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Transportation Alliance

The Baltimore Regional Transportation Board
Offices @ McHenry Row
1500 Whetstone Way, Suite 300
Baltimore, MD 21230

April 28, 2016

Dear Members of the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback about the performance of the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB) as part of the U.S. Department of Transportation certification process. As an advocacy organization with the singular focus to be a catalyst for improving the region's transportation the Central Maryland Transportation Alliance has engaged with the BRTB since we were founded in 2007 and we currently have a seat on the BRTB's Public Advisory Committee.

Firstly, we commend the dedicated and knowledgeable employees of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC) which provides staff and coordination for the BRTB. As an advocacy non-profit that works in the transportation field we have always found BMC staff to be open, honest, and forthcoming whenever we approach them with questions or requests for technical advice or assistance.

However, in our years of working on regional transportation issues we have found that the skills and capabilities found at BMC are underutilized in their capacity as BRTB staff. This latent capacity could be unleashed if the BRTB would play a more robust role in establishing the region's transportation priorities. In developing its long- and short-range transportation plans the BRTB allows its constituent jurisdictions to drive the project selection process. Each local jurisdiction (as well as the state-run modal agencies) submits a list of preferred projects and it is left up to the BRTB to knit these together. The result is a disjointed patchwork of projects whose main goal appears to be the allocation of funding and projects in the most politically expedient way possible. The BRTB should be the forum from which the region is viewed holistically and without political borders. Instead, those boundaries are reinforced by the constituent jurisdictions in a quest to get their share of funds.

The problem appears to be exacerbated by the composition of the BRTB and the voting rights of its members. Each jurisdiction has an equal vote regardless of population size, which often leads to shortchanging the region's central city in favor of decentralized investments. This pattern of investment exacerbates racial and income disparities. To date one of the most thorough analyses of such disparities was done by the Opportunity Collaborative, a regional planning effort led by BMC. Nevertheless the BRTB did not incorporate the goals from the Opportunity Collaborative's regional plan -- goals formulated to address racial and economic disparities -- into its most recent long range plan, Maximize 2040. The region may be better served by a governance structure that provides for proportional representation based on population. We ask that the federal review team comment on the governance structures of the BRTB and MPOs, in general. What is required by federal law? Can BRTB's makeup and/or voting weights be changed? What is the process for changing the makeup of the board?

Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment during the 2016 certification process. We look forward to continuing to work with the BRTB and BMC to improve transportation in the region.

Sincerely,

Eric Norton
Director of Policy & Programs

Comments about Baltimore Metropolitan Council and Baltimore Regional Transportation Board for FTA and FHWA

In late February, I attended a meeting of the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board that had an agenda item that directly impacted my neighborhood. I took the opportunity to give comments about the proposed study.

I was very impressed with the open attitude toward public comments that the organization displayed. While many organizations have various legal requirements for transparency, some institutions simply believe it is a hurdle to the outcome they desire. Baltimore Regional Transportation Board, clearly, believes in public input as a part of their mission. In my experience, institutions with open communication cultures provide confidence to the public about the decisions that are made.

As the Baltimore region approaches future challenges with more demand for the limited resources, it will be critical that local governments find cooperative solutions for regional needs. I believe the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board is prepared to provide a forum for those solutions.

Andrew Hall
206 S. Wolfe St.
Baltimore, Md.

**James S. Leanos
309 Halsey Road
Annapolis, MD 21401**

April 25, 2016

Baltimore Regional Transportation Board
Attn: Mrs. Monica B. Haines Benkhedda
Public Involvement Coordinator
Offices @ McHenry Row
1500 Whetstone Way, Suite 300
Baltimore, MD 21230

Dear Monica:

I have written several weeks ago on the BRTB website with my comments to the FTA/FHWA regarding regional transportation planning in the Baltimore Metro region. Here are my thoughts on the subject.

First, as to existing administration of transportation planning and funding:

- The BRTB has diminished influence in transportation planning and budgeting vis-à-vis its members because of the diminished federal share of transportation funds and the stepped up shares of revenues required from state and local sources.
- The current governor has asserted his influence to emphasize road building, expanding that budget, while limiting transit spending to revenue neutral levels, based upon his perception of his voter support.
- When aggregate transportation expenditures are examined in terms of the apparent need, e.g., the condition of roads, the availability of transit, congestion, etc., it is clear that less dense suburban and rural areas of the state are receiving higher per-capital funding than are denser urban areas, especially Baltimore City and the older, denser areas of Baltimore and Anne Arundel Counties and the City of Annapolis. Part of this is based on the respective insufficiencies of transportation planning at the local government level.
- The lack of a regional transportation taxing district and a linked planning and operating authority virtually guarantees that per capita spending will continue to favor less dense suburban and rural areas because MDOT is a state, not a regional agency.
- An unintended consequence of the federal requirement that transportation planning be fiscally constrained is the insufficient local and regional investment in robust planning efforts to plan and implement needed improvements of the function and design of existing transportation infra-structure, technologies and management.

Second, it is imperative that planning and spending be increasingly restructured and regionalized and de-siloed, particularly in the context of Metro Baltimore's regional transportation assets, which include:

- State designated highways and Federal Highways and major bridges, bikeways, and future busways.
- All assets of the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) within the Baltimore Region
- MTA Maryland—light-rail, metro and bus services
- MARC Services
- CSX and Norfolk Southern Rail rights of way and infra-structure (existing assets are frequently dangerous and/or obsolete, but have strong potential for reuse as transit rights of way, when they are replaced by new freight rail facilities)
- Counties and municipal government nearly all have insufficient transportation planning entities with parochial foci, and have only peripherally opportunistic tendencies to act regionally. County and municipal governments should be relieved of responsibility for all regional transportation assets (State & Federal) and be focused on the most local transportation assets.
- A strong and fully responsible BRTB should be empowered to plan, fund, build and maintain all regional transportation assets.

MDOT, whether intentionally or not, is more responsive to parochial local interests than to coordinated regional priorities as evidenced by the persistence of underfunded regional road and transit maintenance and improvements. The results are steadily increasing congestion and impossibly long travel times for transit riders seeking jobs within or beyond the jurisdictions in which they reside. MDOT has a long record of failure to adequately plan, fund and manage regional transportation assets in the Baltimore and Washington regions, largely as a result of disparate political interests and insufficient focus on these two metropolitan regions which it attempts to serve. The BRTB, while improving of late, is not sufficiently empowered to integrate all of the functions related to satisficing regional demands. MTA has shown some inspiration vis-à-vis the Baltimore Bus Initiative but is hobbled by the requirement that all improvements be revenue neutral.

Some Baltimore residents blame Governor Hogan for the failure of the Red Line. In reality, the Red Line was a local system with regional pretenses and statewide funding, assuring its unpopularity outside of Baltimore City and within parts of Baltimore City. It was a very expensive planning error which should leave behind many lessons learned. The facts are that the Red Line was far too expensive for the travel times that it promised, it was far too vulnerable to floods occasioned by rising sea levels in its eastern reaches, and its expandability was limited by its slow speeds. Incremental improvements to the Baltimore region's transportation systems (bus, passenger and freight rail, and roadways) promise to gain far better public support for spending as those improvements provide benefits throughout the region.

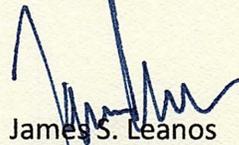
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board

April 25, 2016

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Politics can never be removed from transportation decisions. ***The fact that politics now has the primary responsibility for transportation decision-making in Maryland, that transportation visioning, R&D and performance metrics are so weak in the Baltimore region, and that the public has so little knowledge of real options which could induce more support for transportation spending, all combine to demonstrate the need for dramatically increased transparency and publicity, which clearly outlines the value proposition of transportation planning, funding and management for our region. Politics should be informed by planning, engineering and R&D, not the reverse.***

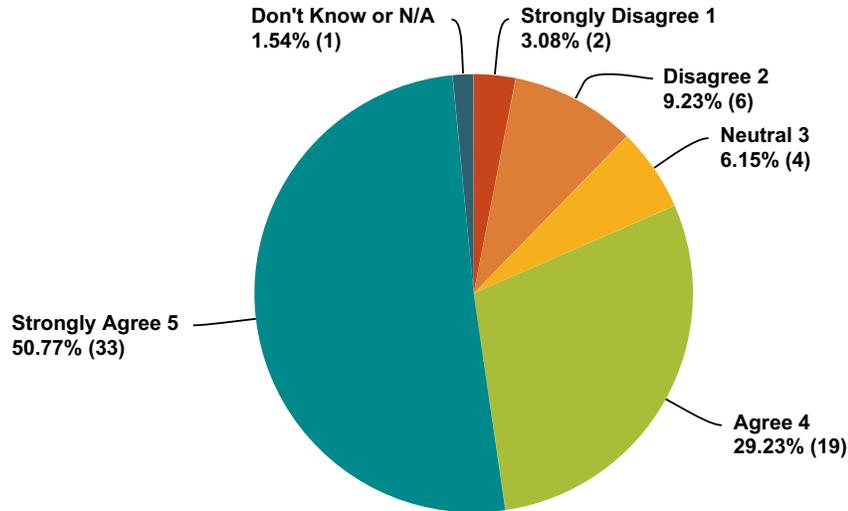
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James S. Leanos". The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive, with a long vertical stroke extending downwards from the end of the name.

James S. Leanos

Q1 There are opportunities for me to provide input on transportation issues and plans.

