

BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD

June 28, 2022
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
9:02 to 10:08 A.M.

MINUTES

The 343rd meeting was called to order at 9:02 A.M. by the Chair, Mr. Sam Snead.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A request for a motion to approve the minutes of the May 24, 2022 BRTB meeting was made by Mr. Snead. A motion was made by Ms. D'Andrea Walker to approve the minutes and seconded by Ms. Lynda Eisenberg. The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

No one from the public wished to share comments at this time.

3. REPORT ON PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda reported on the following public Involvement activities:

- The comment period for the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program and Air Quality Conformity opens this Wednesday, June 29 and runs through Monday, August 1. During that time, a virtual public meeting is set for Tuesday, July 26 at 7 p.m. Register or learn more at publicinput.com/2023-2026TIP or baltometro.org.
- Staff continue to develop a series of educational white papers to share with the public on a range of topics related to *Resilience 2050* - the regions next long-range transportation plan. Staff have released five white papers so far on the topics of air quality; transit; freight movement; traffic safety; and the project scoring methodology. Additional white papers are scheduled to be released every month this year so stay tuned for more papers. Once you read the white paper, email us your thoughts, leave us a voicemail, or take our survey online at: publicinput.com/resilience2050whitepapers.

- Staff are currently reviewing its policies related to public involvement and outreach as part of an effort to update the Public Participation Plan. In May, we asked key stakeholders and members of the public to weigh in and provide feedback on the public involvement process and practices. Highlights include strong support for virtual meetings, a request to have more information that visualizes the planning process, more communication about the decisions that are being made by the BRTB, and how comments are being used.
- Volunteers are sought from Carroll, Harford, and Queen Anne's counties to serve on a newly formed group called Transportation CORE. The CORE is a new form of public engagement that will bring together people from around the region to provide feedback on a range of transportation and planning topics. Staff are hoping to have BRTB members join us to welcome the new members and begin our working relationship with them.

[Handout: Public Involvement Report for June 2022]

4. REPORT FROM THE INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION GROUP

Ms. Nicole Hebert reported the following from the June ICG meeting:

- The status of the conformity analysis and draft documentation was discussed. At the time of the June ICG meeting, the InSITE travel model validation was under way. Since the meeting, BMC completed the MOVES modeling and MDE confirmed the results. ICG provided written concurrence with conformity analysis results via email. With this, BMC staff is moving forward with 23-26 TIP and conformity public involvement period in July.
- Draft MDOT proposed CMAQ air emissions 2 and 4 year targets for the second performance period were presented to ICG by Ms. Virginia Burke of MDOT. BMC and MDOT SHA staff are in the process of drafting proposed congestion targets. The draft Full performance report for the first performance period, and Baseline plan for the second performance period are drafted and ICG, TC, and BRTB will be requested to review and vote on concurrence in August.
- Ozone sip planning is in progress, led by MDE with input from BMC and ICG members regarding RACM analysis and emissions budget setting.

5. REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Ms. Regina Aris reported the following from the June TC meeting:

- BMC staff presented information on InSITE enhancements and the 2019 validation. Staff walked through a range of steps and data sources that were utilized and also reviewed the role of Cambridge Systematics in supporting the effort. The TC members voted to move the resolution to the BRTB.
- BMC staff shared additional results from the 2018-2019 Maryland Travel Survey (MTS), in particular a study of household travel and energy, which analyzed how several household (HH) characteristics relate to the amount of HH automobile travel. Several points of note: Not surprisingly, households with two drivers travel more than twice the distance of

households with one driver. Similarly, households with two vehicles travel more than twice the distance of households with one vehicle.

- A slate of officers was offered by the TC nominating committee. The slate includes the current chair and vice chair for service in the upcoming fiscal year. A vote will occur in July.
- During a closed session two RFPs were discussed and both were approved for release. This included the Vision for an Integrated Regional Bicycle Network and Expanding Coverage for Electric Vehicle Charging Stations.
- This shorter TC meeting was followed by the Congestion Management Process Committee.

6. ELECTION OF BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD OFFICERS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023

Mr. Snead refreshed members on the slate of officers recommended by the Nominating Committee which was Anne Arundel County for chair and Baltimore County for vice chair to serve in FY 2023. Mr. Snead asked if there were any nominations from the floor prior to a formal vote. There were no further nominations. The voice vote yielded all “aye” votes for the nominated slate. Mr. Snead recognized the FY 2023 officers and expresses appreciation for continued support.

7. CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION #22-15

Mr. Todd Lang presented information on InSITE enhancements and 2019 validation. The 2019 validated InSITE model will be used in the 2023 to 2026 mobile source emission analysis, updated long-range transportation plan project evaluation and other regional corridor studies. The original InSITE model was estimated using the 2008 Household Travel Survey and validated to 2012.

The original InSITE model geography was modified to incorporate the recently developed 2020 Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) boundaries. BMC staff in cooperation with the Cooperative Forecasting Group adjusted, combined, and added TAZs based on 2020 Tiger Line File and 2020 Census PL 94-171 block population and household counts. The model geography was expanded to cover Queen Anne’s County, Maryland as well as Adams and York Counties, Pennsylvania. The expanded model contains over 3,000 TAZs with a 2020 base year population of 6.4 million.

Cambridge Systematics, developer of InSITE, incorporated model enhancements in order to improve runtime. The Cambridge Systematics Activity-Based Model (ABM) software, TourCast was modified to adopt a multi-threaded approach to take advantage of multiple server cores and applying a 25% synthetic population sampling approach.

The Cambridge Systematics team analyzed and summarized the 2019 Maryland Household travel survey travel patterns, choices, and behavior. Survey summary statistics were used to

adjust InSITE model component parameters. The calibrated InSITE model components capture the change in travel behavior observed between 2008 (model estimation year) and 2019 observed conditions.

The consultant team used other independent data sources to validate InSITE network travel. A Location-Based Services (LBS) data set was purchased in order to validate distribution patterns, time-of day, and trip lengths. Classified counts and On-Board Transit Survey was used to validate network loadings.

Mr. Snead requested a motion regarding Resolution #22-15. The motion was made by Mr. Theo Ngongang and seconded by Mr. Alex Rawls. A vote was taken on Resolution #22-15, with unanimous support from the members.

[PowerPoint: InSITE Model Validation]

8. PRESENTATION: EAST – WEST CORRIDOR STUDY

Ms. Jamie Richardson (MDOT MTA) presented a range of seven alternatives for the Regional Transit Plan East-West Corridor Study from Bayview to Ellicott City. The Regional Transit Plan provides a 25-year plan for improving public transportation in Central Maryland. It identifies 30 regionally significant corridors with early, mid-term (3-5 years) and long-term (5-10 years) opportunity for transit.

MDOT MTA is currently studying the East-West and North-South corridor (from Towson to Downtown). Each study begins with no pre-determined routes, is built upon previous plans, and incorporates complete streets, new development projects and equity. For the East-West corridor, MDOT MTA is working on opportunities for each timeframe. The QuickLink 40 is an early opportunity limited stop service pilot from Westgate Essex; the RAISE Baltimore grant is a mid-term opportunity for a \$50M investment to improve, bus speed and reliability as well as pedestrian and bike connections along CityLink Blue and Orange.

The East-West study is the beginning of a long-term multi-step process for a major transit investment, with Federal approval process beginning in 2026. Together with stakeholders, MDOT MTA developed four project goals:

1. Improve the connectivity and operations of the existing transit network
2. Expand the reach and connectivity of the regional transit network
3. Prioritize the needs of existing transit riders and transit-critical populations
4. Maximize the economic and environmental benefit of a major transit investment

Seven alternatives were developed based on a market analysis and the project goals and objectives. Alternatives were developed to test different modes and station spacing, treatments, and areas served.

- Alternative 1: Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) from Bayview to Ellicott City via Johns Hopkins Hospital and CMS/SSA
- Alternative 2: BRT from Bayview to Ellicott City via Johns Hopkins Hospital and Route 40
- Alternative 3: Heavy Rail Transit (Metro) from Bayview to Edmondson Village, BRT from Edmonson Village to Ellicott City
- Alternative 4: Light Rail Transit from Essex to CMS/SSA via Bayview and Johns Hopkins Hospital
- Alternative 5: BRT from Essex to CMS/SSA via Bayview and Johns Hopkins Hospital
- Alternative 6: Light Rail Transit from Bayview to CMS/SSA via the Waterfront
- Alternative 7: BRT from Bayview to CMS/SSA via the Waterfront

MDOT MTA studied the measures of effectiveness for each preliminary alternative and made the following conclusions: all alternatives support frequent service, improve travel times and reliability through extensive new dedicated guideway and improve access to transit-critical populations. Costs to build and operate rail alternatives are approximately three to four times higher than BRT.

