

BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD

October 25, 2024
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
9:01 to 9:29 A.M.

MINUTES

The 368th meeting was called to order at 9:01 A.M. by the Chair, Mr. Tony Russell.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A request for a motion to approve the minutes of the August BRTB meeting was made by Mr. Russell. A motion was made by Mr. Geoff Anderson to approve the minutes and seconded by Ms. Corren Johnson. The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

There was no one who wished to address the BRTB.

3. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION #25-9

Mr. Todd Lang presented Howard County's request to add a traffic signal and crosswalk improvement project to the 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Howard County is requesting \$1.28 M of federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding for construction of improvements at five intersections that connect residential to commercial areas: Cedar Lane and Freetown Road, Cedar Lane and Owen Brown Road, Broken Land Parkway and Cradlerock Way South, Harpers Farm Road and Beaverkill Road, Long Gate Parkway at Wheatfield Way.

Mr. Russell asked for comments or questions from the BRTB. Mr. Chris Jakubiak asked for a definition of "countermeasures" as used in the project's description. Mr. Lang replied that we would contact the county and follow up.

Subsequent to the meeting, Mr. Connor Jett of Howard County explained:

“The use of the term "countermeasures" in the project description is referring to the roadway design and technology improvements made in accordance with Howard County's transportation safety goals. See the following FHWA safety countermeasure guidance for examples:

<https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures>”

Mr. Russell then asked for any comments from the audience, none were forthcoming. At that time Mr. Russell asked for approval of the resolution. Mr. Clarence Dickerson recommended approval of the resolution, and Mr. Jakubiak seconded the motion. The BRTB voted unanimously to recommend approval of the resolution.

[PowerPoint: TIP Amendment for Howard County]

4. MDOT PRESENTATION ON THE DRAFT FY 2025-2030 CTP

Secretary Wiedefeld focused on two topics during his conversation with the BRTB, the Key Bridge and the draft CTP.

Francis Scott Key Bridge

The collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge and loss of the six workers has had tremendous impacts on families, communities, commuters and businesses. And continues to have impacts.

MDOT is taking a holistic approach to mitigating congestion on the transportation system by promoting alternative options and resources. During this period of reconstruction the Commuter Choice Maryland program is working with businesses and commuters to promote options such as transit, carpool, teleworking or even flexible work schedules.

Secretary Wiedefeld asked members to amplify these efforts and share information with constituents, businesses, and workers. The more people that use other alternatives the easier it will be for everyone. In addition, the State Highway Administration works closely with the BMC on monitoring traffic patterns. This working group analyzes the data to inform us if any system changes are needed and that coordination will continue.

The Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) is on a fast track to rebuild the bridge over the next 4 years. In August the MDTA Board approved a contract for a progressive design build team to come on board. To be clear, MDTA is funded through the toll revenues it collects which is separate from the State's Transportation Trust Fund.

MDOT continues to work with Maryland's Federal delegation on a bipartisan and bicameral legislation to get the 100% emergency relief funding by the Federal Government to rebuild the Key Bridge.

Finances and the Consolidated Transportation Program

Turning to the Department and some of the financial challenges that we're facing, we were reminded that last year the CTP was reduced by \$3.3 billion dollars between operating and capital budgets. Thanks to the Governor's one-time funding from the State's Rainy Day Fund, and the additional estimated \$1.8 billion in revenues passed by the General Assembly last year we were able to reduce the level of reductions needed to balance the budget.

For this year's draft FY 2025-2030 CTP, MDOT continues to face significant budgetary challenges, really from three reasons. 1) Relatively slow growth of the State's economy, 2) Rising cost of labor materials and 3) Revenues coming in lower than projections.

As a result of these financial pressures, MDOT is making strategic investments with our limited resources to further enhance the safety of our system and maintain operations. So really focusing on the safety and the ongoing state of good repair and preservation of the system.

This draft is a reduction of \$1.3 billion compared to last year's final CTP.

The number one priority obviously, is safety. The safety of everyone using the transportation system, including those who walk, those who bike and those who work on the transportation network.

Secretary Wiedefeld has directed the MDOT team to develop a new capital budgeting prioritization process for highway, transit, bike and pedestrian expansion projects.

This new process responds to direction provided by the Commission on transportation revenues and infrastructure known as the TRAIN Commission, as well as the Governor's directive to create a safe, more affordable, more competitive state that leaves no one behind.

Mr. Russell asked if any members had questions for the Secretary. Mr. Clarence Dickerson asked how comments made during the Tour meetings would be handled. The Secretary stated that when MDOT finalizes the program, that's when they will be able to respond. We'll address those either with ability to move forward or explain why we cannot.

Mr. Jakubiak asked about the status of I-97. Secretary Wiedefeld stated that not only I-97 was impacted, that it is across the State what we did last year. If you recall, we pulled any construction funding for any project that wasn't currently under construction. Yet we were trying to maintain engineering and planning.

Ms. Corren Johnson asked for all members, about declining system performance across all the different modes, particularly the transit system in Baltimore. How are those deferrals going to affect our competitiveness for winning Federal funding for Red Line construction and potentially federal funding in general from a grant standpoint. The Secretary agreed that it will become a very significant issue when MTA enters the Capital Investment Grant process. We're not ready yet to apply, but obviously we need to solve this issue before we would apply because it would rank us much lower.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business. The meeting ended at 9:29 am.

Members

Geoff Anderson, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Chuck Boyd (for Bihui Xu), Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)
Jasmine Champion, Federal Highway Administration, Maryland Division
Steve Cohoon, Queen Anne's County Department of Public Works
Trey Dickerson, Howard County Office of Transportation

Elizabeth Gordon, MDOT Maryland Transit Administration
Chris Jakubiak, City of Annapolis, Department of Planning
Corren Johnson, Baltimore City Department of Transportation
Mary Lane, Carroll County Department of Planning
Jason Quan, RTA of Central Maryland
Alex Rawls, Harford County, Department of Planning
Catherine Salarano, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)
Sam Snead, Anne Arundel County Office of Transportation
Dan Sommerville, Federal Transit Administration, Region 3
Tony Russell, Baltimore County Department of Public Works & Transportation (DPW&T)

Staff and Guests

Regina Aris, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Samantha Biddle, MDOT
Tim Briggs, BMC
David Cookson, Howard County Office of Transportation
Angie Daniel, Baltimore County DPW&T
Rebecca Deibel, BMC
Meredith Devereux, MDOT
Ndemazea Fonkem, BMC
Andrea Jackson, BMC
Dan Janousek, MDOT
Mike Kelly, BMC
Keith Kucharek, BMC
Todd Lang, BMC
Eric Norton, Central Maryland Transportation Alliance
Brian O'Malley, CMTA
Md. Mokhlesur Rahman, BMC
Preston Reed, RTA of Central Maryland
Ashley Roach, BMC
Bryan Sears, Maryland Matters
Andrea Sherman, HDR
Paul Wiedefeld, MDOT
joe
jjoyner2
liz

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board