Answered: 65 Skipped: 1



	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Don't Know or N/A	Total	Weighted Average
%	3.08%	9.23%	6.15%	29.23%	50.77%	1.54%	65	4.17
	2	6	4	19	33	1		

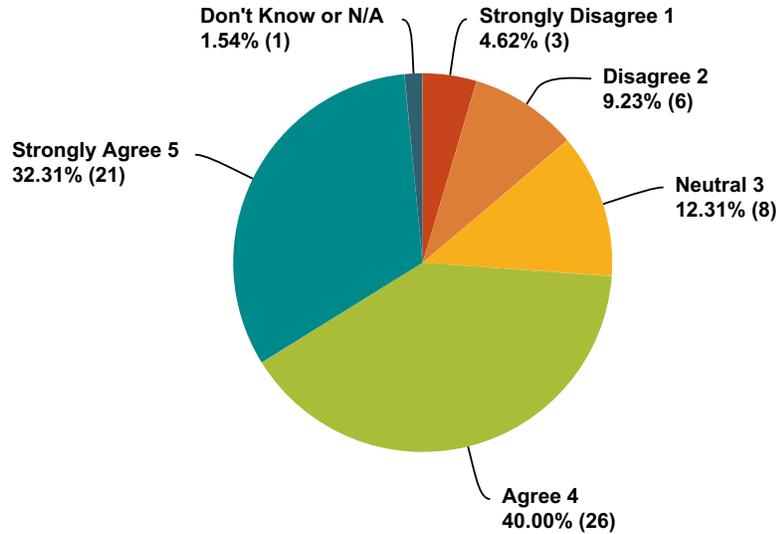
#	Comments	Date
1	Comments are called for in a formal public hearing process long after the important decisions have already been made about public transportation in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area. In essence, we are asked to comment about transportation planners' and managers' ideas and projects, not ones originating from the communities and businesses which rely on good public transportation. Calls for public input before the formal public hearing are superficial, at best.	4/27/2016 11:32 PM
2	There is no broad public outreach or advertising of BRTB at all aside for those who are aware that it and the Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC) even exists. Therefore the only "outside" input will come from those who are politically aware or those who are active transportation activists or among the transportation "enthusiasts" community. Placing the legal ads in The Sun is meaningless, not only due to the Sun's meager readership, but also due to Millennials and other younger demographic cohorts who obtain information via other media. Even then what does the BRTB mean to them and other Baltimoreans who have serious concerns about and issues with transportation but who are oblivious to the existence of BMC/BRTB and the direct impact it has on them and how, if they knew about it, they could have a lasting impact on BMC/BRTB. If they don't know about it and why it's important you will keep getting no response from that much larger community.	4/26/2016 7:51 AM
3	Yes. I agree there are opportunities for the public to provide input. But these opportunities are not well publicized.	4/25/2016 1:12 PM
4	The BRTB has a very open process for reviewing and approving the UPWP, TIP and LRP.	4/25/2016 7:34 AM
5	But it doesn't matter. The governor just does what he's going to do.	4/23/2016 12:31 PM
6	Meetings are tough to make with my schedule, and so this type of online opportunity is helpful.	4/22/2016 3:53 PM
7	I regularly attend Bike/Ped Advisory Group meetings and am able to provide input even though not a member	4/21/2016 7:08 PM
8	I have tried repeatedly to bring issues and answers to elected officials and the administration of the MTA. No one wants to listen.	4/21/2016 11:45 AM
9	As a member of the BMC Safety Committee I feel there is ample opportunity to share my views on overall transportation safety, but I have not had a chance to view or comment on the Transportation Improvement Program or other plans.	4/19/2016 7:22 PM

Feedback to FHWA/FTA for 2016 BRTB Certification

10	The BRTB needs to extend light rail or metro services to one of the biggest employers of the state: Ft. Meade, eliminating hundred of thousands of cars on the road while promoting environmental energy. WDC did it with the metro stop for the pentagon, it is time the BRTB to do the same for FT. Meade.	4/18/2016 9:40 PM
11	Generally there is a feedback session during the first release of plans for most projects and never any follow-up feedback after we've had time to review or communicate. The plans should be released for a few weeks before seeking feedback from the public. This will give opportunities for all parties to review and come prepared with better questions. Possibly even open a FAQ page alongside a project for the first 2 weeks so high frequency questions can be posted as the public begins to review.	4/18/2016 2:20 PM
12	I get contacted throughout the year for both BPAG and BRTB to provide comments to the Regional Plans. I am very interested in improved pedestrian and bicycle access throughout this Region and the whole State of Maryland.	4/15/2016 4:02 PM
13	The TIMBR committee is open to anyone who is interested in traffic incident management efforts in the Baltimore Region.	4/15/2016 2:09 PM
14	The Scrapping of the Red Line was a disaster for the City. Clearly there are people taking decisions who have not the faintest idea as to the impact of such a decision. The Rule of Thumb is that for every \$1 spent, it produces a \$4 return. It is essential that the Port Covington development has a dense transit Network from the Word 'GO' .	4/14/2016 4:32 PM
15	Yes, there are opportunities. The question remains, what connections exist between the public's input and the final decisions on funding.	3/31/2016 4:10 PM
16	Seems that most chances to provide input come late in the planning phases. Not enough opportunity to provide input to what is NOT being planned.	3/30/2016 7:50 AM
17	BRTB provides ample notice and opportunities to provide input through social media, notifications, and public meetings.	3/24/2016 12:51 PM

Q2 There is enough time to comment on regional transportation plans, project updates, and policies.

Answered: 65 Skipped: 1

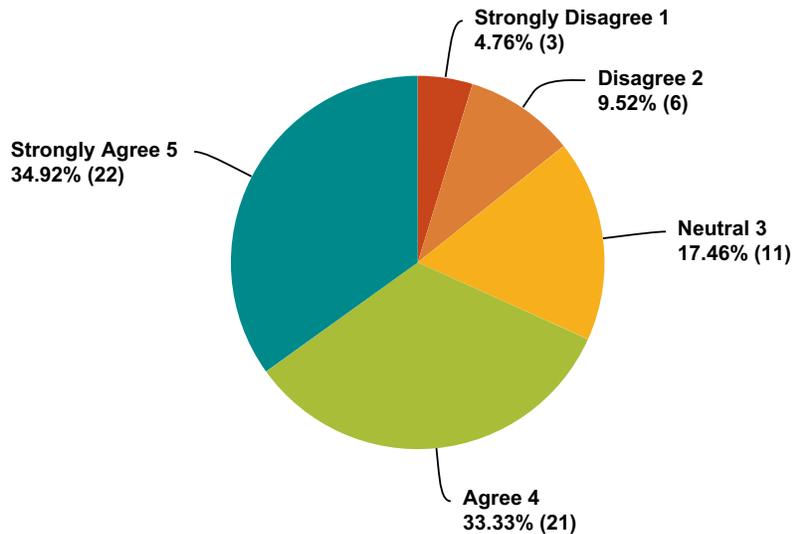


	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Don't Know or N/A	Total	Weighted Average
%	4.62%	9.23%	12.31%	40.00%	32.31%	1.54%	65	3.88
	3	6	8	26	21	1		

#	Comments	Date
1	The time allowed for the commenting process has little importance because it is about decisions which have already been made, and "handed" to the public for comment. These comments are then gathered, reprinted, along with "answers" in the form of repetitive boilerplate comments prepared by a hired consultant.	4/27/2016 11:32 PM
2	As with No.1; you can't comment on what you don't know about and why your should comment. To my knowledge none of these sessions is conducted in the communities where the decisions made will have significant and substantive impact for years to come. If BMC/BRTB is not there how do you expect to get input? The usual excuse of "we have only limited funds" does not have value; if you really want greater input from communities you need to budget for the effort to ensure that can be implemented and in a substantive, non-superficial manner.	4/26/2016 7:51 AM
3	BRTB provides a significant amount of time for both public and agency comment on the plans and policies.	4/25/2016 7:34 AM
4	But it doesn't matter. The governor just does what he's going to do.	4/23/2016 12:31 PM
5	If there is solid information available.	4/22/2016 3:53 PM
6	As I indicated, I have not had the opportunity to view the MPO's regional transportation plans, but would like to do so particularly to ensure that these plans address safety issues.	4/19/2016 7:22 PM
7	Too much time spent on planning that turns into political battle grounds, wasting time and contributing to auto pollution.	4/18/2016 9:40 PM
8	Same as in question 1, after the initial posting of the project, usually at an offline meeting, the documents are posted online too late for the public to properly review and comment at the interactive sessions.	4/18/2016 2:20 PM
9	They request comments many weeks in advance.	4/15/2016 4:02 PM
10	Again, there is plenty of time to comment on issues being proposed, but not a lot of opportunity to comment on planning not being done.	3/30/2016 7:50 AM
11	Yes, the comment period is appropriately long.	3/24/2016 12:51 PM

Q3 Information about opportunities for public input and other regional transportation planning activities are easily accessible to me.

Answered: 63 Skipped: 3



	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Don't Know or N/A	Total	Weighted Average
%	4.76%	9.52%	17.46%	33.33%	34.92%	0.00%	63	3.84
	3	6	11	21	22	0		

