

BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD

May 25, 2021
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
9:01 to 10:34 A.M.

MINUTES

The 331st meeting of the BRTB was called to order at 9:01 A.M. by the Chair, Ms. Mary Lane.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A request for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 23rd and April 16th BRTB meetings were made by Ms. Lane. A motion was made by Mr. Tyson Byrne to approve the minutes and seconded by Ms. Sally Nash. The minutes of both meetings were approved unanimously.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

No one from the public requested to speak to the BRTB.

3. REPORT ON PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda shared the following highlights:

- The BRTB, as the metropolitan planning organization for the Baltimore region, seeks public comments through Friday, June 11 on a new section of the Patapsco Regional Greenway in Carroll County and Howard County.

In 2017, the BRTB approved a concept plan for the Patapsco Regional Greenway, which will be used by bicyclists, hikers, runners, walkers, and in some locations, equestrians. To date, over 12 miles of the greenway have been completed. Now, the BRTB seeks your input on the Sykesville to McKeldin Segment, which will add another 8.5 miles to the greenway.

Details about the comment period and how to provide comments are available at baltometro.org or publicinput.com/O4267.

- Bike to Work Week was held from May 17 – 23. This virtual event encouraged riders to bike anywhere during the week to promote bicycling as a healthy commuting option. Bike

to Work Week is part of the ongoing Love to Ride initiative of BMC to promote bicycling in the region. Visit www.lovetoride.net/centralmd for more information.

4. REPORT FROM THE INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION GROUP

Ms. Nicole Hebert provided the following Interagency Consultation Group update:

- At the most recent ICG meeting on April 7, the recommended conformity exemptions were presented for projects slated to be included in the 2022-2025 TIP. ICG later concurred on April 16 with the recommendations.
- The next ICG meeting will be held June 2 where the group will discuss results of the conformity analysis of the 2022-2025 TIP and Maximize 2045. The draft conformity analysis, including results, has been provided to the ICG.
- With approval of the draft conformity analysis a public comment period will be held June 8 to July 9.
- ICG has been completing monthly reviews of conformity exemption recommendations for 2021-2024 TIP amendments.

5. REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Ms. Regina Aris reported the following from the May 4th Technical Committee meeting:

- For Resolution #21-26, Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda provided members with the annual update of Title VI related activities. Of note, no Title VI complaints have been filed in the last year.
- For Resolution #21-27, Baltimore County requested to add a project back into the FY 2021-2024 TIP that was previously included in the FY 2020-2023 TIP. Baltimore County is requesting to shift construction funds from FY 2020 to FY 2021. This amendment adds the Old Court Road Bridge No. B-0237 over Bens Run project into the FY 2021-2024 TIP.
- For Resolution #21-28, MDOT MTA requested to add a new project to the 2021-2024 TIP. MDOT MTA received Section 5339 (b) Buses and Bus Facilities discretionary grant from the Federal Transit Administration in the amount of \$4.795 million. MDOT MTA will use this funding to help improve the safety and reliability of transit bus service as well as help maintain a State of Good Repair as the economy returns.
- For Resolution #21-29, MDOT MTA requested to add a new project to the 2021-2024 TIP. MDOT MTA received Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement discretionary grant from the Federal Transit Administration in the amount of \$3.1 million. This project, located at the Martin's Maintenance facility in Middle River, MD will replace and upgrade an old, manually-thrown switch on the Northeast Corridor (NEC) mainline with an automated control switch that can be integrated into Amtrak's remote operation system.

- For Resolution #21-30, MDOT MTA requested to add a new project to the 2021-2024 TIP. MDOT MTA received a State of Good Repair discretionary grant from the Federal Transit Administration in the amount of \$9.4 million.
- A presentation on the MTS: Study of Long-Distance Commuting and the Geography of Consumer Spending was made. The study, which was requested by Queen Anne's County, contrasted the consumer spending of: 1) Commuters who work in their home jurisdiction (Work Ins) and, 2) Commuters who work outside their home jurisdiction (Work Outs).
- A presentation on the Census 2020 Urban Area Proposed Changes was made. The Census Bureau is proposing changes to the 2020 Urbanized Area delineation process. BMC has been analyzing the proposed rule changes and has identified several significant items including a change in core density threshold, switching from using population density to housing density, reducing the amount of low density development is included in Urban Areas, and using commuter flow data to determine boundaries in adjacent Urban Areas.

6. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #21-26

Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda provided members with the annual update of Title VI related activities. Over the past year, no Title VI complaints have been filed.

