets regularly to work on regional transportation activities, events, educational campaigns, plans, and to vote on key decisions. Public comment also is a vital part of many of these initiatives. We hope to see you at any of our upcoming meetings. Check out our information on testimony rules and procedures, as well as our guide to making a public comment.

Most meetings take place at BMC, located at 1500 Whetstone Way, Suite 300, Baltimore, MD 21230. Visit www.baltometro.org for a full list of upcoming public meetings.

6 SEPT [Public Advisory Committee \(PAC\) September meeting, 5:30 p.m.](#)

20 SEPT [Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee meeting, 1 p.m.](#)

26 SEPT [BRTB September meeting, 9 a.m.](#)

4 OCT [PAC October meeting, 5:30 p.m.](#)

9 OCT [Columbus Day - BMC's office will be closed](#)

24 OCT [BRTB October meeting, time TBD](#)

1 NOV [Interagency Consultation Group meeting, 9:30 a.m.](#)

1 NOV [PAC November meeting, 5:30 p.m.](#)

10 NOV [Veteran's Day - BMC's office will be closed](#)

15 NOV [Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee meeting, 1 p.m.](#)

Regional Information Center to host U.S. Census Bureau Local Employment Dynamics (LED) training



19 SEPT [Join us in BMC's Regional Information Center!](#)
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
1500 Whetstone Way, Suite 300
Baltimore, MD 21230

Data from the Local Employment Dynamics (LED) Partnership provide unprecedented detail about America's jobs, workers, and local economies. LED integrates existing data from state-supplied administrative records on workers and employers with existing censuses, surveys, and other administrative records to create a longitudinal data system on U.S. employment.

This training will cover how to use Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI), the LED flagship product which provides information about trends in employment, hiring, job creation and destruction, and earnings, with unprecedented detail on geography, age, sex, and industry going as far back as 1990.

A second data product, the LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES), provides annual employment statistics linking home and work locations at the census block-level. This training will provide an overview of how to access LODES data using the web app OntheMap.

Join the Baltimore Metropolitan Council and Nesreen Khashan from the US Census Bureau for this comprehensive LED workshop. ■

Meet the Primes networking event to connect small and minority businesses to prime bidders

BMC and Baltimore County will host the ninth annual Meet the Primes networking event, which connects small- and minority-owned businesses with prime contract bidders, on **Wednesday, October 18**. The event will take place from 8 a.m. until noon at the **Maryland State Fairgrounds**, located at 2200 York Road in Timonium.

The event is free and open to those interested, though registration is encouraged.

Meet the Primes is a great stepping stone for small- and minority-owned businesses to make connections, find work and grow. The prime bidders who will attend the event represent millions of dollars in annual contracts for many industries in the Baltimore region. ■



Debbie Groat, cooperative purchasing director at BMC (right), speaks with a business owner during the eighth annual Meet the Primes event on October 19, 2016. More than 450 people registered for the 2016 event. Photo: BMC