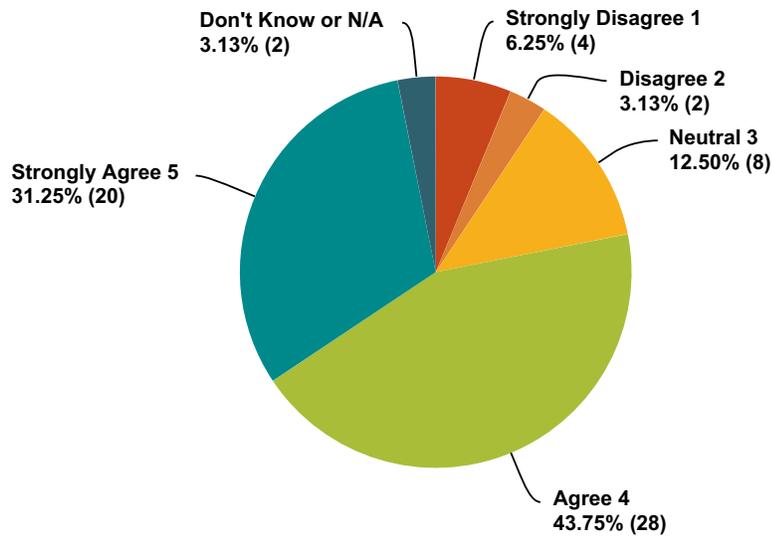
#	Comments	Date
1	I learned about this process when another member overheard me complaining.	5/2/2016 2:22 PM
2	The documentation for most transportation projects is so voluminous as to be not very easy to access. It can be characterized as the "phonebook" approach to public input - in that people are flooded with charts and documents which consultants get paid to write, but which are a challenge for many members of the public to read. Furthermore, the opportunity for so-called "public input" is a far cry from a robust process of public and community engagement in the transportation planning processes.	4/27/2016 11:33 PM
3	Once again, these session are held in areas with limited MTA accessibility, little or very restricted (expensive) parking, if it is available at all, and at times that are convenient for staff but not those from whom you purport to seek input.	4/26/2016 7:56 AM
4	You have to hunt for it and it's not clear how it all ties together. After all, the governor just does what he's going to do.	4/23/2016 12:32 PM
5	It is a bit confusing, as there is an overwhelming amount of information available. A simple online guide to process and new planning activities (updated regularly) would be more useful.	4/22/2016 3:55 PM
6	I follow the BMC and get notices of the safety meetings but not beyond that notification.	4/19/2016 7:23 PM
7	With fully booked schedules, today's technology should allow for more public input, but meetings are generally offline. It's difficult to get to meetings in person and would be easier if meetings were webcast with abilities to participate (chat online) if interested. Also allowing online folks access to public comments/questions/answers from meetings will help keep redundant questions at bay.	4/18/2016 2:23 PM
8	I work in Towson and I live in Reisterstown. The I-695 is not always a "kind" route to use to get to South Baltimore in time for an early evening meeting. The work time meeting are easier to get to from Towson.	4/15/2016 4:08 PM
9	I am on the email distribution list and I have received all information about TIMBR activities, including training opportunities, meetings, conferences, and issues to be discussed.	4/15/2016 2:11 PM

Feedback to FHWA/FTA for 2016 BRTB Certification

10	Planning in the metropolitan Baltimore region is not harmonized by MDOT to the extent it could be if the planning responsibilities for the regions state highways, interstates, and public transit systems were the direct responsibility of the BRTB/BMC. Michael Kelly has improved the process, but the political will is not sufficient to make the needed reorganization.	3/31/2016 4:13 PM
11	Yes they are. However for the population of the public that does not have readily accessible computer access it might be difficult.	3/24/2016 12:53 PM

Q4 I have reasonable access to technical data and information.

Answered: 64 Skipped: 2

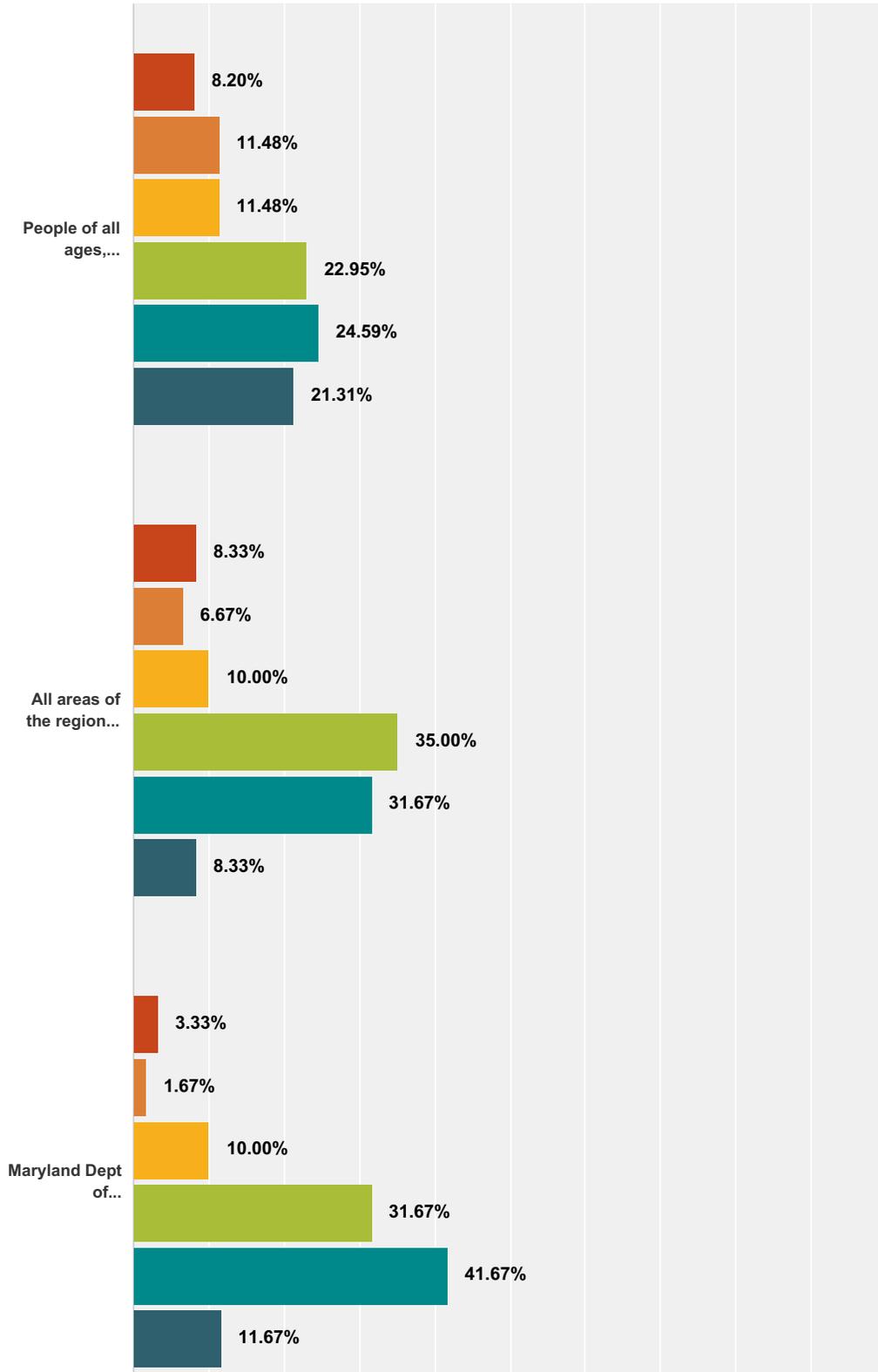


	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Don't Know or N/A	Total	Weighted Average
%	6.25%	3.13%	12.50%	43.75%	31.25%	3.13%	64	3.94
	4	2	8	28	20	2		

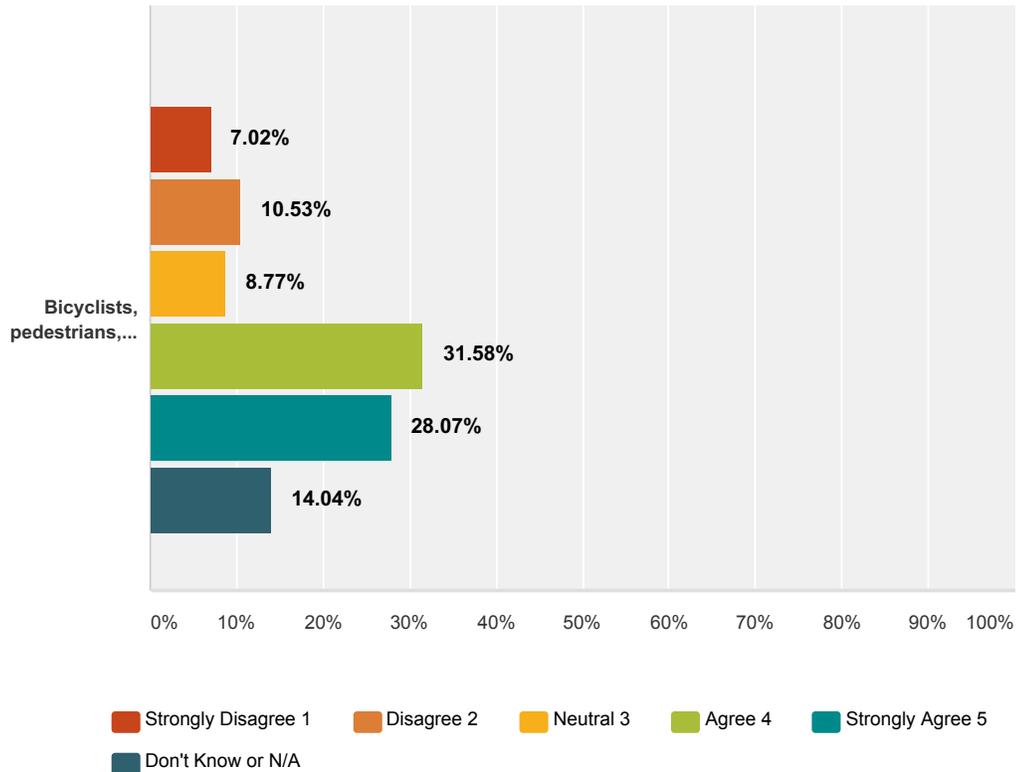
#	Comments	Date
1	Sometimes this information and data are online. Many times, they can be accessed only by visit to an official repository site (e.g. public library) or by a request to the transportation planning agency.	4/27/2016 11:33 PM
2	What data and what information for what purposes? Who mis available to explain to the lay person what that data/information is, what it means and how it can be used generate informed input and understanding of this critical transportation issues.	4/26/2016 7:56 AM
3	I feel like I do if I ask my delegate for it.	4/23/2016 12:32 PM
4	BMC does a very good job in supply all the technical data and information we need to accurately assess the traffic safety problems and concerns in the region.	4/19/2016 7:23 PM
5	I am 2 weeks away from being a retired Registered Civil Engineer, Highway Project Manager.	4/15/2016 4:08 PM
6	Through the BMC web site.	4/15/2016 2:11 PM
7	Several very nice reports prepared this year dealing with economic development used a lot of good regional data.	3/30/2016 7:53 AM
8	Access is reasonable, however some of the project details or background could be more detailed.	3/24/2016 12:53 PM

