
The Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Baltimore Region

FREIGHT MOVEMENT TASK FORCE

September 29, 2022

10:00 to 11:30 P.M.

Virtual Meeting

SUMMARY

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Bala Akundi opened the meeting by thanking everyone for coming. The group went through introductions and who they represent. Mr. Akundi then reviewed the previous meeting minutes and asked everyone to review and comment so we can approve them in the next few days.

2. NORFOLK SOUTHERN (NS)

Ms. Lydia McPherson, Norfolk Southern, began her presentation by providing a national overview of Norfolk Southern. NS has around 20,000 miles of track in the U.S. throughout 22 states and the District of Columbia. All of the rail is maintained by NS. There are over 23,000 employees that provide services to 24 seaports, 10 river ports and 9 great lake ports.

There are just under 300 miles of rail in Maryland including rail lines in and around Baltimore, lines coming in from Pennsylvania as well as Perryville and western Maryland. NS partners with Amtrak to service Baltimore so NS uses the tracks at night when Amtrak is not operating. NS also operates five short line rails in Maryland including Tradepoint Atlantic, Canton, Maryland and Delaware, Delmarva Central RR, and Winchester and Western Maryland RR in western Maryland.

Bayview Yard is the main terminal serving the Port of Baltimore. NS handles approximately 20,000 intermodal lifts annually. The main export in Baltimore is coal and in 2021 moved about 11.2 million tons through the CNX Marine Terminal in Baltimore. NS also ships a lot of farm equipment, automobiles, various raw materials and intermodal freight but will ship whatever the customer needs shipped.

[PowerPoint: Norfolk Southern Overview]

3. FREIGHT DATA EXCHANGE

Ms. Carole Delion, MDOT Office of Transportation and Mobility, presented the Freight Data Exchange Project. The Office of Transportation and Mobility is in charge of incident

management (CHART) as well as traffic and roadway monitoring, traveler information through 511, emergency operations (major events), ITS, traffic management and connected and automated vehicles.

Maryland has a program for Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) which developed a Capability Maturity Model performed with freight partners to coalesce data streams for internal and external partners in one spot. The program also developed the Connected and Automated Vehicle data exchange.

Goals of the project include: Phase 1 to create a specifications requirement document. Phase 2 to build the actual data exchange.

The purpose of the data exchange platform is to support ingesting and hosting real-time and potentially static transportation information of interest to freight partners. The data exchange will offer a single point of focus for stakeholders to pull information needed for their respective initiatives and allow third party vendors to share real-time data into the system.

Current efforts to complete the data exchange program include stakeholder discovery sessions, a recently published Request for Information (RFI), preparing the requirements document based on input from stakeholders, and design/solutions analysis which would allow the data exchange to actually function.

Users of the data exchange include freight drivers, dispatchers, planners, passengers, and traffic operations managers. Some of the major data sets included, but are not limited to Commodity information, congestion and reliability information, work zones, parking, historical data analysis and many others.

The next steps include completion of discovery sessions with stakeholders, compiling responses from the RFI, establishing baseline requirements for the documents, follow up to fill gaps, and determine the procurement and/or solutions to building out the data exchange. The VDOT SmarterRoads data set is a good example of what the data exchange may ultimately look like.

[PowerPoint: MDOT SHA Freight Data Exchange]

4. RESILIENCE 2050 – FREIGHT WHITE PAPER

Mr. Keith Kucharek presented the Freight White Paper that was prepared by BMC as part of the update to the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The current LRTP, *Maximize2045* will be replaced with the new plan, *Resilience 2050*. The LRTP is a fiscally constrained document that establishes the region's transportation goals and strategies. There are numerous goals within the LRTP. Several goals emphasize safety and equity.

White papers were developed in an effort to engage the public. White papers include traffic safety, transit, air quality and conformity, emerging technologies, active transportation, forecasting population, and of course freight. These will continue to be released until next spring.

The Freight White Paper provides an overview of freight in the Baltimore region including the Port of Baltimore, rail freight, air freight, regional freight and roadway freight or trucking.