MDP inquired whether the planned timeframe for Federal approval and funding application of 2024-2026 would overlap with the NEPA process. MDOT MTA is anticipating that an alternatives analysis, identification of a Locally Preferred Alternative, and NEPA can be conducted in this timeframe.

MDP also inquired on how all alternatives would attract enough ridership to support frequent service. Does that mean the ridership justifies the cost? MDOT MTA confirmed that the investment would attract more riders to justify a substantial investment in transit throughout this corridor. A future cost/benefit analysis will help determine what level of investment is worthwhile.

The public comment period for the alternatives is open through August 1, 2022.

[PowerPoint: MDOT MTA East West Corridor Study]

9. PRESENTATION: RAIL CAPACITY MODERNIZATION PROJECT

Mr. Bennett Creighton, Director of Planning and Terminal Development, Ports America Chesapeake (PAC) briefed the BRTB on a recent grant that was awarded to PAC and MDOT MPA to modernize rail infrastructure at the Seagirt Marine Terminal (SMT). By way of background, Mr. Creighton noted that PAC operates the Intermodal Container Transfer Facility (ICTF) at SMT, under a public-private partnership with MDOT MPA. The ICTF is a dual-access facility between Norfolk Southern and CSX that is currently serviced by CSX.

PAC/MDOT MPA were recently awarded a \$15.7 million grant through the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI)

Program in order to begin work on modernizing the terminal. There is an additional \$6.72 million in private funding for a total project cost of \$22.4 million.

The objective of the project are as follows:

Safety: Upgrades infrastructure to achieve a higher level of safety.

Equitable economic strength, improving core assets: Invests in vital infrastructure assets, addresses capital needs to connect farms, factories, and shippers to the rail network.

Resilience, addressing climate change: Reduces emissions, promotes energy efficiency, redevelops existing infrastructure.

Racial equity, economic inclusion: Reduces the safety risks and detrimental quality of life effects that freight movements can have on communities.

Transformation of our nation's transportation infrastructure: Adds capacity to congested corridors by aligning with the completion of the expansion of the Howard Street Tunnel Project and the ability to double stack containers by rail.

International intermodal volumes are expected to ramp up to 10% (from less than 2% currently) following the completion of the Howard Street Tunnel Project in 2024. It is further projected to increase to 15% by 2027 which makes this project vital for operations at the Port of Baltimore. Some of the projected benefits of the project include:

Increased capacity and efficiency for containerized cargo to be shipped by rail, bypassing critical, congested roadways of the northeast U.S.

Improved road safety

Reduced Emissions from Over the road truck (OTR) and Container Handling Equipment (CHE) in the port.

By allowing double-stack trains to access the Port, the Howard Street Tunnel Project will increase efficiencies and capacity for commercial train traffic and facilitate business growth

Construction is scheduled to being in the second quarter of 2023 and is expected to be complete by the second quarter of 2024.

[PowerPoint: Port of Baltimore Rail Modernization]

10. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business

The meeting adjourned at 10:08 A.M.

Members

Kwaku Duah, Annapolis Transit

Heather Murphy, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
D'Andrea Walker, Baltimore County Department of Public Works & Transportation
Steve Cohoon, Queen Anne's County Department of Public Works
Theo Ngongang, Baltimore City Department of Transportation
Lynda Eisenberg, Carroll County Department of Planning
Bruce Gartner, Howard County Office of Transportation
Eric Leshinsky, City of Annapolis, Department of Planning
Alex Rawls, Harford County, Department of Planning
Catherine Salarano, Maryland Department of the Environment
Sam Snead, Anne Arundel County, Department of Transportation
Bihui Xu, Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)

Staff and Guests

Bala Akundi, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Regina Aris, BMC
Cindy Burch, BMC
Tyson Byrne, MDOT
Bennett Creighton, Ports America Chesapeake
Rebecca Deibel, BMC
Monica Haines-Benkhedda, BMC
Don Halligan, BMC
Nicole Hebert, BMC
Dan Janousek, MDOT
Keith Kucharek, BMC
Todd Lang, BMC
Charlene Mingus, BMC
Eric Norton, CMTA
Jamie Richardson, MDOT MTA
Brian Ryder, BMC
Eileen Singleton, BMC
Lisa Sirota, MDOT SHA
Senga
Jacob Took, BMC
Greg Wissman

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board