



**BALTIMORE  
METROPOLITAN  
COUNCIL**

**2023**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

## A LETTER FROM BMC

In the Baltimore region, we have a momentous opportunity to imagine a new course of progress for our communities. Our efforts today lay the groundwork for realizing that vision in the years to come. At the Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC), we want that foundation to be built up by local communities, strengthened through the consensus of our partners and implemented with mindful planning. Through our collective efforts, we seek to help our region invest in and capitalize on outcomes that boost quality of life for all.

In greater Baltimore, we have been sowing the seeds of that investment. From initiatives like the Transportation & Land Use Connection grant program, which quickly unlocks resources to improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities, to a successful bid for an EPA grant to develop a first of its kind regional Priority Climate Action Plan, BMC is making progress toward greater climate resilience, better connected communities and a more vibrant future. One step at a time, we are recovering from the pandemic, facing the impacts of a changing world and embracing smarter systems that propel us into the modern era.

Looking back, we are proud of what we have achieved working with our partners in the region. Our Energy Board saved consumers a record \$74 million on bulk energy purchasing in Fiscal Year 2023. We've built upon the continued momentum of Bike to Work and Chesapeake Connect to once again deliver strong programs. Assets such as the Vulnerable Populations Index, Climate Change Resource Guide and GoSmart Maryland rideshare program continue to support policy and project-level decisions and help our communities make informed choices.

Looking ahead, we are making preparations for the newly established Baltimore Regional Transit Commission, which will give local voices a seat at the table in decision-making around transit system planning and funding priorities. We are developing a regional shelter-in-place and evacuation plan that centers on equitable access to emergency services, and we are fresh into the launch of the latest Look Alive roadway safety campaign. With all this and more coming up, we are hard at work to advance the shared goals of our region.

Our thanks to BMC staff, board members and partner agencies across the Baltimore region. We're grateful to work with talented public servants dedicated to supporting the health and advancement of our communities. Please learn more about our efforts in this report, and follow us to find out how you can get involved.



*Mike Kelly*  
**Mike Kelly**  
Executive Director



**Dr. Calvin Ball**  
BMC Board Chair

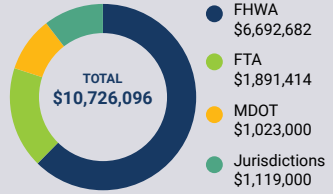


# ABOUT BMC

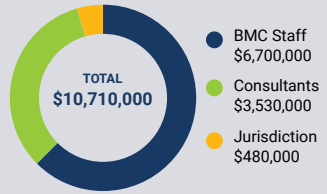
The Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC) is a group of trusted experts who help guide the future of the Baltimore region. We evaluate needs and trends, listen to communities, and develop and implement programs and projects. At a time when the Baltimore region is emerging from decades of disinvestment and capitalizing on its many strengths, we are forging a vibrant economy and building a sustainable quality of life for future generations. Through our work, we are committed to making our communities livable, accessible and prosperous for all.

Our work helps lay the foundation for smart, sustainable and resilient development in transportation, housing and land use. We help coordinate regional strategy on emergency preparedness, energy purchasing, environmental readiness and more. This report highlights some of our work from the previous year. Use the QR code for an immersive digital version.

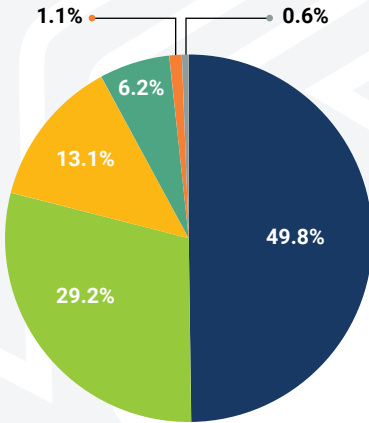
## UPWP Budget FY 2024



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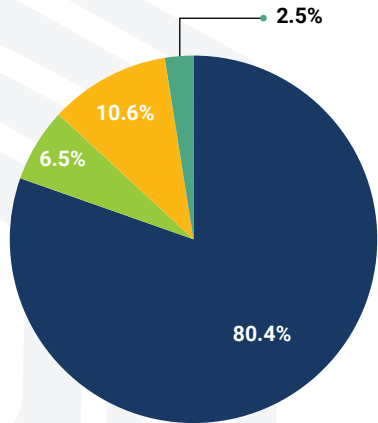


