

## BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD

September 22, 2015

Baltimore Metropolitan Council

9:06 to 10:42 A.M.

### MINUTES

The 273<sup>th</sup> meeting was called to order at 9:06 A.M. by the Chair, Mr. John Powell.

#### 1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A request for a motion to approve the minutes of the August 25, 2015 BRTB meeting was made by Mr. Powell. A motion was made by Mr. Tony McClune to approve the minutes and seconded by Ms. Sally Nash. The minutes were approved unanimously.

#### 2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

No one in the audience wished to address the BRTB.

#### 3. REPORT ON PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda reported that the comment period for the Draft *Maximize2040: A Performance-Based Transportation Plan* opened September 1 and will run through October 15. During this time, a Town Hall meeting will be held in each jurisdiction and a Regional Town Call will be held on Thursday, October 1 from Noon to 1 p.m. In addition, Ms. Haines Benkhedda reported that outreach began for *Maximize2040* at various events around the region, including the Druid Hill Farmers Market, Parking Day in both Annapolis and Columbia. The September Public Involvement report lists the *Maximize2040* meetings and outreach efforts. Full details of the comment period are online at [www.maximize2040.com](http://www.maximize2040.com).

A member of the BRTB asked how the Town Hall meetings are being advertised since there was little turnout for the first two meetings. Ms. Haines Benkhedda shared the range of strategies deployed to inform the public of the opportunity to comment on the Plan. Mr. Tyson Byrne elaborated on how difficult it is for MPOs to draw people into the process and suggested using libraries as was done for Imagine 2060.

#### 4. REPORT FROM THE PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr. Greg Shafer reported that the primary focus of the September PAC meeting was the draft *Maximize2040: A Performance-Based Transportation Plan*. PAC members were asked to share this great opportunity for public involvement in the regional planning process and to attend the meeting in their local jurisdiction. Members also began their review and comments on the plan. Initial comments include:

- Staff are to be commended for a document that is easy to read with good graphics and information; public involvement in the public project ideas and involvement of PAC in all aspects; and small program set asides seem good.
- Since this is a performance-based transportation plan, members looked carefully at the plans goals and performance measures. A number of concerns are raised including:
  - The forecast only shows a transit ridership of 320,000 with this mix of projects, yet the plan target is 500,000.
  - The number of hours spent in traffic increases by four times and average speeds on roadways is reduced by almost 14%.
  - The number of miles driven by the public on congested roadways fall to 38%, yet the goal is 25%.
  - A number of performance measures are established, but there is no forecast as to whether the plan will achieve them. These include: safety, road and bridge condition, roadways with sidewalks, and bicycle/walk as mode of travel to work. There also appears to be no means of measuring on-time bus performance.
- At this time, the PAC offers the following solutions:
  - Update the plan within one year - the PAC understands that funding for the Baltimore Red Line was pulled late in this process, however it recommends that *Maximize2040* be updated after the BMC transit study is completed.
  - Be more transparent – projects in *Maximize2040* were scored and prioritized, however these scores are excluded from the Plan.
  - Provide a plan to achieve the goals outlined in *Maximize2040* - since the current plan fails to achieve many of the milestones, the reasons why the plan don't achieve targets should be identified and a path to success identified, even if it is not feasible at this time.

The PAC will finalize their review and comments on *Maximize2040* at their October meeting. Mr. Shafer noted that the October 7<sup>th</sup> PAC meeting will be in Towson in conjunction with the Baltimore County Town Hall meeting for *Maximize2040*. Lastly, Mr. Shafer reported that the PAC recommends Ms. Rita Ossiander fill one vacancy on the PAC.

## 5. REPORT FROM THE INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION GROUP

Ms. Sara Tomlinson reported the following from the August ICG meeting:

- At the meeting the ICG discussed the list of transportation emission reduction measures (TERMs) to include in *Maximize2040* in reference to the \$285 million set-aside. The ICG agreed to recommend this list for inclusion in the draft document. This list is divided into three sections: technologies, capital improvements, and behavioral strategies. Examples of some of the TERMS include fleet bus replacement; incentives/technologies to improve truck fleet efficiency, virtual truck weigh stations, and promotion of eco-driving.
- The ICG agreed to the results of the draft conformity regional emissions analysis, which were then shared as part of the draft conformity document that went out for public review on September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Also, the ICG has provided feedback to Maryland SHA on two project level conformity determinations where SHA was asking whether they concurred that the projects were not “of air quality concern.” The ICG concurred for MD 103: US 29 to Long Gate and MD 32 at Rosemary Lane Interchange.