Q5 Appropriate transportation agencies and stakeholders are well represented and have access and opportunity for input in the regional transportation planning process

Answered: 62 Skipped: 4



Feedback to FHWA/FTA for 2016 BRTB Certification



	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Don't Know or N/A	Total	Weighted Average
People of all ages, abilities, incomes, races, language levels, etc	8.20% 5	11.48% 7	11.48% 7	22.95% 14	24.59% 15	21.31% 13	61	3.56
All areas of the region (Annapolis, Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carroll County, Harford County, and Howard County, Queen Anne's County)	8.33% 5	6.67% 4	10.00% 6	35.00% 21	31.67% 19	8.33% 5	60	3.82
Maryland Dept of Transportation business units (MTA, SHA, MdTA, etc.)	3.33% 2	1.67% 1	10.00% 6	31.67% 19	41.67% 25	11.67% 7	60	4.21
Bicyclists, pedestrians, drivers, transit riders, freight operators, etc.	7.02% 4	10.53% 6	8.77% 5	31.58% 18	28.07% 16	14.04% 8	57	3.73

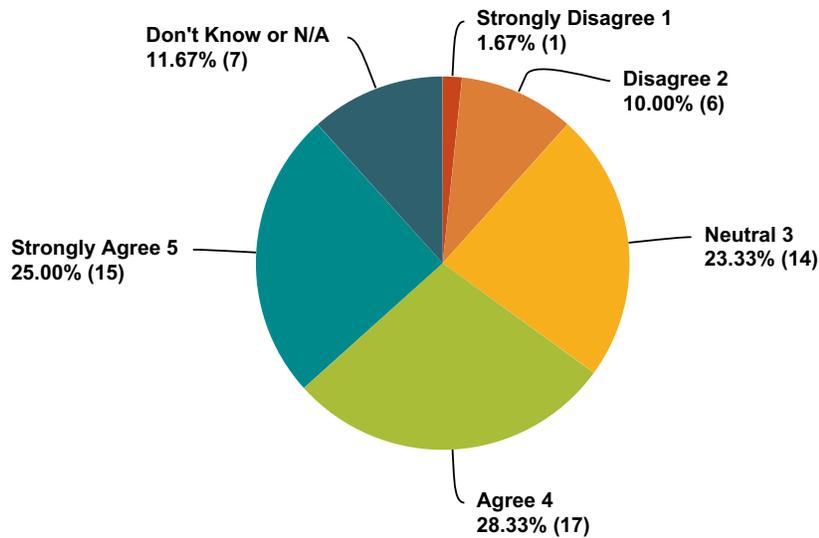
#	Comments	Date
1	Black people are not well represented but this is an issue that the black communities need to address.	5/2/2016 2:23 PM
2	I know BRTB are advocates for bike, peds, drivers, and transit riders. I am not as familiar with their involvement with freight operators.	5/2/2016 2:17 PM
3	Bicyclists/peds/drivers/transit riders/freight – These groups don't have a loud voice. They get overlooked by BRTB and MDOT.	5/2/2016 2:11 PM
4	Again, the whole public transportation planning process is tainted by relying on the anemic concept of "input" usually too late in the process, rather than active and continuous engagement right from the start of a new idea for public transportation.	4/27/2016 11:34 PM
5	See questions 1-4.	4/26/2016 7:56 AM
6	There are times when issues directly impact MDTA and MDTA has not been consulted. However, those occasions are rare.	4/25/2016 7:36 AM

Feedback to FHWA/FTA for 2016 BRTB Certification

7	I went to one of the meetings and it seemed like an extended focus group (and poorly run for that), unclear what it was supposed to accomplish. Certain people were allowed to ramble on about their pet topic, which would lead to disproportionate emphasis given to some person whom you have no idea of their level of representation of the community. But it doesn't matter, does it? The governor just does what he's going to do.	4/23/2016 2:42 PM
8	The open sessions and especially the online mapping tools that allow for public comment are easily accessible by all.	4/21/2016 7:09 PM
9	Federal Agencies are represented as well.	4/19/2016 1:28 PM
10	Major transportation bills should include mandatory pedestrian and bicycle lanes in all MD municipalities.	4/18/2016 9:42 PM
11	My problem is trying to make these meetings but it should be easier to attend once I retire. By the way, please add my personal contact e-mail to your system; Ralph1@engineer.com .	4/15/2016 4:14 PM
12	My responses were specific to the TIMBR committee. Most of the participants are professionals in transportation and public safety, instead of transportation-user groups.	4/15/2016 2:15 PM
13	There is less opportunity to comment on the plan derived from the planning meetings and community input and the comments so not lead to change.	4/15/2016 8:37 AM
14	Transit, Cycling to work on Segregated Bike Routes are both absolutely essential. We MUST make alternatives to the Car an essential part of the next 25 years in Baltimore.	4/14/2016 4:38 PM
15	Elected officials should attend board meetings. Sending lower-level staff in their place shows that the elected officials don't take their responsibilities seriously, and they cede too much decision-making power to the state agencies. Our region lags far behind other regions in terms of elected official participation.	4/14/2016 3:56 PM
16	It is not clear whether the allocation of Federal and State funds reflects the population of the jurisdictions in the metro region. Clearly, Baltimore City is not receiving its fair share of funds for state highways and public transit. And, job centers have insufficient funding for public transit. The reorganization of MTA-Maryland's Bus Plan is a good start, but it is seriously hampered by the idea that it is based upon "revenue neutral" funding. Why is transit revenue neutral when highways are not. There should be parity in expansion of state and federal highway and transit funding--that would be a new beginning to ensure improvements and upgrading of the metro areas transit services and providers.	3/31/2016 4:19 PM
17	Too often most of the stakeholders involved only represent the regional government agencies. Too often, these agencies are represented by junior staff, with good ideas, but lack the authority to act on the part of their agency.	3/30/2016 7:56 AM

Q6 The BRTB considers and adequately responds to public comments

Answered: 60 Skipped: 6

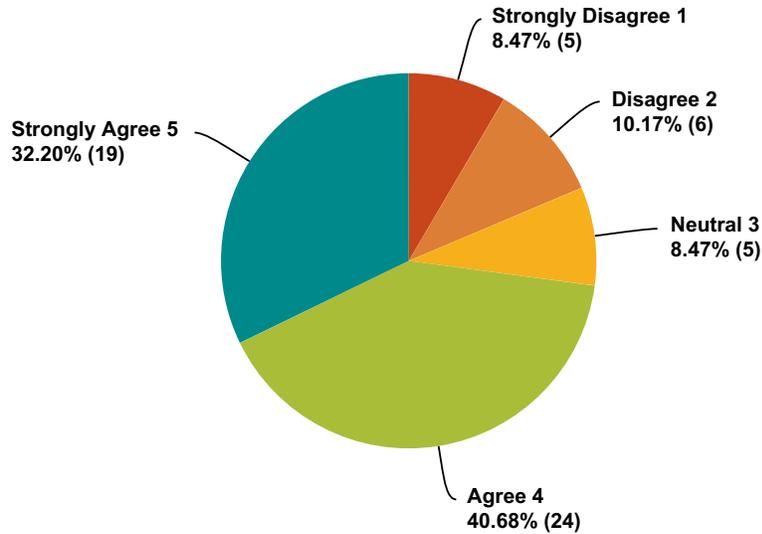


	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Don't Know or N/A	Total	Weighted Average
(no label)	1.67% 1	10.00% 6	23.33% 14	28.33% 17	25.00% 15	11.67% 7	60	3.74

#	Comments	Date
1	BRTB responds to the comments but no changes are made following the input.	5/2/2016 2:12 PM
2	The answers are usually boilerplate, and often not truly responsive.	4/27/2016 11:35 PM
3	You do not have the staff and staff time to perform this vital task effectively.	4/26/2016 7:57 AM
4	BRTB takes public comments seriously and makes every effort to address comments in an appropriate manner.	4/25/2016 7:37 AM
5	It's not possible to tell how much was going to happen regardless of input. Again, a simple guide would help: 1) Current proposals/plans, 2) Key public input, 3) Decisions made based on input.	4/22/2016 3:57 PM
6	There is a vast difference between responding and listening to and changing. They may respond but don't always listen well	4/19/2016 2:23 PM
7	The BRTB considers and responds adequately only during the pre-plan phase.	4/15/2016 8:38 AM
8	The state agencies call most of the shots in this region. The BRTB is in effect rubber stamping state decisions. This means the region's interests are not always considered in decisions that affect the region.	4/14/2016 3:59 PM
9	But there needs to be improvements with sharing responses to public comments. Questions from the public and the related responses need to be made available to the public.	3/30/2016 7:59 AM
10	I cannot tell for sure but I believe they consider responses adequately.	3/24/2016 12:55 PM

Q7 The regional transportation planning process and plans address major issues facing the region.