## Fiscal Year 2023 Audited Financials *(All figures shown as percentages.)*



**TOTAL EXPENSES**  
\$8,283,512

- Salaries and benefits - \$4,126,477
- Consulting services - \$2,420,151
- General expenses - \$1,084,754
- Local pass through - \$514,621
- Other grants - \$89,430
- Depreciation - \$48,079



**TOTAL REVENUE**  
\$8,336,949

- Federal Grants - \$6,702,711
- State and Local Grants - \$540,610
- Local Jurisdictional Dues - \$882,395
- Local pass through - \$211,233

# TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

The **Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB)**, with BMC staff support, produces three federally-mandated transportation planning documents:

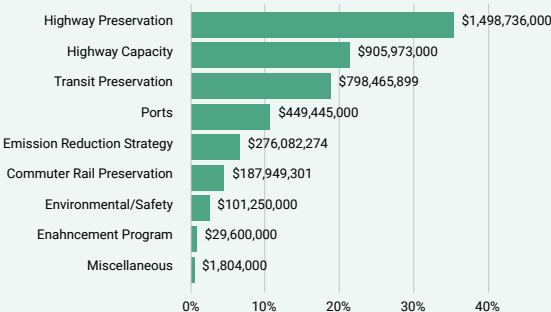
**The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)** is a fiscally-constrained overview of major federally-funded capital projects anticipated in the coming decades. BRTB continued work on the latest LRTP, *Resilience 2050: Adapting to the Challenges of Tomorrow*, as part of a multi-year process with numerous opportunities for public input throughout the drafting of the plan. BMC staff stayed busy developing the plan's goals and strategies, identifying meaningful measures and targets that define success and track how the region is performing and updating the project scoring methodology to apply greater weight to projects that improve transit accessibility and reliability.

**The Short-Term Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** is a list of projects updated by BRTB annually that identifies anticipated timing, costs, funding sources and rationale for federally-funded transportation improvements to be made over the next four years. The FY 2023-2026 TIP programmed a total of \$4.25 billion in Federal and matching local funds for 131 individual projects including capacity improvements, preservation projects and operational initiatives that are supported in the long range plan but have not been previously detailed.

**The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)** outlines a two-year budget and identifies the transportation tasks and studies to be performed by BMC staff, often together with our consultant teams and local jurisdiction members. Tasks completed in FY23 included a regional transit priority corridor analysis, development of guidelines for the implementation of the Safe System Approach to transportation system planning throughout the region and a study concluding in Connected and Automated Vehicle best practices for local governments.

In addition to BRTB's work, we have also been gearing up to support the new **Baltimore Regional Transit Commission**, which was recommended by BMC's Regional Transit Governance & Funding Workgroup and signed into law by Governor Wes Moore following the General Assembly's 2023 legislative session. Composed of business, nonprofit and education leaders, transportation specialists and transit riders, the commission will represent a significant step toward giving the Baltimore region a voice in the future of our transit system.

## Share of FY 2023-2026 TIP Funding by Project Category



# TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

## PATAPSCO REGIONAL GREENWAY

The completed Patapsco Regional Greenway (PRG) Plan, adopted in 2017, envisions a 40-mile shared-use trail connecting Baltimore's Inner Harbor to Sykesville in Carroll County along the Patapsco Valley. To date, over 12 miles of the PRG are complete. Our recent work on the PRG includes ongoing development of preliminary design plans for a segment connecting the Guinness Open Gate Brewery to Southwest Area Park in Baltimore County, and final design plans for the adjacent segment which crosses over the Patapsco River for access to the Town of Elkridge and Patapsco Valley State Park in Howard County.

## TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE CONNECTIONS

BRTB kicked off the Transportation & Land Use Connections (TLC) competitive grant program, which provides short-term technical assistance to local governments. The program unlocks resources for quick implementation of projects responding to the accessibility priorities of local communities. Eligible projects include planning and preliminary design of changes to the built environment to enable more people to easily walk, bike and access transit in their communities. The first round of funding included completion of a feasibility study and preliminary design plans for separated bicycle facility improvements along Wabash Avenue in Baltimore City and bicycle infrastructure design guidance and concept design for a two-mile protected bike lane connecting the Bay Ridge Avenue corridor to Quiet Waters Park in Annapolis.