## 6. REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Mr. Tyson Byrne reported the following from the August Technical Committee meeting on behalf of Brian Muldoon who was out due to injuries:

- Mr. Terry Freeland presented information on the status of *Maximize2040: A Performance-Based Transportation Plan*. This included an overview of the structure of the plan; a look at the breakdown of estimated costs for system operations, preservation, and expansion; a discussion on the review of the draft plan by some of the committee members, and a summary of upcoming public outreach events. Mr. Freeland also described an 11-by-17-inch, two-sided brochure handed out to each member. This brochure summarizes the information in the first four chapters of the plan: 1) requirements and policies, 2) goals and performance measures, 3) financial forecast, and 4) major projects and programs, with year of expenditure cost estimates.
- Ms. Sara Tomlinson reported that the ICG has agreed to release the draft results of the emissions modeling for public review. The draft conformity determination, along with the TIP amendments and Plan are online today. The results show that emissions from the transportation system in the region, resulting from the projects in the plan and TIP are not expected to harm air quality or delay timely attainment of national ambient air quality standards. Ms. Tomlinson then presented an update on the How Far Can We Get study. The study is now being finalized and the oversight committee had their last meeting on August 24<sup>th</sup>. The recommended TERMS include measures such as support for future CAFÉ standards, educational programs for eco-driving, and promotion of electric vehicle use and idle reduction.
- Mr. Byrne reported that the Nominating Committee, consisting of Ms. Valorie LaCour, Mr. Alex Rawls, and himself, came to a consensus on the slate of officers to offer to the TC. The slate of

Officers recommended includes: Carroll County representative for Chair and the City of Annapolis representative for Vice-Chair. The nomination was unanimously approved.

- Mr. Zach Kaufman gave an update on the regional bicycle map initiative, a regional subarea project in the FY 2016-2017 UPWP. The end result of this project will be an online web mapping application serving as a resource for regional on-street and off-street travel. The map will include implemented, planned, and proposed facilities. It will also identify inter-jurisdictional connections as well as gaps within jurisdictions. The project will be a joint effort between the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Group (BPAG) and the Baltimore Regional Geographic Information Systems Committee (BRGIS). Draft recommended layers include regional transit, park-and-ride lots, main bicycle routes, secondary bicycle routes, and trails providing regional connectivity. Draft attributes include type of facility (bike lane, protected bike lane, sharrows, etc.), posted speed limit, shoulder width, and several attributes specific to trails such as surface type and lighting.
- Mr. Bala Akundi provided a quick overview of the Baltimore Freight Finder (BFF) – a web-based GIS application that is based on a concept developed by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Council (DVRPC) for their freight committee. This is a tool that will provide public access to freight facility locations and data to improve sharing the information across public and private sectors as well as to identify and justify freight investment priorities. Existing/available data for each of these elements was collected from task force members and projects that had already been completed – such as the SHA freight implementation plan. The application was developed in-house using a flexible, lightweight platform that could be easily replicated and cost-effective. BFF users can dynamically navigate through the map, turn various layers off and on and toggle between aerial imagery and Google maps. The application is undergoing multiple levels of testing and once completed will be made publicly available through BMC's website.

## **7. BALTIMORE CITY WATER TRANSIT STUDY**

Ms. Valorie LaCour presented the findings of a report on water transit services in the City, including: Water Taxi, Harbor Connector and Dockmaster. The Water Taxi is a fee-based service for visitors to the Inner Harbor while the Harbor Connector is a commuter service for residents. Ms. LaCour described the service characteristics, ridership, costs and routes. Recommendations include: 1) continuing the current business structure, 2) rebranding to differentiate between the water taxi and harbor connector, and 3) coordinate marketing and ticket sales with other Inner Harbor venues, provide year round service and develop seasonal passes.

