

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002-4290 (202) 962-3310 Fax: (202) 962-3202 TDD: (202) 962-3213

Meeting Summary

FREIGHT SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: February 2, 2012

TIME: 1:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Room 3

CHAIR: Eulois Cleckley, Manager of Statewide and Regional Planning/Freight Planning, District Department of Transportation

ATTENDANCE:

Bala Akundi, Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Ron Burns, Frederick County
Amber Carran-Fletcher, District Department of Transportation
Eulois Cleckley, District of Columbia Department of Transportation
Ed Daniel, Montgomery Police
Tom Farley, URS
Adam Greenstein, MDOT Office of Freight and Multimodalism
Christine Hoeffner, VRE
Quintin Kendall, CSX
Keith Kucharek, MD State Highway Administration
Cameron Millard, Cambridge Systematics
William Schaeffer, Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance
Janie Tiedeman, URS
Victor Weissberg, Prince George's County

CALL-IN ATTENDANCE:

Lyn Erickson, Maryland Department of Transportation

MWCOG STAFF ATTENDANCE:

Karin Foster, MWCOG
Ron Kirby, MWCOG
Andrew Meese, MWCOG
Rich Roisman, MWCOG

Eulois Cleckley, Freight Subcommittee Chairman

Mr. Cleckley opened the meeting and introduced himself. After a round of introductions, Mr. Cleckley asked for comment on the November 11, 2011 Freight Subcommittee meeting summary. No comment was made and the summary was finalized.

Karin Foster, MWCOG/TPB Freight Program Staff

Ms. Foster recognized Eulois Cleckley as the Statewide and Regional Planner as well as Freight Program Manager for the District Department of Transportation Office of Planning. She thanked him for taking on the role as Chairman of the TPB Freight Subcommittee.

Chairman Eulois Cleckley, Recognize Victor Weissberg for his service as Chairman to the TPB Freight Subcommittee

Mr. Cleckley recognized Victor Weissberg for his service as Chairman to the TPB Freight Subcommittee over the last three years. Ron Kirby also thanked Mr. Weissberg for the important role he has played during the initial years of the TPB Freight Subcommittee and as a liaison to the TPB. Ms. Foster and Mr. Meese also expressed gratitude to Mr. Weissberg for his service. A certificate signed by TPB Chairwoman Muriel Bowser was presented to Mr. Weissberg by Mr. Cleckley.

Bala Akundi, Port of Baltimore Rail Served Properties Inventory and Opportunities Analysis Study

Mr. Akundi spoke to a PowerPoint slide presentation. The Port of Baltimore Rail Served Properties Inventory and Opportunities Analysis Study objective was to identify and evaluate rail-served properties around the Port of Baltimore in order to understand rail utilization and capacity opportunities.

Stakeholders included the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, Baltimore Development Corporation, Maryland Department of Transportation, Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, Maryland Port Administration, Baltimore City Department of Transportation, and the railroads (P&BR, Canton Railroad, Norfolk Southern, and CSX Transportation).

The project study area was limited to properties within the Maritime Industrial Zone Overlay District (MIZOD), Foreign Trade Zones, Enterprise Zones, and Port Locations. The database compiled as part of this study contained information attributes including property ID, address, name of property owner, acreage, and rail provider. Each railroad serves different users roughly grouped under manufacturing, intermodal, and warehousing distribution.

The Industrial Market Opportunities Analysis was another component of the study with the goal to understand industrial market demand to rail access. With increasing goods movement to the Port of Baltimore and investments to enhance Baltimore's competitiveness related to the Panama Canal expansion, the Opportunities Analysis found that rail-served industrial properties are a unique resource that needs to be preserved. Rail access offers opportunities for warehouse distribution centers to take advantage of rail and water access. Rail access is likely to become more important in the future as transportation costs rise over the long term.

Mr. Akundi noted the Project Deliverables:

1. Geospatial Database and Technical Memorandum
2. Opportunities Analysis Report
3. Web site
4. Preliminary Report with rail-served properties and key data

The projects time and scope did not allow for in-depth research of the properties. Mr. Akundi described the next steps for this project:

1. Maintenance: Data needs to be updated on a periodic basis
2. Web Site: The web site is currently temporary
3. Opportunities Analysis: Share data/report with economic development staff at state/local level
4. Form a project working group
5. Identify agency/staff lead for next phase
6. Identify/secure funding for updates, maintenance, marketing

Questions and Comments:

Rich Roisman, MWCOG/TPB staff, asked how the project overcame the legal challenges of listing the source of the data. Mr. Akundi noted the project team and MDOT in particular have been cautious but they believe they will be able to overcome legal challenges.

Ron Kirby, Director of Transportation and MWCOG/Department of Transportation, asked if the rail inventory database consisted of sidings, connecting to the railroad. Mr. Akundi and Rick Crawford, Norfolk Southern, confirmed that yes the database includes consists largely of sidings to provide access to the railroad.

Ms. Foster asked if Norfolk Southern or CSX, the Class 1 railroads, serve many “local” customers in Baltimore. Do they make the stops for a relatively small load? Quintin Kendall of CSX Transportation described the importance of the frequency volume/commodity/length of haul. He also noted that the railroad has regional development employees working to secure these kinds of customers. Mr. Kendall added that many states have Rail Industrial Development funds. For example, Virginia appropriates two to three million a year for rail industrial development. Local governments can apply to the state and the state weighs the merit of an investment with a 70 percent public 30 percent private funding. Mr. Crawford added that Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Ohio have seen an explosion of these types of growth programs. Maryland has no such program.

