

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

February 4, 2025
9:31 to 11:25 A.M.

MINUTES

1. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 2024 MINUTES

Ms. Angie Daniel, Vice Chair, asked for approval of the minutes from the December meeting of the Technical Committee. Mr. Brian Ulrich moved to approve the minutes with Mr. David Cookson seconding the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

2. PRESENTATION: TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT - REGIONAL NEEDS, CAUSES, & PRIORITIES

Mr. Walker Freer, ICF, introduced the Transportation Needs Assessment project. The needs assessment is intended to gather information on how our region's transportation system – roads, bridges, buses, trains, sidewalks, bikeways – works and doesn't work for people living in the Baltimore region. The project will identify transportation needs, causes for needs and investment priorities in the context of the existing Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) goals (improve accessibility, increase mobility, improve system safety, etc.). This will help to inform the development of the next LRTP by providing a baseline for how our transportation system is currently performing relative to these goals. The project will also identify policies and performance measures to track progress in addressing identified needs. Rather than focusing on technical data and metrics, the project is focused on transportation system users and their challenges.

The project kicked off in November 2024, followed by a review of existing surveys and research in December and January. Next steps include an analysis of existing conditions in February 2025, a survey and focus groups in March and April, analysis of results in May, identification of performance metrics and policy improvements in June, and a final report in July.

Mr. Freer summarized the process for the review of existing surveys and research. There is an overwhelming amount of data available on the transportation system. The challenge for this task was distilling all of the available information into a draft list of transportation needs from a user perspective. This initial analysis of transportation needs will be refined through subsequent tasks such as the upcoming survey and focus groups.

Mr. Noah Levine, also with ICF, summarized the documents considered for the review of existing surveys and research task, including state, regional and local documents. The review prioritized documents and reports including community engagement. ICF also conducted several interviews with MDOT MTA and BMC staff to supplement the document review. High-level needs from various studies identified top goals such as congestion relief, increasing safety for active transportation, a safe and secure transportation system, addressing environmental challenges, and improving public transit.

Mr. Levine then summarized findings from the literature review for each of the LRTP goal areas, including improve accessibility, increase mobility, improve system safety, implement environmentally responsible transportation solutions, improve system security, improve and maintain the existing infrastructure, and promote prosperity and economic opportunity.

Mr. Freer closed the presentation by summarizing next steps for the project. These include creation of a StoryMap focused on existing transportation conditions, a survey and focus groups, analysis of results, and a presentation of findings. Technical Committee members asked a few clarifying questions and offered some additional resources for the consultant team.

[PowerPoint: Transportation Needs Assessment: Review of Existing Surveys & Research]

3. PRESENTATION: LRTP SCENARIO PLANNING

Ms. Hannah Twaddell, ICF, presented work to date on the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Scenario Planning project. The project will explore risks and opportunities associated with uncertain future transportation conditions that are both pressing and difficult to predict. Doing so will build the BRTB's capacity for exploring and selecting policy actions in support of the next LRTP and beyond.

The project began in September 2024 with best practices research, a survey gathering public input on scenarios, and scenario development. Modeling and scenario workshops will occur in February and March 2025, followed by analysis of a refined set of scenarios in April, analysis and identification of policy and LRTP recommendations in May, and project closeout in June.

Ms. Twaddell summarized the modeling framework for the project. The project is going to use a strategic model known as VisionEval to analyze changes in several broad categories related to the transportation system. This strategic model is useful for exploring "what if" analysis associated with long-range planning. The broad categories selected for the project include policy choices such as transportation investments, transportation fees, and housing as well as external forces such as economic changes, technological change, and environmental shifts.

Ms. Twaddell summarized work to date. The best practices research included experiences and lessons learned from ten peer Metropolitan Planning Organizations and state Departments of Transportation across the country. These peers learned a wide variety of lessons from their use of VisionEval. Uses included helping policymakers and the public to realize and tackle hard

questions, explore uncertainty, jumpstarting new initiatives, and pursuing ambitious policy goals.