The COVID-19 pandemic had mixed impacts to the Port of Baltimore (Port). Cargo volumes were mixed while the cruise industry was completely shut down but is now back up and running and recently added Norwegian Cruise lines to go along with Carnival and Royal Caribbean. The Port generates over 30,000 indirect, direct or induced jobs and is a major source of income, responsible for more than \$3.3 billion in personal income and \$2.6 billion in business revenues.

Maryland was the location of the first railroad in North America, the B&O Railroad, which was chartered in 1827. By the mid-1870's rail dominated both passenger and freight movement. Once automobiles became prevalent, rail saw a big decline until the 1970's when Conrail and Amtrak were established to revitalize freight and passenger rail service.

Two Class I railroads operate in Maryland, CSX and Norfolk Southern. These two railroads own and operate the majority of the 800 plus miles of track in Maryland and carry about 11% of the freight by weight and 4% of the freight by value. Maryland's freight railroads employ over 2,500 people with another 2,700 employed by Amtrak and MARC.

The Howard Street Tunnel will provide double stack capabilities to clear a major freight bottleneck between Baltimore and Philadelphia. There are 21 other projects associated with the Howard Street Tunnel project including 11 in Baltimore City. The cost is approximately \$466 million and is expected to be complete in 2025.

The Baltimore Washington Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI) employs over 9,700 people. BWI handles 57% of regional cargo, which is more than double Reagan and Dulles airports combined. Amazon recently named BWI one of its top 5 busiest facilities. Air cargo has averaged a 19% increase over the last five years at BWI.

The pandemic had a major impact on both passenger and air cargo at BWI. Business and leisure travel were significantly reduced due to travel restrictions and public health concerns. The opposite was true for freight as BWI saw an unprecedented increase, mostly due to the demand for e-commerce.

The White Paper includes information on regional freight. The U.S. has over 4 million miles of roadway, 100,000 miles of rail, 1.4 million miles of pipeline, 20,000 public and private airports and over 5,000 coastal, inland and Great Lakes waterways moving cargo. Trucks carry the vast majority of freight by weight and value in the Baltimore region.

Top commodities moved within the Baltimore region by weight include gasoline, gravel and nonmetal mineral products. Commodities moved by value include gasoline, motorized vehicles and mixed freight.

Top commodities by weight originating within the Baltimore region and heading outbound include coal, crude petroleum, and gravel. Top commodities by value are motorized vehicles, electronics and mixed freight.

Top commodities coming into the region by weight include coal and food products. Top commodities by value include electronics, motorized vehicles and mixed freight.

The ISTEA legislation began providing separate freight funds for the first time, but MAP-21 was the most important legislation with regards to freight movement. MAP-21 included many commercial motor vehicle safety initiatives, established the National Freight Policy and National Freight Network, designated critical rural freight corridors and encouraged states to create Freight Advisory Committees.

The FAST Act in 2015, continued the work of MAP-21 and established the Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects Program as well as the National Highway Freight Program. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA or BIL) added \$244 billion in new investments impacting freight movement. It also created the Office of Multimodal Freight Infrastructure and Policy.

The trucking industry faces many issues including driver shortages, bottlenecks, parking concerns and curb utilization. The American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) has listed the driver shortage as a top concern for five years in a row. The driver shortage is estimated to be 80,000. This is a global issue, not just a problem in the U.S. There are many possible reasons contributing to the driver shortage. The pandemic created health concerns and stalled training, aging drivers, the age a driver can cross state lines, and the lack of diversity. Women make up 47% of the population but only 6% of commercial drivers are women. And finally, the newer drivers tend to get the worst routes which contributes to newer drivers quitting.

There are numerous potential solutions. Higher pay, benefits, and signing bonuses could attract new drivers, lowering the regulated age from 21 to 18, improving the industry's image and diversifying recruiting efforts to attract more women, minorities and veterans.

Bottlenecks are another industry concern. There has been a steady growth in freight transportation, but freight capacity has not kept pace. Two types of bottlenecks exist. Recurring and non-recurring. Bottlenecks caused nearly 2 million truck person-hours of delay at a cost of over \$110 million a year. Baltimore County has the worst bottlenecks in the region.