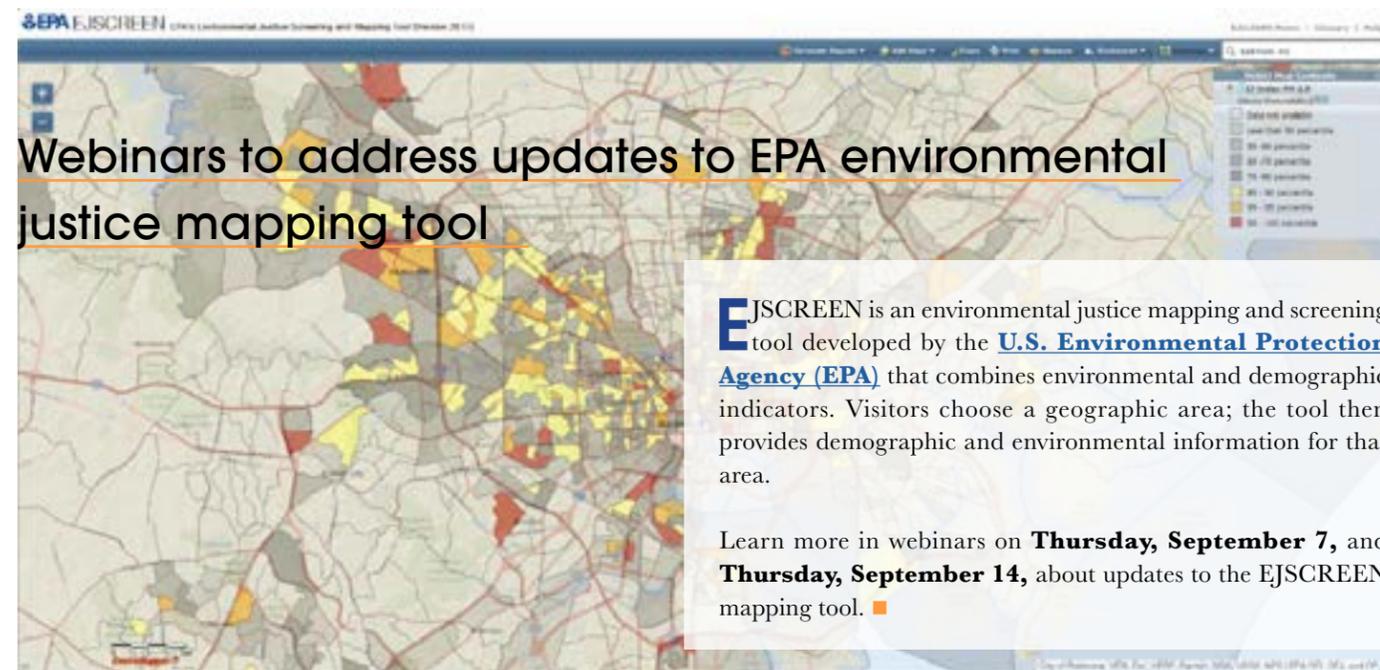
Safe Routes to School program, Walk to School Day encourage students to commute by alternative modes

Safe Routes to School is a comprehensive approach that encourages students and their families to walk, bike, or use other forms of active transportation to commute to and from school.

Wednesday, October 4, is **Walk to School Day**, so now is a great time to organize an event or find out how to develop a Safe Routes to School program. ■



Webinars to address updates to EPA environmental justice mapping tool

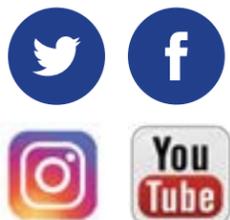


EJSCREEN is an environmental justice mapping and screening tool developed by the **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** that combines environmental and demographic indicators. Visitors choose a geographic area; the tool then provides demographic and environmental information for that area.

Learn more in webinars on **Thursday, September 7,** and **Thursday, September 14,** about updates to the EJSCREEN mapping tool. ■

Let's get social!

Stay up-to-date with the Baltimore Metropolitan Council on social media.



- 12 SEPT** [Arundel Mills public meeting - Central Maryland Transit Development Plan](#)
[For more information](#)
- 13 SEPT** [Columbia public meeting - Central Maryland Transit Development Plan](#)
[For more information](#)
- 25 SEPT** [Maryland Department of Transportation Consolidated Transportation Program meetings begin.](#) [For more information](#)
- 4 OCT** [Walk to School Day](#)
- 15 OCT** [National Teen Driver Safety Week begins](#)

LETTUCE TURNIP THE BEET!



Photo: Courtesy of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Maryland's State Library Resource Center

Lexington Market is one of the longest running open-air markets in the United States. Formed in 1782, it originally sold produce from local and surrounding area farms. Farmers came from as far away as Reisterstown and Towson for market days that ran from 2 a.m. until noon.

variety of produce in the region. Fresh local fruits and vegetables, meats, and seafood were readily available at more than 500 stalls; the famous **Bergers Cookies** was already a well-established presence. Farmers and their horses began staying at local inns to get a head start the next morning. The market opened on Tuesdays, Fridays, and until midnight on Saturdays. ■

By the time this photo was taken around the turn of the 20th century, Lexington Market had become a gathering place for concerts and political debates as well as maintaining the largest