The project also included an online survey, open from mid-November to mid-December, focused on gathering public input on the scenario categories, priorities within each category and outcome measures. The online survey yielded over 650 responses, though survey respondents were not representative of the Baltimore region. The typical respondent was male (58%), white (77%), and had a graduate or professional degree (50%). Ms. Twaddell summarized key results from the survey. Priority categories for scenarios included improving transportation, the environment, and housing and land use. Priority transportation improvements included more transit service, improving biking and walking, and improving and sustaining the current transportation system. Priority outcome measures included safety, accessibility, and environmental responsibility.

Ms. Twaddell gave a detailed summary of the scenarios and outcome measures selected for the project. Project categories include transportation investments, housing and demographics, fees and incentives, economic changes, technological changes, and resilience and the environment. BMC and the consultant team worked together to create between three and five different levels of change for each of these categories based on input from prior tasks. All of these levels are relative to the baseline scenario, which reflects the 2050 LRTP. Outcome measures selected for the project include metrics related to access, mobility, safety, the environment, and economic prosperity.

The project team will use VisionEval to model every possible combination of each scenario level across each of the categories. The total number of combinations of levels, or scenario bundles, can be calculated by multiplying the number of levels for each of the categories considered. For example, both transportation investments and housing and demographics include five levels each, for a total of $5 \times 5 = 25$ combinations.

The modeling results will yield a distribution of impacts across the hundreds of scenario bundles for each of the outcome measures. Ms. Twaddell provided a few example visualizations from VisionEval modeling in Vermont to give Technical Committee members an idea of what the analysis might look like. Tools used for the analysis will allow users to quickly identify the specific scenario bundles associated with goals of interest. For example, users could quickly filter the modeling results to identify the scenario bundles associated with VMT reductions or other outcomes measures of interest.

Ms. Twaddell summarized the next steps for the project. After initial modeling is complete in February, the consultant team will lead a series of three scenario workshops in March. Discussion topics will include scenarios that perform well, tradeoffs across scenarios, risks and opportunities associated with the scenarios, and potential local or regional policy options to pursue. The scenarios will then be refined and rerun based on input received from workshop participants. This will also include more detailed model runs using BMC's activity-based travel demand model. Finally, results will be summarized and used to recommend refinements to LRTP development and other policy options.

After Ms. Twaddell finished, Technical Committee members asked several clarifying questions related to how the project can inform the LRTP and which scenarios will be run. Mr. Zach Kaufman provided some examples of how results could be incorporated into the next LRTP, and noted that BMC hopes to continue using the VisionEval model beyond this project.

[PowerPoint: LRTP Scenario Planning]

4. PRESENTATION: POST PANDEMIC TRENDS

Mr. Kevin Pullis, WBA, provided background. Surveys were conducted among both employers and employees in the greater Baltimore area to examine behaviors and expectations regarding a variety of topics, including their current work situation and commutes, and work from home policies. The intention of this survey was to observe changing trends related to work from home, commercial, real estate markets, and home location choice decisions. This is the first of a two presentation series, with the second part, which will occur in March, covering secondary research conducted by the AECOM team, and our final conclusions.

The employee and employer surveys were conducted between late February and early April 2024, among a representative sample of area residents and a convenient sample of businesses. The employee survey was completed by 1630 area residents, where 77 responses were received to the employer survey. The residential survey was conducted online and by phone while the business survey was conducted entirely online. Mr. Pullis informed the group that the employee data was weighted so that it aligned with census data on the area by various socioeconomic variables.

Mr. Pullis then provided additional information concerning survey completion, indicating that the employee survey took an average of fifteen minutes to complete with questions on multiple topics centering around four key topic areas; their job title and company, working from home, commuting status at present and before workplace and travel restrictions implemented in response to the covid-19 pandemic, and what employment is like now, and what they expect it to be like in the future. The employee survey also included questions regarding respondents' demographics. Moving on to the specifics of the employer survey, Mr. Pullis stated that the employer questionnaire, which took an average of eight to ten minutes to complete, and also covered four topic areas; company designation, current workforce issues surrounding transportation and the workforce, including issues with telecommuting at present and potential changes in the future, and questions to assist in developing a profile of the companies being surveyed.

