

BALTIMORE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

**BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD
RESOLUTION #17-16**

**RESOLUTION TO ENDORSE THE PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT FOR
I-95 ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS**

WHEREAS, the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Baltimore region, encompassing the Baltimore Urbanized Area, and includes official representatives of the cities of Annapolis and Baltimore, the counties of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, Howard, and Queen Anne's, as well as representatives of the Maryland Department of Transportation, the Maryland Department of the Environment, the Maryland Department of Planning, the Maryland Transit Administration, and Harford Transit; and

WHEREAS, Section 450.322 of the Final Metropolitan Transportation Planning Rules issued by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration on May 27, 2016 identifies the requirements of a congestion management process in transportation management areas. In TMAs designated as nonattainment for ozone or carbon monoxide, the congestion management process shall provide an appropriate analysis of reasonable (including multimodal) travel demand reduction and operational management strategies for the corridor in which a project that will result in a significant increase in capacity for SOVs is proposed to be advanced with Federal funds; and

WHEREAS, on behalf of the Maryland Department of Transportation, the Maryland Transportation Authority has provided a draft Purpose and Need Statement dated October 2016; and

WHEREAS, this study involves improving existing capacity and roadway geometry, supporting economic development and land use changes, and addressing limited multi-modal connections in the I-95 Port Covington study area; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board, as a commenting agency, endorses I-95 Access Improvements from Caton Avenue to the Fort McHenry Tunnel, Purpose and Need Statement as described in Attachment A.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Baltimore region, approved the aforementioned resolution at its January 24, 2017 meeting.

Date

Clive Graham, Chairman
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board

Purpose and Need Summary for I-95 Access Improvements from Caton Avenue to the Fort McHenry Tunnel

I. PROJECT LOCATION

The study area generally follows I-95 along the northern boundary of the Port Covington peninsula between Exits 50 (Caton Avenue) and 56 (Keith Avenue), and includes sections of Hanover Street, McComas Street and Key Highway. The study area is approximately seven miles long.

II. PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

The I-95 Access Improvements project aims to maintain operations on I-95 and other elements of the local and regional transportation system by accommodating forecasted increased transportation demand resulting from the planned development at Port Covington, and enhancing multi-modal connections to the peninsula.

III. NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Improvements are needed to:

- address increased transportation demand;
- address inadequate roadway capacity and geometry;
- support economic development and land use changes; and,
- address the limited multi-modal connections.

Increased transportation demand is expected as a result of redevelopment of the Port Covington Peninsula. The Port Covington redevelopment project will transform 266 acres on the peninsula from under-utilized industrial brownfields into a mixed-use urban development. As proposed, this mixed-use development is said to be the largest urban redevelopment project currently underway in the United States. As currently planned, the Port Covington redevelopment will increase population density and employment on the peninsula, which will generate a demand for infrastructure improvements. The redevelopment project is projected to generate more than 5,600 vehicular trips during the AM peak hour and more than 8,100 vehicular trips during the PM peak hour to and from the site. The developer has committed to using technology and other incentives to reduce reliance on automobile trips as a means of accessing the site.

IV. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) and the Baltimore City Department of Transportation (Baltimore City DOT), in coordination with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is studying a suite of improvements to Interstate 95 (I-95) ramps and other nearby transportation facilities to support ongoing and planned redevelopment of the Port Covington peninsula in south Baltimore. These improvements are collectively known as the I-95 Access Improvements from Caton Avenue to the Fort McHenry Tunnel (I-95 Access Improvements).

Interstate 95 is part of the Interstate Highway System in the City of Baltimore, and is owned, operated and maintained by MDTA. The Baltimore City DOT is responsible for other arterial and collector roadways in the project area. FHWA has approval authority over any changes to access points on the Interstate Highway System. Approval of any proposed modification to interstate access constitutes a federal action subject to review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Figure 1. Study Area