Staff continue to work to increase knowledge and understanding of Title VI, environmental justice, and equity. In March, BMC hosted training for approximately 40 staff and committee members on the history of race in America and systemic and institutional racism. In December, staff launched an internal equity working group to share information, discuss emerging issues, and collaborate on ways in which we can apply an equity lens to the work of the BMC and BRTB.

For the DBE program, staff have reviewed past participation and established the goal of 31.7 percent for FY 2022. The mailing list of DBE firms is also being updated so that qualified firms can receive RFP notices.

As part of our efforts to address equity, staff continued to enhance our EJ analysis and tools. This year, staff have focused on three areas: 1) explored what updated EJ analysis methods are enabled by the transition to the InSITE activity-based model; 2) we utilized new research to conduct an analysis of bicycle and pedestrian crash rates in relation to the location of EJ populations at the census tract level; and 3) we updated the EJ section of the 2021-2024 TIP to include more detailed data on EJ populations in the Baltimore region and a discussion of the methodology.

This year staff are planning a number of initiatives, including hosting Every Voice Counts in Fall 2021. In addition, staff will continue to incorporate an equity lens into projects such as the Climate Change Resource Guide and the analysis of Automated Vehicle deployment in the region.

[PowerPoint: Title VI Annual Report]

7. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #21-27

Mr. Keith Kucharek introduced the resolution. In Resolution #21-27 Baltimore County is requesting to add a project back into the FY 2021-2024 TIP that was previously included in the FY 2020-2023 TIP. Baltimore County is requesting to shift construction funds from FY 2020 to FY 2021.

The Interagency Consultation Group (ICG) has determined that this project is exempt according to the conformity rule, and the Technical Committee recommended sending the resolution to the BRTB as presented at their May 4th meeting.

Mr. Kevin Sabolcik presented details of the project. This amendment adds the Old Court Road Bridge No. B-0237 over Bens Run project into the FY 2021-2024 TIP. Construction funds in the amount of \$1.9 million (\$1.44 million federal/\$0.46 million matching) would shift from FY 2020 to FY 2021. The estimated total cost of the project remains the same at \$2.1 million. The shift of funds is necessary due to delays in the P.S. & E., milestone review, advertisement, and award process due to COVID-19. The P.S. & E. process took place in FY 2020 but advertisement was delayed until October of 2020 (FY 2021) which necessitated the inclusion of this project in the FY 2021-2024 TIP.

The existing conditions of the bridge include a single span, pre-stressed concrete box beam bridge that was constructed in 1971. The Structure Inventory and Appraisal (SI&A) rating for this bridge is poor with the superstructure rated 4 out of 10 (poor) and the substructure rated 6 out of 10 (satisfactory). Numerous repairs have been done on the bridge over time and the bridge is currently posted for restricted loads. Replacing the bridge would allow for removal of those restrictions. Only the bridge will be replaced as the abutments are in satisfactory condition and will remain. It is anticipated that the contract will be awarded in June 2021, with construction beginning in summer 2021 and completion of the project in summer 2022.

Ms. Sally Nash made a motion to move Resolution #21-27 and Mr. Ramond Robinson seconded the motion. Ms. Lane asked if there were any questions from the members and then from the audience. Ms. Lane then asked for a vote and Resolution #21-27 was passed unanimously.

8. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #21-28

Mr. Kucharek introduced Resolution #21-28. MDOT Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA) is requesting to amend the 2021-2024 TIP to add a new Section 5339 (b) Buses and Bus Facilities discretionary grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), necessitating the inclusion of the project in the 2021-2024 TIP.

The ICG has determined that this project is exempt according to the conformity rule, and the Technical Committee recommended sending the resolution to the BRTB as presented at their May 4th meeting.

The amendment adds \$4.795 million Federal and \$808,000 matching in engineering funds. Ms. Lara Bachman, MDOT MTA presented the details of the project.

Funding for this project will be used to improve the safety and reliability of transit bus service as the economy continues to improve. Additionally, the funding will be used to maintain a state of good repair. The Section 5339 (b) funding will be used to fund the replacement of diesel fuel buses in Harford County with Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses. In Howard County, funding will be used to purchase replacement transit vehicles and implement an automated bus stop announcement system. And, in Carroll County, funding will be used to replace older vehicles with new vehicles.

The schedule for implementation has not been determined by the Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS), however, all projects must be completed by August 31, 2022 according to the bus contract.

Mr. Theo Ngongang made a motion to move Resolution #21-28 and Ms. D'Andrea Walker seconded the motion. Ms. Lane asked if there were any questions from the members and then from the audience. Ms. Bihui Xu asked how many buses would be included in the order that totals \$4.8M? Ms. Bachman was unsure and indicated that she would check and get back to the members. Subsequent to the meeting, Ms. Bachman provided an update, indicating that Carroll County will replace three buses, Harford County will replace six diesel buses, and Howard County will replace three transit vehicles. Ms. Lane asked for a vote and Resolution #21-28 was passed unanimously.

9. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #21-29

Mr. Kucharek introduced Resolution #21-29. MDOT MTA is requesting to amend the 2021-2024 TIP to add a new Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement (CRISI) discretionary grant from the FTA, necessitating the inclusion of the project in the 2021-2024 TIP.

The ICG has determined that this project is exempt according to the conformity rule, and the Technical Committee recommended sending the resolution to the BRTB as presented at their May 4th meeting.

Ms. Bachman presented the details of the project. The \$3.1 million grant will be matched with \$3.1 million from MDOT MTA for a total investment of \$6.2 million in planning and construction funds. Currently there is no schedule for the work as it is dependent on Amtrak which did not include this project in their original program.

This project, located at the Martin's Maintenance facility in Middle River, MD will replace and upgrade an old, manually-thrown switch on the Northeast Corridor (NEC) mainline with an automated control switch that can be integrated into Amtrak's remote operation system.

Benefits of this switch replacement project include improved crew safety and improved reliability. This project will support increased train movements in and out of Martin's Yard as a result of an expanded Martin's Yard facility.

Mr. Byrne made a motion to move Resolution #21-29 and Mr. Bruce Gartner seconded the motion. Ms. Lane asked if there were any questions from the members and then from the

audience. Mr. Robinson wanted to know if this project was included in MARC's Cornerstone Plan. Kate Sylvester indicated that while the project was not specifically mentioned in the Cornerstone plan, it would be considered as part of the types of projects included in the plan. Additional information on the Cornerstone plan can be found at:

[https://www.mwcog.org/assets/1/28/11012019 - Item 7 - Presentation - Marc - Cornerston Project 2019.pdf](https://www.mwcog.org/assets/1/28/11012019_-_Item_7_-_Presentation_-_Marc_-_Cornerston_Project_2019.pdf)

Ms. Lane asked for a vote and Resolution #21-29 was passed unanimously.

10. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #21-30

Mr. Kucharek introduced Resolution #21-30. MDOT MTA is requesting to amend the 2021-2024 TIP to add a new State of Good Repair discretionary grant from the FTA, necessitating the inclusion of the project in the 2021-2024 TIP.

The ICG has determined that this project is exempt according to the conformity rule, and the Technical Committee recommended sending the resolution to the BRTB as presented at their May 4th meeting.

Ms. Bachman presented the details of the project. The \$9.4 million grant will be matched with \$3.6 million from MDOT MTA for a total investment of \$13.0 million in planning and construction funds. Currently there is no schedule for the work as it is dependent on Amtrak. However it is anticipated that the facility will be usable by the end of 2023. This is subject to change depending on the timing of the pre-award authorization from the Federal Rail Administration and the procurement process.

Additionally, construction of this project should not impact the scheduling or services considering there are a number of future service expansion legislations and discussions ongoing. However, if there are any schedule changes, they would likely result in one or two additional stops at Martins.

Benefits of this project include reduced storage and layover operating fees and increased flexibility and fluidity of revenue service through Penn Station in Baltimore. The reduced fees are a result of MDOT MTA paying less fees to Amtrak for train storage at Penn Station. This project will also support passenger rail traffic adjustments due to construction of the Baltimore & Potomac Tunnel replacement.

Ms. Walker made a motion to move Resolution #21-30 and Mr. Byrne seconded the motion. Ms. Lane asked if there were any questions from the members and then from the audience. Ms. Lane asked for a vote and Resolution #21-30 was passed unanimously.

11. PRESENTATION: WASHINGTON-BALTIMORE 2019 REGIONAL AIR PASSENGER SURVEY

Mr. Timothy Canan presented this topic, he is the TPB Planning Data and Research Program Director at MWCOCG. Mr. Canan began with a description of the Continuous Airport System Planning (CASP) Program that began in 1978 to provide a process that supports the planning, development, and operation of airport facilities and the transportation facilities that serve the

airports in a systematic framework for the Washington-Baltimore region. The CASP cycle of activities includes: 1) regional air passenger survey, 2) forecasts of future air passenger air plus ground travel, and 3) revised regional air system plan for ground access. The air planning system includes three major airports and consists of 25 jurisdictions, 161 Aviation Analysis Zones (AAZs) and 2,604 Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZs).