Answered: 59 Skipped: 7



	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Don't Know or N/A	Total	Weighted Average
(no label)	8.47% 5	10.17% 6	8.47% 5	40.68% 24	32.20% 19	0.00% 0	59	3.78

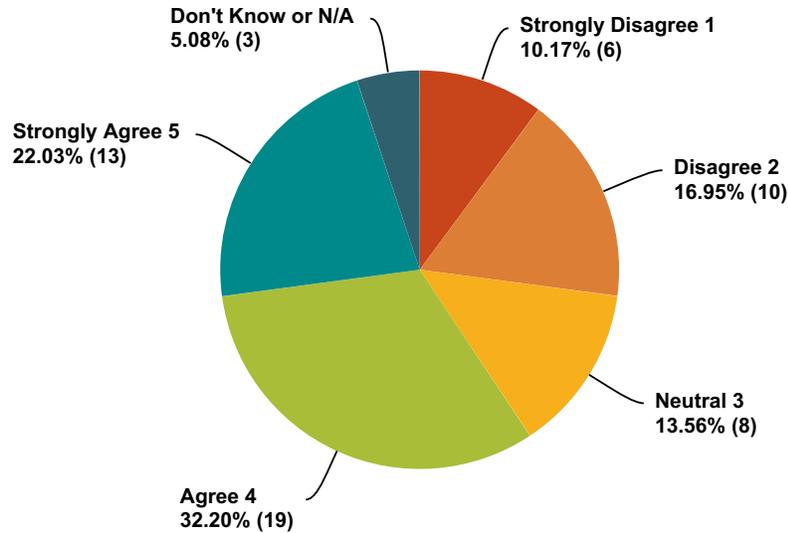
#	Comments	Date
1	Not really, it attempts to fix current issues but does not make any attempts to address or plan for a future multi-modal transportation network.	5/2/2016 2:14 PM
2	After many years, and despite many iterations of documents which claim to examine Regional Transit Needs and propose long term plans, there has never really been a detailed, imaginative, equitable, and ambitious proposal of a vision for a metropolitan multi-modal and integrated public transportation system for the Baltimore Metropolitan Area. The Baltimore Region Rail System report of 2002 attempted to do this for rail only, thus failing to integrate with other modes (such as bus). It also only proposed an east-west Red Line (planned, but then killed in 2015 by Governor Hogan), a north-south yellow line, which never got off the ground, and an extension to the northeast of the current Metro (Green Line), which also was abandoned in a few years.	4/27/2016 11:37 PM
3	At the macro, top down level yes. Down on the pavement no.	4/26/2016 8:03 AM
4	Many highway projects included in the plan are a particular county's or city's priority, but are not a regional or statewide priority and should likely not be included in the plan.	4/25/2016 7:44 AM
5	But it doesn't matter. The governor just does what he's going to do.	4/23/2016 2:43 PM
6	My experience is with Bike/Ped and it has been excellent	4/21/2016 7:11 PM
7	Still highway focused.	4/19/2016 2:25 PM
8	With as much traffic that exists between Baltimore and WDC there should by a direct light rail service between the two cities 24 X 7, with connection lines servicing the surrounding communities, to include Westminster, Owen Mills, Ellicott City, Glenn Burnie, etc.	4/18/2016 9:48 PM
9	Many efforts have resulted in enhanced multi-agency coordination to manage traffic incidents such as TIM training, the MOVE-IT program to educate the public on what to do in a minor crash (no injuries and the vehicles are still operational), coordination with the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner to have the road re-opened quickly, funeral procession for public safety personnel killed on duty, move-over campaign, etc.	4/15/2016 2:23 PM

Feedback to FHWA/FTA for 2016 BRTB Certification

10	The final plan is not an integrative, logical regional plan, but rather is disjointed, with no conceptual rationale for the final choices made. It was extremely disappointing to our community who worked so hard and long, attending meetings, really focusing on safety and planning for the future.	4/15/2016 8:44 AM
11	Clearly we must exclude Politicians from any of the decision making processes.	4/14/2016 4:41 PM
12	In any event, funding is too focused on declining federal participation, and should be re-cast in light of the high probability of continuing reductions in the federal share. Additional local and regional funding sources are essential to the region's transportation improvements.	3/31/2016 4:27 PM
13	I believe several Counties are more engaged in the processes then others. For example, I don't believe Baltimore County is as well invested as is Anne Arundel. Baltimore County's input to major transportation issues seems to lack behind others.	3/30/2016 8:11 AM

Q8 Essential transportation improvements are able to be implemented because of the BRTB.

Answered: 59 Skipped: 7

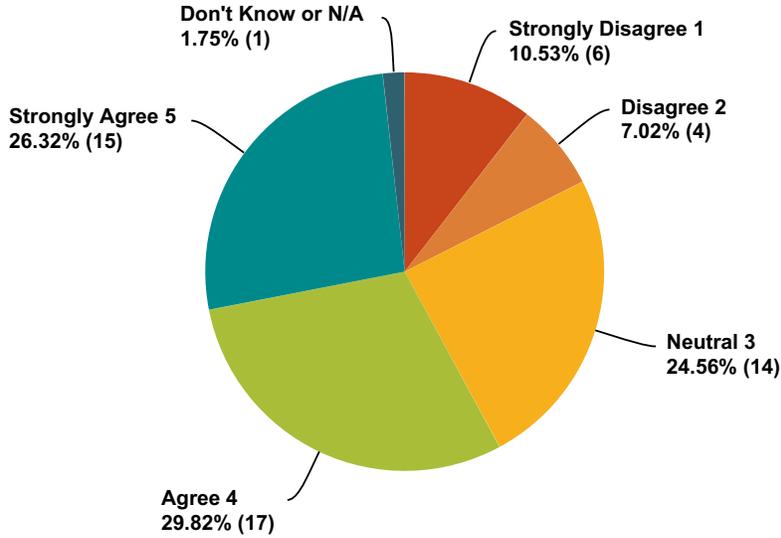


	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Don't Know or N/A	Total	Weighted Average
(no label)	10.17%	16.95%	13.56%	32.20%	22.03%	5.08%	59	3.41
	6	10	8	19	13	3		

#	Comments	Date
1	Too much politics elsewhere.	5/2/2016 2:24 PM
2	Essential improvements, yes. No long term improvements.	5/2/2016 2:14 PM
3	The BRTB is basically only allowed to rubber stamp decisions presented to it and made by others, such as the MTA, MDOT, and BDOT. Its role comes at the end of the decision-making process, not the beginning.	4/27/2016 11:37 PM
4	Where is the evidence of this? Yes all transportation is politically influenced despite what the research and the "numbers" verify. So who deems what is or is not essential and for whom?	4/26/2016 8:03 AM
5	"Don't know" is not the same as "N/A" and I would suggest separating the two in the future.	4/25/2016 3:57 PM
6	BRTB strongly supports needed transportation improvements in the region.	4/25/2016 7:44 AM
7	The governor just does what he's going to do.	4/23/2016 2:43 PM
8	With such short questions, do you really need to resort to abbreviations, because I forgot what it stands for?	4/23/2016 1:38 PM
9	The BPAG is excellent for regional planning and facilitation but actual improvements rely heavily on counties and cities	4/21/2016 7:11 PM
10	Essential to cars but not to people.	4/19/2016 2:25 PM
11	BRTB should have supported construction of Red Line or development of an alternative system.	4/16/2016 6:56 PM
12	See comments in Item 7	4/15/2016 2:23 PM
13	Most of the chosen plans are not going to impact the overall transportation issues in Maryland.	4/15/2016 8:44 AM
14	The BRTB is a legislatively mandated afterthought in the eyes of the state agencies. The local elected officials accept this situation when they should be participating in the process and flexing more decision-making muscle.	4/14/2016 4:03 PM
15	The BRTB does what it can, but the authority that rests with the BRTB is insufficient to meet the needs currently faced by the metro area.	3/31/2016 4:27 PM
16	I believe the MDOT drives the wagon, and not the BRTB.	3/30/2016 8:11 AM

Q9 The region's long-range and short-term transportation plans reflect transportation needs, priorities, and desires of the region.

Answered: 57 Skipped: 9



	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Don't Know or N/A	Total	Weighted Average
(no label)	10.53% 6	7.02% 4	24.56% 14	29.82% 17	26.32% 15	1.75% 1	57	3.55

#	Comments	Date
1	We need a good rail system. Light rail is not adequate.	5/2/2016 2:24 PM
2	Not really, it's driven by politics, not sound planning principals that is data driven.	5/2/2016 2:14 PM
3	Automobile and highway interests are too prominent in short-term plans, and the long-term plans are too vague on the future of public transportation to be of much use.	4/27/2016 11:37 PM
4	See number 8.	4/26/2016 8:03 AM
5	See my comment on question #7 above.	4/25/2016 7:44 AM
6	Can't tell. While you can't please everyone, you can inform everyone of input and decisions based on it.	4/22/2016 3:58 PM
7	It is mostly an exercise in stapling the local plans together. There is little regional planning and little effort to get the BRTB members to think bigger and regionally.	4/19/2016 2:25 PM
8	BRTB puts too much emphasis on highways and not enough on transit expansion.	4/16/2016 6:56 PM
9	They are just a patchwork of trying to give something to most stakeholders. There is no cohesive logical plan and no communication post submittal about the submissions.	4/15/2016 8:44 AM
10	BUT! there is no point having carefully thought out plans, if Politicians then trash them.	4/14/2016 4:41 PM
11	We don't think regionally in metro Baltimore. We think in the context of the region's counties and Baltimore City. I don't think that BRTB/BMC has sufficient authority to change this, particularly in light of reduced federal funding and slowly increasing state and local shares. In addition, federal funds usually come in funding silos. Fund allocations are made in order to qualify for those silos, which are not flexible enough to allow a harmonization of funding, region-wide, to reflect the volatile and growing needs of the region.	3/31/2016 4:27 PM

Feedback to FHWA/FTA for 2016 BRTB Certification

12	Again, don't believe Baltimore County is engaged enough to pull their priorities. They seem to just wait to see what comes their way from MDOT and Baltimore City, and then they act. The transportation transit needs for Baltimore County seems too concerned with moving people to and from the City, and not enough with movement with the County. For example, Dundalk to / Essex or Rosedale.	3/30/2016 8:11 AM
13	Public transportation has a back role in the plans.	3/24/2016 1:00 PM

Feedback to FHWA/FTA for 2016 BRTB Certification

Q10 What do you think the BRTB is doing well?