**BRAKING NEWS:  
STOP FOR PEDESTRIANS.**

[LookAliveMD.org](http://LookAliveMD.org)

**LOOK ALIVE**

## LOOK ALIVE ROAD SAFETY CAMPAIGN

We are proud to coordinate Look Alive, in partnership with the Maryland Highway Safety Office. Look Alive is a regional safety campaign asking greater Baltimore's road users – drivers, cyclists and pedestrians – to use caution, remain alert and stay safe while traveling. We have recently refreshed the campaign, first launched in 2019, to include more in-person engagement with street teams deployed in areas with high pedestrian traffic, plus new messaging from star Signal Woman on billboards, buses and other platforms. Behind the scenes, the campaign includes education about the local Strategic Highway Safety Plans we developed with our jurisdictions, supporting a wholesale effort to reduce deaths and injuries on the region's roads.

# ENVIRONMENT

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## AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY

As part of the 2023-2026 *Transportation Improvement Program*, BMC staff conducted an air quality analysis of planned projects to ensure conformity with Federal standards. Our analysis shows that emissions expected from the region's transportation network in future years will not exceed the limitations set by the state's emissions budget. Upcoming transportation plans, including the next long-range plan, will incorporate new motor vehicle emissions budgets, which were refreshed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) earlier in 2023. Meanwhile, we are celebrating the Baltimore region's attainment of national clean air standards for the first time since the program was initiated, and we are committed to continued progress in improving regional air quality.

## CLIMATE CHANGE RESOURCE GUIDE

The BMC / BRTB Climate Change Resource Guide, released in February 2023, can assist local agencies prepare for climate change impacts across six infrastructure service areas: transportation, stormwater, water, wastewater, facilities and solid waste. By providing historic and projected climate data, potential impacts on infrastructure and adaptation strategies, the guide and accompanying toolkit for local planners outlines steps to leverage resources for resilience within communities to respond to increased heat, flooding and other threats from climate change impacts. Recent extreme weather in the region has underscored the urgency of undertaking this work, and this resource encourages agencies to take steps that are within reach and develop a strategy best suited to protect local communities.

## CLIMATE POLLUTION REDUCTION

In cooperation with members throughout the region, BMC staff recently helped secure \$1 million in funding through the EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant to facilitate a regional Priority Climate Action Plan. Currently in development, this plan will build from the foundation of existing climate plans and policies to coordinate a unified regional strategy to guide informed local implementation. The plan will also include a regional greenhouse gas inventory, helping local leaders, planners and communities understand emissions trends and identify opportunities for cost-effective mitigation. We hope this planning work can help our region's local communities take action to support a global emissions reduction effort in the coming decades.

# COMMUNITY

## HOUSING

We have recently continued work toward addressing structural barriers to accessible and equitable housing in the greater Baltimore region, engaging partners in local communities to achieve results in helping thousands of families maintain their homes. Our efforts have helped bolster eviction prevention and rental assistance in local jurisdictions, while on a wider scale recommendations to the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development helped support preservation of housing affordability across the Baltimore region amid turmoil among investors.

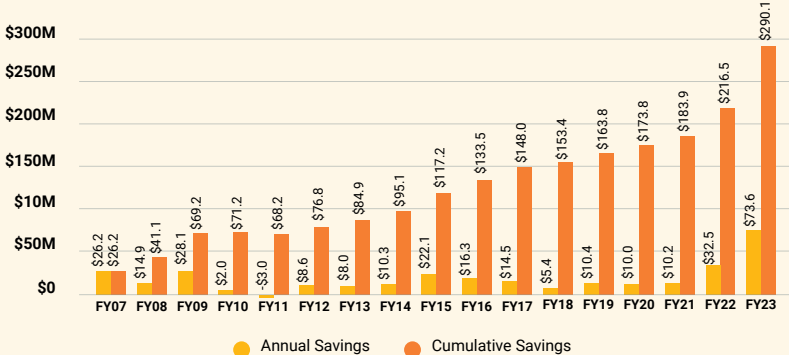
The Regional Fair Housing Group has worked to inform efforts to address racial gaps in homeownership and housing access. We compiled details of available special-purpose credit programs in the region, including new down payment assistance programs in Baltimore City and Annapolis and increased assistance for existing programs in Anne Arundel, Harford and Howard Counties. Meanwhile, analysis of Low-Income Housing Tax Credit unit occupancy by race shows significant improvements in access to newer family units among Black residents, reflecting the success of a 2017 agreement around this program.