Truck parking is a top ten issue according to ATRI. Maryland has over 2,900 public and private parking spaces available at private truck facilities, rest areas, welcome centers, travel plazas and weigh and inspection stations. Most of the parking is along the three major interstates of I-95, I-70, and I-68.

Demand is outweighing supply, causing trucks to park in undesignated spaces such as roadway shoulders, ramps, local roadways and private parking lots. ATRI indicates that drivers begin looking for parking an average of 56 minutes before the end of their hours of service. This time spent looking for parking accounts for over \$130 million in lost wages in the Baltimore region. Some of the challenges to truck parking include an overall lack of parking spaces available, urban vs rural needs, and parking locations with amenities.

Curb utilization is another issue facing the trucking industry. There is an ongoing battle for curb space between buses, taxis, trash collection, automobile parking, food deliveries, e-commerce deliveries and of course larger trucks making deliveries.

Possible solutions include flex zones, time of day restrictions, staging zones, urban consolidation centers, paid access to freight zones, moving deliveries to different locations and off-peak deliveries. Several pilot programs have shown to be affective with off-peak delivery incentives, particularly in New York.

The BRTB is the federally mandated MPO for the Baltimore region. The Freight Movement Task Force is a subcommittee of the BRTB. Some of the things the BRTB and FMTF are doing with regards to freight movement include providing input into Maryland's Critical Urban Freight Corridors, approving the short-range transportation improvement program or TIP, approving the LRTP, and coordinating with local jurisdictions and MDOT to establish their transportation priorities.

[PowerPoint: BRTB Freight White Paper]

5. AGENCY UPDATES

Mr. John Thomas, MDOT Capital Planning and Programming, provided a brief update on the Maryland State Freight Plan. The final drafts of the Statewide Freight Plan and the Statewide Rail Plan were submitted to the Federal Highway and Federal Transit Administrations in August. Adoption of these plans is important because the National Highway Freight Program Funds can only be obligated if the State Freight Plan is up to date. Once the plans are adopted, MDOT will discuss what they can do to partner with MPO's and local jurisdictions to implement solutions, specifically land use and planning and zoning.

Mr. Thomas also provided an update on Operation Lifesaver which is a national non-profit organization of rail safety education and awareness. The organization provides public education programs to reduce collisions, injuries, and fatalities and railroad crossings and to prevent trespassing on railroad property. FMTF members are encouraged to sign up to provide voluntary training.

[PowerPoint: Operation Lifesaver Overview]

ATTENDANCE:

Members and Guests:

Kwame Arhin, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Dan Blevins, Wilmington Area Planning Council (Wilmapco)
William Borden, Morgan State University (MSU)
Summer Bowman, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)
Louis Campion, Maryland Motor Truck Association (MMTA)
Youngmin Choi, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Innovative Programming Division

Carole Delion, MDOT Office of Transportation and Mobility
Cecelia Donovan, Ecologix Group
Dale Eutsler, Anne Arundel County Office of Purchasing
Rudy Husband, Norfolk Southern
Rick Johnson, Baltimore County Department of Economic and Workforce Development
Nicole Katsikides, Texas Transportation Institute (TTI)
Kyle Leggs, Baltimore City Department of Planning
L'Kiesha Markley, MDOT Motor Carrier Division
Michele Martin, MDOT
Parto Mazdeyasni, MDOT Maryland Port Administration (MPA)
Lydia Mcpherson, Norfolk Southern
Troy Mix, University of Delaware
Roxanne Mukai, Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA)
Dr. Mamie Parker, Ecologix Group
Amanda Rutherford, U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD)
Tina Sanders, MDOT Motor Carrier Division
Kip Snow, Community Colleges of Baltimore County
Daniel Spack, Ecologix Group
Linda Taylor-Newton, Baltimore City DOT
John (JT) Thomas, MDOT Capital Planning and Programming
Jacqueline Thorne, MDOT Office of the Secretary
Reidel Vichot, University of Delaware
Patrirk Zilliacus, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC)

BMC Staff:

Bala Akundi, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
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