Answered: 37 Skipped: 29

#	Responses	Date
1	I don't know, but we must continue.	5/2/2016 2:24 PM
2	Coordinating stakeholders to identify and focus efforts on projects and programs of greatest benefit to the region is one of the greatest strengths of the BRTB.	5/2/2016 2:19 PM
3	They follow the process very well and provide great opportunity for input. However, the process is slanted and can be overridden by politics (aka the governor cancelling the Red Line).	5/2/2016 2:15 PM
4	BRTB, supported by BMC, is doing a good job of soliciting public input, making information accessible, and providing data and excellent information.	5/2/2016 2:07 PM
5	Public involvement	5/2/2016 2:04 PM
6	keeping the community informed about evolving transportation needs and developing new issues.	4/29/2016 12:18 PM
7	There are some able and caring professionals who are members of the staff of the BRTB. The BRTB is good in its collection of data, and its attempts to reach out to the public. However, the public is neither sufficiently nor meaningfully engaged in the transportation planning process, and is consulted far too late in the planning process (see some of the answers above to questions). I think it is significant that in the December 2014 Guidebook issued by Transportation for America on "The Innovative MPO," there were 58 MPO's listed from around the USA - and Baltimore's was NOT among them.	4/27/2016 11:43 PM
8	The BRTB is very inclusive of all partners and interested parties. They are also transparent in their planning and project progress.	4/27/2016 12:00 PM
9	It exists.	4/26/2016 8:09 AM
10	Address long term transportation needs Manages short term actions required for approval of TIP amendments. Addresses public concerns and seeks public input.	4/26/2016 5:52 AM
11	Street Smart campaign, regional bicycle planning, BPAG speakers from various agencies and projects around town	4/25/2016 4:02 PM
12	It seems to me that the BRTB does a good job of identifying transportation improvement projects throughout the Greater Baltimore region that are essential for upgrading the area's overall public transit system.	4/25/2016 1:28 PM
13	The meeting are very well organized and inclusive of all the appropriate partners. The information discussed is appropriate for the group and the mission of transportation in this region.	4/25/2016 7:57 AM
14	There are working hard to make the regional travel demand model a useful tool for project development as well as for regional plans. Their efforts on freight issues is a valuable tool for the transportation agencies in the region.	4/25/2016 7:47 AM
15	Soliciting input from all sectors. Every facet of transportation is included; public, private, business, and recreation. The board members are dedicated and enthusiastic.	4/25/2016 6:16 AM
16	getting publicity	4/23/2016 1:38 PM
17	Allowing those that wish to voice the needs to be heard.	4/22/2016 6:29 PM
18	Local input is still a high priority in the Baltimore Region. This is apparently not universal among MPOs nationwide. I would hate to see this approach by the BRTB erode and become more bureaucratic.	4/22/2016 4:07 PM
19	BRTB does excellent public outreach.	4/22/2016 2:47 PM
20	Bike/ped Advisory Group	4/21/2016 7:12 PM
21	Working with local jurisdictions to listen to their needs and incorporate them in the regions over transportation plans and goals where appropriate.	4/21/2016 11:03 AM
22	inclusive meetings - multidisciplinary team working toward shared transportation goals. Learning opportunities - hearing from others about transportation projects - methods, success and evaluation.	4/20/2016 5:47 PM
23	I think they do a good job in the safety area and they have done an excellent job in managing the pedestrian/bicycle safety campaign for the region.	4/19/2016 7:26 PM

Feedback to FHWA/FTA for 2016 BRTB Certification

24	The BRTB communicates very well and is very responsive to inquires and also is supportive of transportation and safety efforts occurring in the Baltimore region. They are a very valuable partner to work with.	4/19/2016 5:08 PM
25	Engaging diverse groups that are representative of the region's needs, including transportation professionals	4/19/2016 2:30 PM
26	I think it is slowly trying to have a tiny bit of regionalism.	4/19/2016 2:27 PM
27	Enumerating concerns of the public regarding transportation needs.	4/19/2016 2:22 PM
28	The BRTB does a great job at getting information out in relation to new projects and ideas. It is also a great forum for Inter Agency Collaboration throughout the State.	4/19/2016 1:30 PM
29	It is beginning to ask the residents and look into the potential benefits of efficient mass transit.	4/18/2016 9:53 PM
30	Reaching out to and motivate the stakeholders	4/15/2016 2:24 PM
31	Identifying all stake holder and soliciting input. Working as a team to improve the service and advanced notice that our customers need.	4/15/2016 2:19 PM
32	The process is accessible, easy to view online, and the meetings are inclusive and open to the public. The locations are accessible.	4/15/2016 8:49 AM
33	not much. The rail lines only service a few not all b	4/14/2016 7:49 PM
34	Doing OK in adopting federally required documents.	4/14/2016 4:06 PM
35	BRTB is clearly the leader in demographic reporting and managing the federal funding allocation process, which is the purpose of its existence under federal law. However, it is not a thought leader in transportation matters, and MDOT fails miserably in this arena.	3/31/2016 4:36 PM
36	Moving projects planned by MDOT and Baltimore City forward in the planning processes.	3/30/2016 8:18 AM
37	Their staff is excellent. They're diverse and have excellent technical staff and managers. Their public outreach is great.	3/24/2016 1:02 PM

Q11 Do you have any suggestions for how the BRTB can improve?

Answered: 34 Skipped: 32

#	Responses	Date
1	Involve more citizens with a greater understanding of the planning process on its advisory boards and commissions.	5/2/2016 2:19 PM
2	Use more traditional public notification, not everybody has internet access.	5/2/2016 2:15 PM
3	The BRTB should strengthen their relationship with Maryland state and various stakeholders to ensure programs are implemented and successful.	5/2/2016 2:07 PM
4	use more people like Monica Benkedda that have a personal knowledge of minority city residents and their travel needs.	4/29/2016 12:18 PM
5	Although there are some very talented, well-trained and sincere staff working for the BRTB, their hands are tied because of the limited role allowed for MPOs under the Maryland practices of MDOT which basically are restricted to going along with decisions made elsewhere in the State and local government systems. There is also absurd "equal-weighting" (i.e one vote for each) for decision-making of the seven local jurisdictions represented on the BRTB - Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Anne Arundel County, Carroll County, Harford County, Howard County, and the City of Annapolis. These localities vary widely in amount and density of population and urban-rural mix. Their decisions should not have equal weight. There are many instances around the US of MPOs which use a weighted system for making decisions which takes into account wide variations in population density among their local jurisdiction members. This is much fairer and also makes a lot more sense. Although it did not finally find its way into federal legislation, there was consideration about seven or eight years ago to require such proportional representation for MPOs as part of the federal transportation authorization statute.	4/27/2016 11:43 PM
6	Play a stronger role in looking at transportation at the regional level instead of just following the lead of individual jurisdictions.	4/27/2016 2:39 PM
7	Reread 1-10. Deeper, more comprehensive, ground level contact with neighborhoods and communities. More intense and sustained marketing and promotion of who/what BMC/BRTB is, why it matters and how greater numbers of citizens can get involved in the process. Yes this requires a full-time staff to implement and deliver on a consistent basis all of which requires the most important element for sustaining and growing involvement: Leadership.	4/26/2016 8:09 AM
8	BRTB should work with agencies to seek methods for prioritizing selection and implementation of regional projects.	4/26/2016 5:52 AM
9	BRTB processes are dominated by transportation agencies, even though health and environmental concerns are vitally important in any transportation planning. I would encourage BRTB to give health and environmental agencies votes on all BRTB committees and at the BRTB level. Also, the BRTB should take on the Surgeon General's call to get communities walking more (see http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/calls/walking-and-walkable-communities/index.html) and initiate some regional walking events and related promotional materials, with of course a focus on walking for transportation.	4/25/2016 4:02 PM
10	I don't believe the BRTB is doing enough to communicate to the general public its mission, duties, and the improvement projects they identify for the public to voice its opinions. In my opinion, the general public is largely "in the dark" in regards to the BRTB and its overall mission.	4/25/2016 1:28 PM
11	No	4/25/2016 7:57 AM
12	BRTB should work to ensure lower level local priorities, which cannot compete for the limited regional and statewide resources available are not included in the regional plans and programs.	4/25/2016 7:47 AM
13	N/A	4/25/2016 6:16 AM
14	It became stuck in the Red Line plan even as that plan became less useful to its future riders, less realistic, and far more expensive -- and did not find away out of putting itself behind a failed plan. What was never admitted was that the Red Line would be so expensive that funding would be taken from bus services, so that many people who are materially poor would have worse transportation options.	4/24/2016 11:36 PM
15	Not at this time.	4/22/2016 6:29 PM
16	BRTB could have more events/public outreach beyond Baltimore County	4/22/2016 2:47 PM
17	Allow additional citizen/advocacy group reps on the BPAG	4/21/2016 7:12 PM
18	n/a	4/21/2016 11:03 AM

