

# Baltimore Regional Transportation Board Equity Scan

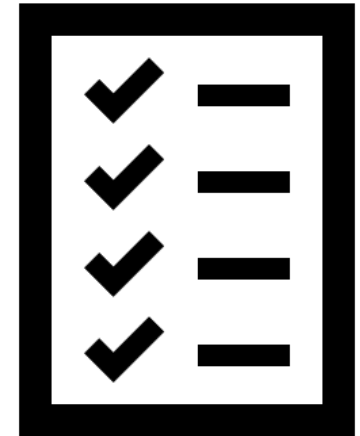
Project Update: April 4, 2023



# Agenda

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- Introduction
- Summary of Completed Tasks
  - Long-Range Transportation Plan Practices
  - Transportation Improvement Program Practices
  - Unified Planning Work Program Practices
  - Public Participation Plan Practices
- Facilitated Discussion
- Next Steps



# Project Objectives

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- On behalf of the BRTB, BMC is seeking to identify strategies to deepen its commitment to equity within four key transportation planning areas:
  - Long-range transportation plan (LRTP)
  - Transportation improvement program (TIP)
  - Unified planning work program (UPWP)
  - Public participation plan (PPP)

# Summary of Completed Tasks

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## **Task 2**

- Reviewed key BRTB plans: LRTP, TIP, UPWP, PPP
- Conducted four interviews with BMC staff about key plans
- Developed a summary white paper about BRTB plans

## **Task 3**

- Reviewed LRTPs, TIPs, UPWPs, and PPPs of 20 peer agencies
- Conducted five interviews with peer agencies, reviewed fifteen websites
- Developed a white paper on peer agency best practices



# Long-Range Transportation Plan Practices

# BRTB Equity Practices in the LRTP

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- Targeted outreach to organizations working with low-income, minority and limited English proficiency (LEP) populations
- Developed equity-related goals and strategies for *Resilience 2050*
- Initial equity-related criteria for project selection and prioritization in *Maximize 2045*
  - Significant updated scoring that considers equity in most technical scoring criteria for *Resilience 2050*
- Conducted an environmental justice (EJ) analysis in Maximize 2045 with an expanded list of metrics for comparing transportation needs within traffic analysis zones, this will continue into Resilience 2050

# Peer Agency Equity Practices in the LRTP

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- Developed equity goals
- Incorporated equity strategies and investments
- Conducted EJ or equity analyses
- Developed equity scoring for the LRTP
- Focused on inclusive and equitable public outreach

# Peer Agency Examples - LRTP

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## Capital Area Metropolitan Organization

- Equity is one of six goals in the LRTP
- The **equity goal** includes three objectives:
  - Access to Opportunity
  - Impact on Human Environment
  - Valuing Communities

## Metropolitan Council

- Equity goal in the LRTP that focuses on **healthy and equitable communities**
- The equity goal includes four objectives with topics around:
  - Air emissions
  - Impacts of transportation construction, operations
  - Availability and attractiveness of active transportation options
  - Community cohesion and connectivity

# Opportunities to Advance Equity Practices - LRTP

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- Define and develop an equity framework to guide LRTP strategies, and investments.
- Enhance equity scoring criteria for projects in the LRTP.
- Conduct qualitative analysis to document past transportation decisions relative to current inequities
- Take advantage of IIJA –Bi-Partisan Bill/Grants.

# Challenges - LRTP

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- Overcoming institutional decision making.
- Clearly defining equity for the region and a method to apply the definition/criteria to the LRTP project selection.
- Getting Board “buy in” on equity definition and overall policies.
- Building trust with the public and the Transportation CORE.
- Development of clear equity criteria that is measurable and sustainable.
- Develop standard Board talking points and examples of equity to make elected officials more comfortable in talking about transportation equity.



# Transportation Improvement Program Practices

# BRTB Equity Practices in the TIP

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- Defined low-income populations
- Developed maps that highlight projects by EJ areas
- Included a section on coordination with human transportation services
- Included several TIP criteria that address equity-related concerns (e.g., bike/ped safety, access to transit)

# Peer Agency Equity Practices in the TIP

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- Incorporated equity into project scoring/evaluation/prioritization
- Conducted equity-related public outreach for the TIP
- Completed an equity investment analysis

# Peer Agency Examples - TIP

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## Greater Madison MPO

- Included various ***equity-related criteria*** in the TIP, such as:
  - Provides convenient, affordable transportation options that enable people of all ages and abilities to access jobs, services, and other destinations.
  - Improves transit accessibility to jobs, especially in transit-dependent areas.
  - Ensures interests of underrepresented groups are considered in the transportation planning process

## Metropolitan Transportation Commission

- Conducted an ***investment analysis*** to assess TIP investments through an equity lens
  - Sought to understand if low-income and minority populations, seniors, and persons with disabilities were equitably sharing in the Bay Area's TIP investments
- Included ***three*** components: Population Use-Based Analysis, Disparate Impact Analysis, and Transportation Equity Measure Analysis

# Opportunities to Advance Equity Practices - TIP

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- Increase involvement and input from overburdened communities
- Develop graphics to highlight equity related projects uniquely.
- Consider grant funding from Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill to fund a mapping project with MTA to identify new transit locations for TIP analysis.
- Add Equity Criteria within the existing TIP submittal process.