Mr. Canan reported on the most recent survey with findings on airport use, airport preference, trip originations, and mode choice. The major conclusions included: the geographic findings generally reflects similar patterns observed in previous air passenger survey results, with the followings exceptions:

- 5% decline in airport satisfaction,
- continued expansion of TNC ridership, and
- 12% share increase of “other” travel purpose from 4% to 16%.

Significant percentage-wise local origination growth at IAD, especially from the Baltimore metro area. Note: actual numeric total remains low. BWI saw the greatest percent increase in originations from Stafford County, Virginia, while DCA’s was from Anne Arundel County, Maryland. The Washington-Baltimore air systems region continued to perform competitively across all three airports, with 13% growth in local originations. The ongoing Washington-Baltimore regional air passenger survey response rate & quality study will make methodological and procedural improvement recommendations for future surveys. Due to the pandemic, no survey was taken in 2020. This report is available in full on the MWCOCG website.

Several members inquired about light rail as an option to BWI, the impact of TNC driver shortage, why is Calvert County in the DC region and St. Mary’s isn’t, and why would folks in Virginia pass DCA to fly out of BWI. Mr. Canan answered a few of the questions and then Mr. Byrne indicated that a similar study was completed by the Salisbury – Wicomico area and they have some information about fares at a range of airports.

[PowerPoint: Washington-Baltimore Regional Air Passenger Survey 2019]

12. PRESENTATION: TRANSIT GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING

Ms. Bethany Whitaker, project manager from Nelson Nygaard, presented on the fifth technical memorandum that explores potential transit funding measures to understand both the potential to raise additional funding to support transit and how specific transit funding measures may integrate with different governance models.

Ms. Whitaker began with a briefing on the May 4th Virtual Town Hall. Ninety people registered and 80 people attended the town hall. Some 118 responses were documented to the follow up survey. The next forum will be held in late June.

Regarding funding measures, the interdependence of governance and funding was stressed. The memorandum sets evaluation criteria, including: funding potential, stability, equity, existing or new and geographic level. Funding measures were also categorized into major, secondary and other sources depending on their prevalence of use and their ability to generate

sufficient revenue. The memorandum attempts to define funding “needs” for the region with different growth scenarios. The estimated needs ranged from \$16m-\$48m annually in additional funding. Potential tax rates were indicated with statewide and regional funding potential. National examples were provided for context. Finally the memorandum provides sample potential packages for discussion purposes.

The presentation wrapped up with a discussion of next steps.

[PowerPoint: Transit Funding Measures]

13. NOMINATION OF FY 2022 OFFICERS

Mr. Ngongang, on behalf of the Nominating Committee, offered the slate of Officers for FY 2022, they are Anne Arundel County for Chair and Baltimore County for Vice Chair. Mr. Ngongang thanked Ms. Eisenberg and Mr. Byrne for their help as members of the Nominating Committee. Elections will take place at the June meeting of the BRTB. Nominations from the floor will also be accepted at that time.

14. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Kwaku Duah indicated that he was receiving information that all of the LOTS should be completing their safety plans and submitting to the BRTB for adoption. The due date to BMC is July 20, 2021.

The meeting adjourned at 10:43 A.M.

Members

Kwame Arhin, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Maryland Division
Tyson Byrne, (for Heather Murphy) Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Steve Cohoon, Queen Anne’s County Department of Public Works
Kwaku Duah, Annapolis Transit
Bruce Gartner, Howard County Office of Transportation (OOT)
Mary Lane (for Lynda Eisenberg), Carroll County Department of Planning
Ryan Long, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Region III
Sally Nash, City of Annapolis, Department of Planning
Theo Ngongang, Baltimore City Department of Transportation
Alex Rawls, Harford County, Department of Planning
Ramond Robinson, Anne Arundel County, Department of Planning & Zoning
Kate Sylvester, Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA)
D’Andrea Walker, Baltimore County Department of Public Works
Bihui Xu, Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)

Staff and Guests

Regina Aris, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Lara Bachman, MDOT MTA
Keith Belcher
Cindy Burch, BMC
David Cookson, Howard County OOT
Rebecca Deibel, BMC
Erica Falk
Fred Fravel, KFH Group
Monica Haines-Benkhedda, BMC
Don Halligan, BMC
Nicole Hebert, BMC
Tamar Henkin, Tamar Henkin Strategic Advisors
Victor Henry, BMC
John Hillegass, Greater Washington Partnership
Dan Janousek, MDOT
Keith Kucharek, BMC
Todd Lang, BMC
Christian Morrison,
Eric Norton, CMTA
Kevin Sabolcik, Baltimore County DPW
Lisa Sirota, MDOT SHA
Bethany Whitaker, Nelson Nygaard

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board