Feedback to FHWA/FTA for 2016 BRTB Certification

19	I think they need to involve the Safety Committee more in the transportation planning process. Most of the individuals involved could provide valuable input and it would ensure that safety is actively addressed in all planning documents.	4/19/2016 7:26 PM
20	No.	4/19/2016 5:08 PM
21	WE need to figure out the voting system that currently is structure to almost prevent any kind of regional efforts and certainly anything that is not most new lanes of highways.	4/19/2016 2:27 PM
22	Continue to focus on how to achieve public transportation that operates efficiently and on a frequent basis to areas that require regular transit service but currently have little or no service. Explore the prospect for Uber connections between job sites and transit stops, and advocate for same, if warranted.	4/19/2016 2:22 PM
23	Not at this time.	4/19/2016 1:30 PM
24	Travel to the greater Denver/Aurora area in Colorado and see how they have developed their mass transit. They have one common light rail that circles the two cities and services both down towns and surrounding areas to include Denver International Airport. The BRTB needs to do the same, normalize and modernize the transportation and make it accessible to more than just downtown. Connect Baltimore, to WDC with stops along the 295 parkway.	4/18/2016 9:53 PM
25	Closer review of MTA bus service, installation of new technologies to help users; and need to push for alternative plan for Red Line.	4/16/2016 6:58 PM
26	Shift Maryland's political will to immediately begin construction, based on older existing plans, of a broad, comprehensive metro rail system linking the Baltimore City/Washington D.C metropolitan hubs and suburbs in between. We are long overdue and this could have already been realized had Baltimore City's metro rail system not been designed to cater only to downtown commuters living in Owings Mills back in the 1980's. Baltimore's metro rail system should be designed to be on par with other metropolitan cities such as New York, Chicago, Japan and London.	4/15/2016 3:48 PM
27	None that I can think of.	4/15/2016 2:24 PM
28	Continue to invest time an effort into training in order to improve customer service. Look at multiple jurisdiction training events so all areas can participate and become familiar with the key players in their areas.	4/15/2016 2:19 PM
29	If a community (in this case a network of 5 communities) submits a plan that includes vitally needed safety and traffic flow changes, integrating biking and walking as a central solution, and that plan is not approved, provide detailed feedback. People volunteered their time and energy to this because it would have greatly enhanced safety and biking/walking/ livability/transportation in North Baltimore City and we have no idea why this concept was not approved. It leaves community members feeling that there really is no desire for their input or for the knowledge they bring to collaborative solution planning. This is especially true when the plan would have had so little cost.	4/15/2016 8:49 AM
30	yes; however this space is too small to write in that's why I will be attending the meeting.	4/14/2016 7:49 PM
31	Elected officials should show up and engage in the process. Be a strong voice for the region's issues and concerns.	4/14/2016 4:06 PM
32	The BRTB must become the empowered and go-to R&D, planning, funding and management authority for transportation in the Baltimore region for highways, public transit, water taxi service, rail (passenger and freight) and those operating agencies within the counties and Baltimore City which currently provide these services for state and federal roads. [Local streets and roads would remain with the counties and Baltimore City]. Roads of regional significance are our state designated highways and our designated interstates. We haven't sufficiently and effectively addressed the many issues which cross jurisdictional boundaries and the result is a decline in the quality of transportation services provided in the region.	3/31/2016 4:36 PM
33	Look for opportunities to identify improvements not being discussed at various Agencies, and be the champion for those needs. Engage the public. Engage more stakeholders other then the government agencies that should be engaged. No committees of the BRTB should only be represented by all government representatives.	3/30/2016 8:18 AM
34	They could stress their importance for the region better. More self promotion regarding their important role especially with MDOT branches.	3/24/2016 1:02 PM

David Highfield <davidhighmd@gmail.com>
To: comments@baltometro.org

Thu, Apr 14, 2016 at 5:52 PM

I would like to see timely and urgent progress on the Baltimore tunnel replacement and replacement of the Susquehanna river bridge.
David Highfield
Westminster, MD

Katharine Rylaarsdam <krylaarsdam@indylink.org>
To: comments@baltometro.org

Fri, Apr 22, 2016 at 5:47 PM

Hon, has nobody told you there is an election on Tuesday? What a damn fool time to schedule a meeting!

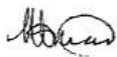
On 4/22/2016 3:04 PM, Public Involvement Coordinator wrote:

Dear Katharine

This is a friendly reminder about the federal certification review of the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board. The FHWA and FTA conduct this on-site review every four years.

As someone who's sent the BRTB comments, attended a public meeting, or served on the BRTB's Public Advisory Committee, we're interested in your comments on the regional planning process to share with FHWA and FTA.

*You can participate in the federal review by **joining us on Monday, April 25**, sending us your **comments**, or taking our online **survey**. Details are below. Thanks! :)*



Monica B. Haines Benkhedda
Public Involvement Coordinator



Peter Moe <pmoe@mdot.state.md.us>
To: "comments@baltometro.org" <comments@baltometro.org>

Tue, Apr 19, 2016 at 1:21 PM

To Whom it May Concern:

It is my pleasure to stop for a moment and offer feedback on the operations of the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board as a part of the FHWA and FTA 2016 Certification Review. I will be out of town on the 25th, otherwise I would gladly have offered these comments in person.

I have worked with the staff of BRTB for ten years in a range of capacities, mainly in the planning and operation of highway safety plans and campaigns. BRTB has been and remains a steadfast partner in the work to promote highway safety in the greater Baltimore region as a part of both long term- and short term plans and projects. BRTB has been an active participant in the Maryland Strategic Highway Safety Plan development and implementation, and an important bridge between the state and local jurisdictions.

Mr. Bala Akundi has been an invaluable partner in the implementation of the Maryland Strategic Highway Safety Plan and, along with BRTB members and staff, in the state's efforts to promote pedestrian safety through the StreetSmarts campaign and other highway safety campaigns.

As a lifelong resident of the Baltimore metropolitan region, I am glad to have BRTB steering the ship toward the transportation future of the region.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer my comments and my endorsement of BRTB for recertification.

With regards,

Peter Moe

Peter C. Moe | **Director, Driver Safety** | Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration | 6601 Richie Highway, N.E., Glen Burnie, Maryland 21062 | ☎ 410-424-3731 | 📠 410-761-1545 | * pmoe@mva.maryland.gov | "The MVA shall provide exemplary driver and vehicle services that promote Maryland's mobility and safety while enhancing product security."



William Fox <wfox@baltimorecountymd.gov>
To: "comments@baltometro.org" <comments@baltometro.org>

Fri, Apr 22, 2016 at 4:09 PM

From: Eileen Singleton [mailto:baltimoremetropolitancouncil@baltometro.ccsend.com] **On Behalf Of** Eileen Singleton
Sent: Friday, April 22, 2016 1:48 PM
To: William Fox <wfox@baltimorecountymd.gov>
Subject: [REMINDER] Your feedback is important! Let FHWA and FTA know how the BRTB is doing as your MPO

Dear Eileen

This e-mail was a bit confusing, so I just want to tell you that I would be really glad to come to this meeting on the 25th but I will be away on vacation. So I will say this, I thought that the conference was very very good and that it had a lot of very good information and the people that were participating in this conference were very knowledgeable as to what they were talking about.

Sincerely,

William D. Fox



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PAC RESOLUTION #2016-03

A RESOLUTION REGARDING THE 2016 FEDERAL CERTIFICATION OF THE BRTB BY THE PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) OF THE BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD (BRTB)

WHEREAS, the BRTB, the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Baltimore region responsible for transportation planning and policy making for the Baltimore region; and

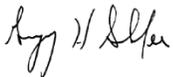
WHEREAS, the PAC serves as an advisory body to the BRTB, charged with providing independent, region oriented citizen advice to the BRTB on issues related to the development of the Baltimore Regional Transportation Plan (BRTP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and amendments that affect the region's conformity with federal air quality requirements, the public involvement process, regionally significant land use issues, and other regional transportation-related issues, as appropriate, promotes public awareness and participation in the regional transportation planning process and promotes equity in the regional transportation planning process; and

WHEREAS, the PAC reviewed the requirements for recertification from the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, as well as the recommendations from the recertification in 2012 in developing these comments.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the PAC submits the attached comments to the BRTB as an input to the Federal Recertification process.

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the PAC appreciates this opportunity to share feedback and looks forward to an active participation in the public meeting process.

Submitted by;



Gregory H. Shafer
Chairman, BRTB Public Advisory Committee

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Public Advisory Committee of the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board would like to take this opportunity to express our opinion on the recertification of BRTB as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the region. We have reviewed the requirements for recertification from the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration as well as the recommendations from the recertification in 2012 in developing these comments.

Purpose of the recertification process:

Review Element	PAC Comment
<p>Planning process addresses the major issues facing the Region</p>	<p>The BRTB is engaged in the discussion on major transportation issues facing the region but often times appears to be following the lead of the sponsoring agencies instead of working to develop and implement a plan that meets the needs of the people in the region. The PAC encourages BRTB to initiate projects and drive the highway or transit agencies to implement them.</p> <p>The transportation issues addressed seem to focus on the vehicular issues; ped/bike and public transportation seem to have lower priority. The nature of the system of using priority letters from individual counties, through State agencies, drives project selection and planning process resulting in a plan that lacks a truly regional perspective.</p>
<p>Identify noteworthy practices and opportunities and that there is continued progress from prior reviews</p>	<p>See comments below on progress toward improvement based on previous review comments.</p>
<p>All planning partners appropriately cooperate in the planning process</p>	<p>The members of the BRTB seem to work well together and have a very collegial and functional working relationship. The PAC has not observed dysfunction in this process.</p>
<p>Products and process are compliant with federal regulation</p>	<p>While the PAC does not have an opinion on the compliance of the work products with Federal requirements, we do believe that BRTB makes every reasonable effort to be compliant. The PAC reviews all of the work products of the BRTB and makes an effort to provide timely and helpful comments.</p>
<p>Stewardship of planning process</p>	<p>PAC continues to help ensure that BRTB planning process is in accordance with the 3C's planning principles which also protect and enhance the reputation of our built and natural environment locally.</p> <p>PAC will continue to support BRTB initiative and where feasible, strengthen informed, collaborative, and transparent decision making.</p>

Objectives of the Planning Certification Review

Objective	PAC Comment
<p>Planning activities of MPO, MDOT, transit operators, and other agencies with responsibilities for transportation planning are conducted in accordance with FHWA and FTA regulations, policies, and procedures including the provisions of ISTEA, TEA-21, and SAFETEA-LU:</p>	<p>While the PAC does not have an opinion on the compliance of the work products with federal requirements, we do believe that BRTB makes every reasonable effort to be compliant. The PAC reviews all of the work products of the BRTB and makes an effort to provide timely and helpful comments.</p>
<p>The transportation planning process for the metropolitan planning organization is a 3-C (continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive) process that results in the development, implementation, and support of transportation improvements;</p>	<p>The PAC has observed the BRTB's planning process over the past four years and found that it meets these objectives.</p>
<p>The UPWP adequately documents MPO's transportation planning activities and all other significant transportation planning activities occurring in the area;</p>	<p>The BRTB has recently gone to a two-year process for updating and approving the UPWP. This has been done because it doesn't change significantly over this short period. The PAC believes that this approach is reasonable and is given the opportunity to comment on the revisions that inevitably occur in the off year.</p>
<p>The transportation planning products, including the LRTP and TIP reflect the identified transportation needs, priorities, and funding resources;</p>	<p>The PAC has participated in the development of the new LRTP and reviews the TIP and any amendments. These plans are developed with input from the public and make a good effort to meet the needs and priorities given the funding limitations. There was significant concern over the manner in which the Red Line project was cancelled this past year. While the governor had the authority to cancel the project, the planning process seems to have been subverted through the way in which the project was cancelled. This is a significant concern for the PAC.</p>
<p>Products of the transportation planning process are multi-modal in perspective, complete, based on current information, and interrelated;</p>	
<p>Requirements and objectives of ISTEA, TEA-21, SAFETEA-LU, the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) are considered and incorporated where appropriate into the planning process and supported through development activities; and</p>	<p>A complaint has been filed with MDOT stating that it violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act when it canceled the Red Line and moved all of the state funding to projects outside Baltimore City and County.</p>

Objective	PAC Comment
The issues raised during the last Federal Certification review have been addressed by the MPO.	See comments below on progress toward improvement based on previous review comments.