Mr. Pullis informed the group that the remainder of the presentation would cover major takeaways from both the employee and employer surveys and conclude by describing the seven segments that constitute the employee population of the Greater Baltimore area. To begin, there was a discussion of employees' current work situation in comparison to their ideal situation, in terms of in-person versus hybrid and fulltime work-from-home arrangements. Survey results indicate that in the first half of 2024, almost 2/3 of employees work either entirely or mostly in person, while, conversely, 1/8 work entirely remotely. Mr. Pullis further noted that survey results indicate that those who say they work mostly in-person work almost

entirely in-person. These results would indicate that, depending on individual understanding of hybrid work environments, between 23% and 41% of employees surveyed have some degree of hybrid employment and overall 95% of employees were employed by companies that have a physical work location in the area. Next, employees' current work situations were compared to their reported ideal work environment. Mr. Pullis indicated that while results were widespread, two trends emerged among respondents; those aged 44 and younger were more likely to prefer hybrid versus fully in-person work, and women were more likely than men to want fully remote work. The note with the latter is that a large majority of women still wanted a work situation that was at least partially in person. The presentation moved on to discuss the preferences of Baltimore area employees and what factors had the greatest impact on their overall satisfaction.

Results indicate that employees desire more flexibility in their work schedules, availability of remote work options, and increased pay transparency. Mr. Pullis moved on to point out that there wasn't much variance across industries, though, in person and historically lower-paying jobs, such as food service and retail often were the least likely to seek these benefits. It was also noted that employees were surveyed on their overall satisfaction with their jobs. Mr. Pullis presented a set of tables that outlined multiple areas of impact on overall job satisfaction and desired employer actions. The data presented indicates that employees value access to resources along with accommodations that promote accessibility, and flexibility in their work schedule - including the number of hours worked. Information provided in the presentation indicate only one sixth of respondents indicated a level of flexibility at work that allowed for maintaining a proper work-life balance, or that they didn't have enough control over when, where, or how they work. In all, over 50% of respondents indicated that they lacked the flexibility at work to maintain a desired work-life balance, with 3/10 of those surveyed reporting that they have considered changing jobs and actively explored external positions.

Mr. Pullis then explored the differences in the perceptions of employers compared to employees. The survey results show that most employers don't expect much change in their current or planned work arrangements, whereas employees are expecting a greater return to in-person work, or simply are not sure what is going to happen. Responses also show that only five employers surveyed plan to require employees to return in person, with three of those employers indicating that the company is considering or taking steps to encourage employees to return to in-person work, such as designing new office space mandating days in the office or hosting more special events. These survey results suggest that there is some disconnect between employee expectations and employers' understanding of those expectations. Mr. Pullis posited that employers do seem to understand that employees want to avoid congestion, which is one of the primary reasons employees want to work from home. However, findings show that employees also want to work from home to save money on commuting, spend more time with friends and family, or provide care to children and family members; both the latter are reasons that few employers mentioned. Results also show that while commuting to work is down across all modes of transportation since disruptions brought on by COVID-19, it's had a greater proportional impact on public transportation than on driving.

Mr. Pullis then introduced Mr. Rahman Mokhlesur, a travel demand modeler at BMC, to provide an explanation of the data analysis process and how Baltimore area employees sampled in

the survey were further segmented into seven distinct groups. In this analysis, it was one of the BMC objectives to understand the current market structure ,where the respondents live and work, what portion of the society they represent, how they behave, and think how they perceive and use different modes of transportation. Mr. Mokhlesur then explained that a cluster analysis was implemented to achieve these obecjtives; Cluster analysis is a tool by which we can identify the pattern by grouping individual into different groups. Grouping was done based on the similarities and dissimilarities of different characteristics of the respondent. It was explained to the group that of the 157 variables included in the survey, 21 were used for cluster analysis across six distinct factor groups, shown in Table A below. Mr. Mokhlesur concluded his explanation by noting that following the initial segmentation, a K-means algorithm was used to group the respondent into seven final groups, all clustered with associated individuals; Mr. Mohklesur then returned the presentation to Mr. Kevin Pullis.