Ms. LaCour also described free Harbor Connector service characteristics, ridership, costs and routes. Data on the three routes shows that 7 and 8 AM and then 5 and 6 PM are the peak periods which makes sense for a commuter service. Recommendations include: 1) Rebrand as an extension of the Charm City Circulator, 2) Improve signage to distinguish this from the Water Taxi, 3) Determine if Route 3 should be operated as a pedestrian bridge until the proposed bridge is constructed, 4) Reduce mid-day service on Routes 2 and 3 to save money, 5) Initiate discussions with employers to help fund the service, and 6) Improve the floating docks to eliminate portable stairs. Looking to the future, the City may expand the Harbor Connector and will need to develop capital and operating

cost estimates for: future routes, landing and parking, and appropriate boats for all occasions. The potential new routes includes: South Clinton Street, Cherry Hill, Westport, and Fort Armistead.

The responsibilities of the Dockmaster was described leading to the following recommendations: 1) Focus on visiting ships and no longer collect fees for transient docking services, 2) Consider relocating several private operators to the Finger Piers and Westwall, and 4) If space permits, allows private operators to manage fees for transient boats at Finger Piers and Westwall.

Several BRTB members asked about Guaranteed Ride Home, bicycles on board, and parking fees. Ms. LaCour will respond with the information shortly.

***[PowerPoint: Water Transit for the City of Baltimore, Maryland Status Report]***

## **8. HOWARD COUNTY DOWNTOWN COLUMBIA BRIDGE FEASIBILITY STUDY**

Mr. Chris Eatough began the presentation with a map showing how this facility could connect downtown Columbia to Oakland Mills via a bridge over US 29. The current bridge is 10 feet wide, 200 feet long over US 20 with another 500 feet for the ramps and is the only bike/pedestrian crossing for 6 miles. As the study began to consider improving the facility the question of also using it for transit was posed. Mr. Eatough described 6 options ranging from retrofitting the existing bridge all the way to an option with personal rapid transit vehicles. Features of all the options were described and a summary of total cost and estimated time for completion was provided. As a recommendation, the study called for implementing Option 1 as soon as possible with some enhancements, trimming brush on the pathways leading to the bridge, and continues further evaluation of new bridge options to include transit.

***[PowerPoint: Downtown Columbia Bridge]***

## **9. OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Lang announced several upcoming events:

Monday, September 28 is the GBC Transportation Summit

Thursday, October 29 is a Mid-Atlantic Regional Roundtable in Newark, Delaware

Tuesday, October 27 is a 4:30 PM meeting of the BRTB elected officials and secretaries

The meeting adjourned at 10:56 A.M.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### ***Members***

Tyson Byrne, (for Heather Murphy), Maryland Department of Transportation, OPCP  
Lynda Eisenberg, Carroll County Department of Planning  
Diane Franks, Maryland Department of the Environment, Air Quality Planning & Monitoring Program  
Emery Hines, Baltimore County, Department of Public Works  
Pat Keller, Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), Statewide Service Development  
Frank Murphy, Baltimore City, Department of Transportation  
Tony McClune, Harford County, Department of Planning  
John Powell, Howard County, Office of Transportation  
Sally Nash, City of Annapolis, Department of Planning  
Bihui Xu, Maryland Department of Planning, Transportation Planning

### ***Staff and Guests***

Regina Aris, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)  
Charles Baber, BMC  
Robert Berger, BMC  
Ben Cohen – BWI Business Partnership  
Chris Eatough, Howard County  
Terry Freeland, BMC  
Monica Haines Benkhedda, BMC  
Victor Henry, BMC  
Alex Krempasanka – Maryland Department of the Environment  
Valorie LaCour, Baltimore City DOT  
Todd Lang, BMC  
Charles Perry, McCormick Taylor  
Greg Shafer, Chair, Public Advisory Committee  
Jerry Smith, SHA  
Rebecca Smith, BMC  
Sara Tomlinson – BMC

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary  
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board