## PURCHASING

As the economy continues to adjust and shift along with the supply chain's resilience, the Baltimore Regional Cooperative Purchasing Committee (BRPC) thrives through collaboration with regional participants. BRPC participants share contract details and work together to tackle today's procurement challenges. These cultivated relationships and the exchange of essential information raise the performance level of the entire region. The founding principles forged in the 1960s survive the test of time and challenges by **building trust, building knowledge and building volume.**

A notable example of these collaborative efforts continues to be the BRPC's Energy Board subcommittee, which includes county and city governments, public schools and community colleges and nonprofits that collectively spent \$117 million on gas and electricity in FY23 and were the largest purchaser of Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE). Compared to BGE's standard rates, the Energy Board saved \$74 million on electricity in FY23 and has saved \$290.5 million since beginning to cooperatively purchase electricity in 2006.

**BRPC Electric Procurement Program Costs Avoided when Compared to BGE Standard Offer Service Rates\***



\* Excludes BGE hourly based type III accounts which represents in the range of 29% - 53% of the total portfolio depending on year

# PREPAREDNESS

Our planning work in emergency preparedness helps a regional network of local first response agencies connect, strategize and share support ahead of, during and in the wake of a range of potential hazards. Through the Baltimore Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), BMC supports the development and implementation of response and recovery plans, tabletop exercises, public information messaging, and coordination with related planning in transportation, climate resilience and other areas.

Recently, local agencies in the Baltimore region have faced challenges related to increasingly intense heat, storms and flooding, among other climate-related hazards, as well as potential risk of terrorism, threats to cybersecurity and more.

In response, we have recently focused on developing a regional disaster housing and evacuation plan to establish clear communication protocol between jurisdictions and coordinate the timing of response actions. The UASI Whole Community Committee has led the effort to ensure that our evacuation planning work includes vulnerable populations, centering equitable access to transportation, information and emergency services in potential evacuation scenarios.

While our planning work strengthens the region's preparedness for natural disasters or other emergencies, it also helps make connections and leverage resources to support responders on the ground as situations arise. The UASI committees facilitate collaboration and conversation ahead of and during potential disasters, empowering more effective response and recovery.





# PROGRAMS



## CHESAPEAKE CONNECT

Earlier in FY23, once again BMC led the annual Chesapeake Connect trip to Detroit, Michigan, bringing together leaders from across greater Baltimore to connect, reflect and learn from the experiences of a peer region. Detroit has many bright minds implementing brilliant ideas to counter challenges it faces, including a declining population, historic under-investment and barriers to building wealth in communities of color. Through site visits and discussions with local community leaders, we sought to curate an effective exploration of these innovative developments reinvigorating a great American city and ask how we can bolster similar ideas in and around Baltimore.

## BIKE TO WORK

Bike to Work Central Maryland wrapped its 26th annual festivities with a record number of events connecting riders around the Baltimore region throughout Bike to Work Week, which ran May 15-21. The packed slate of programs included over a dozen Pit Stops celebrating National Bike to Work Day, as well as more than 30 bike shops serving as gear pickup spots. Registration was on par with the 25th anniversary celebration, continuing a resurgence after two years disrupted by the pandemic as riders around the region rolled out together again.



## GOSMART MARYLAND

The launch of GoSmart Maryland provides a new resource and campaign that provides residents of Baltimore and Carroll counties with easy access to carpool, vanpool and transit information for their commutes, including the guarantee of a free ride home in an emergency. GoSmartMD brings together information about all the options for traveling in the Baltimore region, allowing commuters to find partners, use transit and identify park-and-ride lots, which helps to save money and time while reducing travel stress. For employers, the campaign provides education on financial incentives for program participation.



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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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BMC Board Chair

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BMC Board Vice-Chair

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*CEO, Greater Baltimore  
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the 2023 Annual Report