# Challenges - TIP

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- TIP process: jurisdictions and state agencies provide the information to BMC.
- Project submittal is based on the MDOT CTP more so than on TIP criteria.
- Analyzing distribution of benefits and burdens in TIP investments can be a complex task.
  - Some types of TIP projects comprise significant dollar amounts but are difficult to map (e.g., MDOT MTA bus fleet purchases, MDOT SHA areawides). This makes it difficult to assess impacts on geographically identified overburdened communities.
- Only handful of equity projects that can be specifically identified.



# Unified Planning Work Program Practices

# BMC Equity Practices in the UPWP

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- Included equity-related studies/activities
  - Standalone equity task for 5 years
  - Study of undue burdens of fares, fees and fines on disadvantaged populations
  - Support for community outreach activities (e.g., Every Voice Counts)

# Peer Agency Equity Practices in the UPWP

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- Included equity-related activities, studies and projects, such as:
  - Expanding opportunities for underrepresented populations to participate in the transportation planning process
  - Updating equity emphasis area maps
  - Conducting EJ or equity assessments

# Peer Agency Examples - UPWP

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## Miami-Dade TPO

- UPWP task to develop an ***Equitable Transportation Assessment Planner***
  - Geographic Information System (GIS)-based tool that uses sociocultural demographics to assist in equity analyses for projects

## Boston Region MPO

- UPWP includes \$177,000 to support a ***Transportation Equity Program***
- Tasks include:
  - Expanding opportunities for underrepresented populations to participate in the transportation planning process
  - Developing and refining equity-related analytical techniques through ongoing review of planning products to evolve methods and further analyses

# Opportunities to Advance Equity Practices - UPWP

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- Use the BMC InSite model to perform key forecasts using demographic data for equity analyses.
- Include multiple tasks around developing, refining and adopting a framework for BMC's equity areas.
- Develop a task to address regional transportation issues for low-income communities at the grassroots level.

# Challenges - UPWP

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- Using BMC's InSite model is complicated and there is hesitancy in forecasting populations of low-income communities in geographic locations.
- Working with overburdened communities can be difficult, especially focusing them on understanding transportation planning.



# Public Participation Plan Practices

# BMC Equity Practices in the PPP

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- Documented Federal laws, regulations and guidelines that ensure equitable and inclusive outreach.
- Updated accessibility policy to use plain and inclusive language.
- Added civil rights organizations to the list of Interested Parties.
- Maintain a database/email distribution list that includes organizations and agencies that serve or represent the interests of underserved populations.
- Establishment of the Transportation CORE

# Peer Agency Equity Practices in the PPP

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- Prioritized outreach to traditionally underrepresented or disadvantaged populations
- Developed strong relationships with diverse groups in their region
- Conducted reviews of current public outreach efforts to identify ways to make the process more equitable
- Incorporated equity principles for engagement in the PPP
- Created maps to help identify areas for outreach and/or to log areas the agency has conducted outreach

# Peer Agency Examples - PPP

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## Broward MPO

- Developed three fundamental EJ principles
- Created a map to ***document data from public outreach efforts*** to conduct a gap analysis and strategic approach
  - Allows for comparison of where outreach is conducted vs areas of need

## San Diego Association of Governments

- Has a ***language assistance*** call-in center with over 15 languages
- Engaged over 200 ***community-based organizations***
- Conducted a regional survey on tools, processes, concerns, and needs

# Opportunities to Advance Equity Practices - PPP

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- Prioritize outreach to traditionally underrepresented or disadvantaged populations
- Develop strong relationships with diverse groups in their region
- Incorporate equity principles for engagement in the PPP

# Challenges – PPP

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- Public Input: there is some limited analysis to understand gaps.
- Public perception that BRTB ignores public comments.
- Resources are limited for major Public Participation efforts
- Board needs to fully embrace equity considerations in its decision making.



# Facilitated Discussion

# Discussion Questions

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- Overall, what is most valuable, useful, or meaningful to you from the examples we discussed?
- Within the four activities (LRTP, TIP, UPWP, PPP), let's narrow down and highlight best practices the BRTB may want to advance.
- For each activity:
  - What would be the most meaningful practices to advance in this region?
- For each practice:
  - What are the potential benefits of applying this practice? Why is it important to us?
  - What challenges may arise when applying this practice? How might we avoid or mitigate those risks?



# Next Steps