Table A: 21 Variables Used in Factor Analysis for Clustering

Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Factor4	Factor5	Factor6
Flexibility at work	Work from home	Ideal work environment	Full-time employment	Low level of education	Low income household
Control on work situation	Flexible hybrid schedule	Travel to physical location	Duration of work hour	Work type	Single family house
WFH situation		Remote work option		Office and technology	Auto travel
Flexible work schedule					Young adult
Resources and accommodations					Race/Ethnicity
Work schedule					

At this time, Mr. Pullis presented further on each of the seven segmented groups: Comfortably Remote Proffessionals, Frustrated Flex Seekers, Resilient Essential Workers, Grounded Workplace Leaders, Flexible Free Spirits, Hybrid Harmony Achievers, and Restless Job Seekers. The presentation moved on to providing a breakdown of each groups representation within the surveyed population; Chart 1 is included below for reference, with additional detail given at length to each segmented group in the presentation linked below. Following a detailed presentation on each group, Mr. Pullis acknowledged this presentation as a high-level overview of a larger project with more to be covered in the second planned presentation and a final report to be made available for review. At this time the presentation ended and the floor was opened to questions.

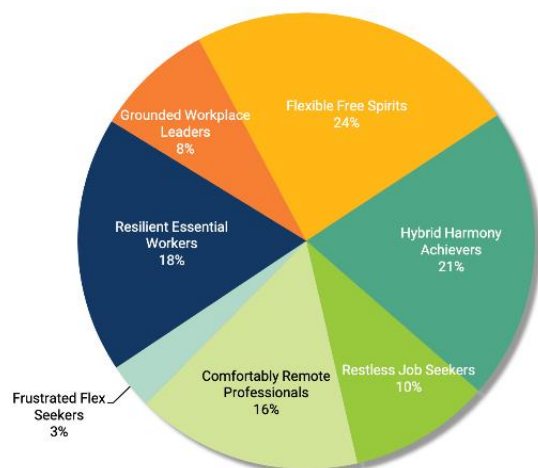


Chart 1: Segmentation of Workers by Factor Analysis

[PowerPoint: Post-Pandemic Trends – Phase 1 Survey Results]

5. UPWP UPDATES

Mr. Todd Lang, BMC, introduced a presentation on the Transportation Planning Budget, federally known as the Unified Plannin Work Program (UPWP). This process is undergone every two years, with this round focusing on fiscals years (FY) 2026 and 2027, with an initial focus placed on FY 2026. As a reminder, Mr. Lang noted that funding allocated to the MPO is 80% federally funded through the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, with match funding provided by the Maryland Department of Transportation and dues from local jurisdictions to BMC.

For FY 2026, an estimated \$10.8 million is available for the annual work program. Of this amount, approximately \$7.1 million (two-thirds of the funding) is allocated to BMC staff to meet federal metropolitan planning requirements. The remaining funds will support consultants, local projects, and regional priorities.

Several proposed focus areas for FY 2026 were outlined. These include setting aside funding to work with the new MDOT prioritization process, which will support feasibility studies for local jurisdictions submitting projects for prioritization. A study on crash data analytics and telematics providers was also proposed to improve regional crash data analysis, with input from local jurisdictions, police departments, and other stakeholders. Additionally, updates to the freight model and a statewide household travel survey were recommended to reflect post-pandemic travel patterns, as the last survey was conducted in 2018-2019.

The presentation highlighted the continuation of partnerships with the Transportation Association of Maryland (TAM) to develop workforce skills and training support. Funding was also proposed for advancing the Patapsco Regional Greenway project, specifically the Carroll County segment, including the Henryton Road bridge. A regional transit partner survey was identified as a priority to improve coordination with private and nonprofit transit providers, such as college town shuttles and other services.