Andrew Meese, MWCOG/TPB staff, asked what kind of effect the Panama Canal is expected to have on the Port of Baltimore. What forecasts/studies have been done? Mr. Crawford described the Port of Baltimore as a niche market with not a lot of containers at present. It is also the only port east of the Mississippi without double-stack clearance. Cameron Millard, Cambridge Systematics, noted a study that had been done by Canadians on Panama’s Canal.

Keith Kucharek, MD State Highway Administration and Janie Tiedeman, URS Maryland State Highway Administration/Maryland Transportation Authority Freight Implementation Plan

Mr. Kucharek introduced the SHA/MDTA Freight Implementation Plan that is currently underway. Ms. Tiedemann spoke to a PowerPoint and described the Plan. The Plan addresses freight challenges related to trucks that use the highway system, both existing and future, and how those challenges can be addressed.

The Plan builds upon previous efforts by MDOT and other agencies. Through data collection the objective is to understand existing and projected freight demand on the network. With this information the Plan will identify a range of freight transportation needs and a short-term list and long-term list of projects.

Stakeholder outreach included transportation agencies, law enforcement, trucking industry representatives, logistics managers, truck stop owners, maintenance and operations staff, regulators, and technology experts. A survey of transportation agencies and a survey of freight haulers were conducted. Freight haulers concerns were:

- (1) Geometric constraints at ramp termini and other locations;
- (2) Additional virtual weigh stations and e-screening facilities needed;
- (3) Truckers do not always have the most up-to-date GPS data;
- (4) Increase in the number of certified commercial vehicle inspectors;
- (5) Need for safer places for trucks to pull off for enforcement activities;
- (6) Need more designated truck lanes;
- (7) Traffic calming measures, roundabouts, and tree-lined boulevards difficult for trucks;
- (8) Lengthen ramps at weigh stations;
- (9) Hours of Service;
- (10) Federal tractor-trailer size and weight regulations;
- (11) Lack of overnight parking;
- (12) Trucks parked on shoulders and ramps unsafe and damaging to roadway;
- (13) Partner with hotels, commercial retail center, and industrial complexes to allow truck parking;
- (14) Encourage shippers/receivers to provide additional off-hour truck parking; and
- (15) Partner with GPS providers and truck stops to provide drivers with information on available truck parking.

A stakeholder workshop was also held. Issues discussed include congestion and delay for trucks, truck crashes and safety, and geometric road deficiencies that inhibit safe truck movement.

The Plan process was to first identify freight “hot spots” and next identify projects to address these hotspots. Projects were screened to determine which ones are feasible and could be included in a short-term or long-term plan. Based upon a weighting criteria developed by the transportation agencies, number of crashes, roadway geometrics, and volume of truck traffic were the top three weighted features. The database was queried using the weighted factors and each roadway segment was given a “score.” Ms. Tiedeman displayed maps depicting Hot Spots with high scores, medium scores, and low

scores. Solutions were developed and grouped as short-term projects, spot-safety improvements, break-out projects from ongoing studies, and long-term projects.

The remaining steps in the study are to identify short-term improvement roadway projects and develop preliminary cost estimates. Additionally, the truck parking inventory needs to be updated, trucking expansion concepts and cost estimates need to be developed, and the short-term and long-term implementation plans need to be drafted to develop a freight planning process that MDTA and SHA can use for future projects.

Questions and Comments:

Cameron Millard, Cambridge Systematics, asked if the stakeholders were geographically distributed throughout the state. Ms. Tiedeman responded that stakeholders were from all over the state.

Victor Weissberg, Prince George's County, asked if the criteria used for weighting could be queried for crashes by time of day, injury, or death. Ms. Tiedeman responded yes, the information is generated from the crash reports.

Andrew Meese asked about the Highway Needs Inventory in Maryland. Mr. Kucharek replied that the document is mandated and updated every three years. It is the MD SHA's long-range wish list.

Karin Foster, Freight Program Updates—

Ms. Foster shared some highlights from the Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting freight sessions, such as the logistics effort underway to prepare for the London Summer 2012 Olympics.

Ms. Foster updated the Committee on the freight language in the latest House and Senate transportation authorization bills. The House bill calls for the development of a five-year National Freight policy. The Senate Bill includes a new National Freight Network Program to provide \$2 billion for FY 2012 and FY 2013 with the money being distributed through formula funding to the states for infrastructure improvements that strengthen our freight network.

Ms. Foster announced an upcoming Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals Truck Hours of Service and Safety Panel on February 15, 2012.

Roundtable Updates—

Ron Burns, Frederick County, commented on the importance of local government coordination with the GPS applications, such as Navtec, that truck driver's use. For example, near the Costco Warehouse in Frederick County, truck drivers following GPS were directed onto a road that had a six inch clearance problem for trucks. Several trucks have gotten stuck. Despite the signage on the road, trucks continue to get stuck.

Mr. Crawford described some projects under construction, including the intermodal facilities at Harrisburg, Rutherford Crescent Corridor, Birmingham, and Memphis. Additionally, a project in the TPB region is the at-grade crossing at Gainesville Route 29. The time frame for this project is one year.

Mr. Kendal noted that the Virginia Avenue Tunnel NEPA process was underway. Public meetings have been held and information can be found on the web site <http://www.virginiaavenuetunnel.com/>

Christine Hoeffner, Virginia Railway Express, noted a record high VRE on-time performance. The VRE fleet has all new locomotives. Rail infrastructure improvements have been made. Mr. Hoeffner also noted the retirement of the VRE CEO Dale Zehner. Mr. Crawford added that Norfolk Southern has been happy with the joint service with VRE and investments have been made in new track and crossovers.

Next Meeting March 8, 2012

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