Key Public Involvement Questions

Are citizens provided the opportunity to participate in the processes?	There are review periods for every major work product and public meetings in order to solicit input from the public. Opportunity to participate in the process is also made available through social media outlets.
Is information about transportation issues made available early enough to solicit input?	The nature of the planning process results in comment periods that occur late in the process, particularly for TIP amendments. This makes it difficult for input from the public to make a meaningful difference.
Is there adequate notice of planning activities?	The BRTB uses various means of traditional and electronic media to notify the public of opportunities to comment on work products. The PAC continues to work with the BRTB to identify and implement new ways of reaching out to the public and soliciting their input. The PAC recommends improved tracking of the effectiveness of outreach to vulnerable populations.
Is there adequate time to comment?	The PAC reviews every major work product and amendments thereto and the public is given the required time to review these work products as well. At times the review periods, while meeting statute requirements, seem too short. The BRTB is justifiably reluctant to increase the review periods beyond the required length, but the PAC believes that in some cases this restricts the public's ability to provide meaningful input. The public is only given information on projects and work programs that are carried forward. There is no information on how these are chosen over other projects/work products. It's hard to know if there are other projects that would provide greater public benefit. Public comment and PAC participation are pro forma in many cases, especially on TIP amendments.
Is there reasonable access to technical data and information?	The BRTB has always demonstrated a strong willingness to provide any information needed by the public to review the work products. They also work closely with the modal agencies to obtain additional information on work products when requested by the public. The BRTB could post more technical data on its publicly accessible website.
Are comments appropriately considered by the MPO?	The BRTB responds to every comment received from the public. The response to the comments is often just an explanation of why things are done the way they are instead of considering how things may be done differently as a result of the comment from the public.
Any noteworthy positive aspects to cite or suggestions ?	We suggest quarterly review of recertification recommendations by the Public Involvement Committee.

Recommendations from 2012

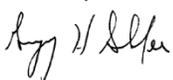
Recommendation	PAC Comment
<p>The Federal Team recommends that the Baltimore MPO revise the Urbanized Area Boundary (UAB) to include, as a minimum, the 2010 urbanized area.</p>	<p>The MPO boundary has been extended to include Queen Anne’s County. The County has been added as a non-voting member of the BRTP.</p>
<p>The Federal Team recommends that the Baltimore MPO update the Metropolitan Area Boundary to include areas likely to become urbanized within the twenty year forecast period covered by the transportation plan.</p>	<p>The MPO boundary has been extended to include Queen Anne’s County. The County has been added as a non-voting member of the BRTP.</p>
<p>Once the revised UAB is established, the Federal Team recommends the MPO evaluate and functionally reclassify its highway network.</p>	<p>The PAC agrees that roadways should be evaluated and reclassified, if necessary.</p>
<p>The Federal Team encourages the Baltimore MPO to establish performance targets to track progress towards attainment of critical outcome for the next LRTP update.</p>	<p>Performance targets have been incorporated into the LRTP (<i>Maximize2040</i>) with input from the PAC and the public. The BRTB adjusted some targets in accordance with recommendations from the PAC. However, we note that the region is not projected to meet some targets when the current LRTP is modeled for the 2040 Preferred Alternative.</p>
<p>The Federal Team recommends that the MPO provide a summary of actual work completed and percent of federal funds spent for each work activity when submitting the UPWP progress report on a biannual basis.</p>	<p>This is being included in the UPWP progress report, the information is not being provided to the PAC or to the public. This would be good information to have to evaluate the effectiveness of the BRTB’s work.</p>
<p>The Federal Team recommends the MPO explain project history to the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) as well as the link between the MPO’s project selection process for the TIP and the State Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) project selection process, and provide this reminder as background information during project reviews by CAC.</p>	<p>BRTB staff has made a concerted effort over the past few years to have representatives from the sponsoring agency present during the presentation of the TIP amendments to the PAC.</p>
<p>The Federal Team recommends that the MPO ensure compliance with its Public Involvement Process and bylaws on public comments and reviews for all of the MPO’s plans and programs.</p>	<p>The PAC is of the opinion that BRTB is meeting the requirements of the Public Involvement Plan and bylaws. There are, however, some ways in which BRTB could more effectively utilize the Vulnerable Population Index and reach out to traditionally underserved populations. The Vulnerable Population Index notes that the BRTB and PAC should focus its outreach on seven vulnerable populations in the area: people in poverty, Hispanic/Latino, non-Hispanic and non-white minorities, limited English proficient, people with disabilities,</p>

Recommendation	PAC Comment
	<p>the elderly and car-less households. The Plan details four strategies to engage these communities as well as strategies for outreach, engagement and education. Suggest that the an Annual Report on Public Involvement be published every year and include a section detailing BRTB’s outreach efforts, performance measures of its success and recommendations for improvement. As appropriate, changes to the PIP should be made based on the conclusions of the Annual Report.</p>
<p>The MPO Title VI Program must describe its Title VI policies, goals, procedures, and accomplishments and adopt the MDOT Title VI program. It is required that the Title VI Assurance be signed by the CEO of each agency. The Executive Director of the MPO will sign the Title VI assurance. The Federal Team suggests the MPO utilize and sign a standard Title VI assurance, provided by U.S. DOT. 7</p>	<p>Resolution 15-19 of the BRTB adopted assurances and policies regarding Title VI requirements. The PAC reviewed these policies and offered support to the BRTB in the adoption of these assurances and policies.</p>
<p>To ensure continued DBE program improvement the Federal Team recommends the MPO develop a DBE Program Plan or adopt in its entirety the MDOT/SHA DBE Program Plan and its DBE overall goal methodology. In addition, the MPO should submit its DBE Uniform reports to MDOT/SHA on June 1 and December 1 every year and provide DBE training to those who are responsible for implementing its DBE program.</p>	<p>The BRTB adopted a DBE policy in May 2015 with the approval of Resolution 15-27. The PAC reviewed this resolution and supported it including the 29% DBE goal.</p>
<p>The Federal Team encourages the MPO to include the participants of the programming process of Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS) as the projects move through the regional planning process. Increased participation in MPO workgroups and technical studies by LOTS representatives with day-to-day involvement in transit planning and operations is encouraged.</p>	<p>The PAC intends to actively solicit involvement and participation by users of the LOTS in the public involvement process.</p>
<p>The Federal Team recommends that the MPO develop a method to monitor the effectiveness of the current and potential new CMP strategies.</p>	<p>Congestion Management Process strategies and suggestions specific to the top congested areas are detailed in charts on pages 17-19 of the 2015 CMP document at baltometro.org/phocadownload/Publications/Transportation/CMP/CongestionMgmtProcess_2015.05.pdf</p>
<p>The Federal Team recommends that the MPO continue to make significant contributions to any future 8-hour ozone or PM2.5 SIPs which may be</p>	<p>The budgets for air quality do not appear to be realistic for transportation. The forecasts are so far below the budgets that very poor transportation choices could be made relative</p>

Recommendation	PAC Comment
<p>required under any new air quality standards which EPA has or will promulgate by providing technical support to MDE in developing mobile emission budgets and emission reduction strategies which will contribute to the attainment of the air quality standard.</p>	<p>to air quality and still meet the budgets.</p>
<p>The Federal Team encourages the MPO to continue increased engagement with low-income and minority residents. The MPO should take advantage of space inside the vehicle to communicate vital information about the planning process to members of the transit-riding public.</p>	<p>The MTA recently made a presentation to BRTB/PAC on the BaltimoreLINK Plan. PAC members commented to MTA representatives that the public involvement, particularly for underrepresented populations, has been inadequate. MTA promptly added several public meetings in areas of the City that are clearly underrepresented. Other methods of engaging underrepresented groups need to be identified and incorporated. It does appear, however, that the advertising space within public transit vehicles remains underutilized.</p>
<p>The Federal Team recommends that the PIP update address how the MPO will consider and respond to input solicited through social media and articulate how that input is used in the decision making process, so that the community has some reassurance that online solicitation is an avenue for information exchange and real-time response back and forth, rather than a one way communication.</p>	<p>The Public Advisory Committee and BRTB, supported by the staff at BMC, collate and make available to the public all comments submitted during each planning period. This information is available in various forms, including a PDF of all comments submitted via surveys from public meetings, via email, written letters and via social media. Infographics and maps also summarize comment themes and locations of these comments. The BRTB provides a matrix of each comment, who it was submitted by and the BRTB's response during each planning period. In addition, the Public Advisory Committee submits a Resolution to the BRTB that reflects the public's input and comments after each comment period. To further ensure that the community has reassurance about the iterative process of public input and its real-time response, it is recommended that individuals and community groups that provide comments receive specific notice about comment periods, openings on the Public Advisory Committee and public meetings via email, Twitter or phone/letter and are asked to assist in sharing this information with their networks.</p>

The PAC submits these comments to the BRTB as an input to the Federal Recertification process and looks forward to an active participation in the public meeting process.

Sincerely,



Gregory H. Shafer
Chairman

Public Advisory Committee of the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board