Other focus areas included a state of the region benchmarking initiative to compare the region's demographics, economics, and transportation metrics with other regions. The transportation land use connection grant program was proposed to continue, as it has supported successful local projects. Funding was also set aside for the AMPO Transportation Planning Institute, an online training program that will expand to include additional courses for staff development.

Mr. Lang emphasized the need for training programs to help local jurisdictions navigate federal funding processes, particularly for new staff and discretionary grants. Building on the success of the Bikeable Baltimore Region project, funding was proposed to update local bicycle plans and ensure alignment with the regional plan.

In total, approximately \$2.5 million is proposed for consultant-led activities in the FY 2026 work program. The schedule for approval includes seeking consensus from the Technical Committee on February 4 to release the draft UPWP for a 30-day public review. Public comments will be accepted until March 9, with a presentation of comments to the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB) at the March meeting. Final approval is expected at the joint elected official meeting on April 25, followed by federal approval of contracts by July 1 to ensure funding availability.

Mr. Lang concluded by inviting questions from the committee and seeking consensus to release the draft UPWP for public review.

[PowerPoint: Draft 2026-2027 UPWP]

6. OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be in person on March 4, 2025. There was no other business. A motion to close the meeting at 11:18 was made by Mr. Cohoon with a second from Mr. Kwaku Duah.

CLOSED SESSION

Ms. Daniel asked for a motion to open the closed session. Mr. David Cookson made a motion which Mr. Duah seconded. The Technical Committee began the closed session at 11:19 A.M. to discuss upcoming Requests for Proposals.

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Scoring Methodology:** Ms. Charlene Mingus discussed the key tasks associated with developing a methodology for scoring bicycle and pedestrian projects for the LRTP. Tasks, budget and timeline were discussed with members.
- **Transportation and Land Use Connections Competitive Grant Program:** Ms. Regina Aris provided an overview of the proposed RFQ for the Transportation and Land Use Connection grant program. The RFQ seeks to identify one or more teams to serve on-call for local applicants that are awarded grants. The application process will be reviewed with the Technical Committee once the RFQ solicitation is underway.

The Technical Committee unanimously approved BMC to move forward with the release of the two tasks as funds are available.

Ms. Daniel asked for a motion to end the closed session. Mr. Kahl made a motion which Mr. Stu Sirota seconded. The Technical Committee ended the closed session at 11:25 A.M.

ATTENDANCE

Members

Ben Allen – MDOT State Highway Administration
Steve Cohoon – Queen Anne’s County Department of Public Works
David Cookson – Howard County Office of Transportation
Angelica Daniel – Baltimore County Department of Public Works & Transportation
Kwaku Duah – Annapolis Department of Transportation
Albert Guiney Engel – MDOT Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA)
Sam Kahl – Harford County Department of Public Works
Shawn Kiernan (for Dan Janousek) – Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Tiffany Fossett (for Clare Stewart) – Carroll County Department of Planning
Catherine Salarano – Maryland Department of the Environment
Stu Sirota – Baltimore City Department of Transportation
Brian Ulrich – Anne Arundel County Office of Transportation (OOT)

Staff and Guests

Geoff Anderson - MDOT
Regina Aris - Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Charles Baber - BMC
Emma Balsam - ICF
Monica Haines Benkhedda - BMC
Erin Bolton - BMC
Tim Briggs - BMC
Cindy Burch - BMC
Rebecca Deibel - BMC
Ndemazea Fonkem - BMC
Walker Freer - ICF
Matt Hancock - BMC
Tavon Hawkins – MDOT SHA
Victor Henry - BMC
Zach Kaufman - BMC
Todd Lang – BMC
Noah Levine - ICF
Anna Marshall - BMC
Charlene Mingus – BMC
Jordan Mueller – MDOT SHA
Kevin Pullis - WBA
Md. Mokhlesur Rahman - BMC

David Roden - AECOM
Eileen Singleton – BMC
Marium Sultan – BMC
Hannah Twaddell - ICF