

# STATE FREIGHT ADVISORY COMMITTEE



## State Freight Advisory Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday, April 6, 2022 | Time: 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

### Attendees

Bala Akundi (BMC)	Kwame Arhin (FHWA)	Cathrin Banks (The Maryland and Delaware Railroad)
Daniel Blevins (WIMPACO)	Debbie Bowden (Caroline County Economic Development)	Summer Bowman (FMCSA)
Mark Chambers (Perdue Agri Business Incorporated)	William Cawthern (Baltimore Development Corporation)	Ben Cohen (Calvert/St. Mary's MPO)
Philp Dacey (MDOT MVA)	Lindsay Donellon (FHWA)	Benjamin Fischer (FHWA)
Adam Genn (Weller Development)	David Greene (MDTA)	Michele Gross (MDOT MVA)
Meredith Hill (MDOT SHA)	Jeffrey Hirsch (MDOT TSO)	José Holguín-Veras (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute)
Gladys Hurwitz (MDOT TSO)	Tiffany Julien (FHWA)	Nicole Katsikides (TTI/MDOT)
Robert King (FMCSA)	Kyle Leggs (Baltimore City)	Laura MacNeil (DCDOT)
John Magness (Canton Railroad)	Subrat Mahapatra (MDOT SHA)	L'Kiesha Markley (MDOT SHA)
Michelle Martin (MDOT TSO)	Parto Mazdeyasni (MDOT MPA)	Catherine McGee (VDOT)
Roxane Mukai (MDTA)	Matt Mullenax (Hagerstown/E. Panhandle MPO)	Christopher Parris (MDTA)
Marc Petrequin (APG)	Chad Reese (WRA for MDOT)	Laura Richards (CS for MDOT)
Kathy Robertson (MDOT MTA)	Harry Romano (MDOT TSO RIF)	Jon Schermann (MWCOG)
Nanette Schieke (MDOT MVA)	Andrew Shrock	Dominic Scurti (MDOT MPA)

Chris Smith (Specialized Carrier and Rigging Association)	Kipp Snow (Community College of Baltimore County)	John "JT" Thomas (MDOT TSO RIF)
Jacqueline Thorne (MDOT TSO RIF)	Aaron Tomarchio (Baltimore City County)	Joan Ward (APG)
Brandon Wilcox (FHWA)	Bihui Xu (MDP)	

## Welcome

### Jeffrey Hirsch, MDOT Assistant Secretary, Office of Transportation Policy Analysis & Planning

Jeffrey Hirsch welcomed everyone.

He introduced John "JT" Thomas, the new Assistant Director for Planning & Capital Programming in the MDOT Secretary's Office. In this role, he will be responsible for leading the Rail and Intermodal Freight Team. JT joins MDOT with 15 years of transportation planning, programming, regional coordination, and design experience with Local and State Government in Maryland and Virginia.

Jeff Hirsch also welcomed three new members to the State Freight Advisory Committee (SFAC)

- Rudy Husband, Norfolk Southern
- Will Cawthern, Baltimore Development Corporation
- Courtney Jenkins, Calvert-St. Mary's Metropolitan Planning Organization

He provided updates since the last meeting in September 2021:

Last year, Maryland saw legislative advances facilitating utilization of innovative technologies in Maryland, including SB 291 of the 2021 legislative session to allow truck platooning using a unified electronic platform between the trucks, and SB 726 of the 2021 legislative session, allowing operation of personal delivery device (PDD) bots on roadways, sidewalks, bike trails, and crosswalks in the state.

Since the bills' passing, MDOT MVA has advanced both initiatives, developing a PDD process for companies to apply by submitting their operational and emergency response plans, and a similar process for platoon operators to submit their operational plans for deploying this technology in Maryland. Moving forward, Maryland is already talking with industry and stakeholders on use cases to allow platoons with more than two trucks, to include other vehicles, such as buses, and platoons with a human driver in the lead vehicle only and the following vehicle "driven" by the technology.

The Port of Baltimore has been able to capitalize on the delays and overcrowding of West Coast ports, hosting two dozen unscheduled container ships, termed an Ad Hoc port call. In October, two new shipping lines announced they will be landing at the Port. More recently, ZimShipping announced it will begin calls at the Port of Baltimore, bringing e-commerce from China and Asia to the East Coast. With the 50-foot water depth required by the biggest container ships and four massive new cranes, the Port can manage higher cargo volume than ever before. This increase in goods arriving at the Port of Baltimore has further increased the demand for truck drivers, tying into one of our conversations for today: workforce development.

Maryland officially broke ground on the 126-year-old Howard Street Tunnel. The expansion of the Howard Street Tunnel will complement the additional goods movement from the Port, allowing double-stacked containers to travel by train to and from the Port. It resolves a bottleneck and will boost business at the Port by 160,000 containers each year. The project is a partnership between the state, federal government, and CSX with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation contributing as well by improving clearance of ten bridges between Baltimore and Philadelphia. At this point, double-stacked service is expected to begin in 2024.

## State of the Practice

### Freight-Efficient Land Uses | Jose Holguin-Veras | Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

José Holguín-Veras is the William H. Hart Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and the Director of the Center for Infrastructure, Transportation, and the Environment. Dr. Holguin-Veras's research emphasizes the integration of state-of-the-art economic principles into transportation modeling, so that a complete picture could be developed on the broader impacts of transportation activity on the economy and the environment; and the study of the behavior of the participating agencies to support sustainable policies. His influential research has led to substantial improvements in the ability to model and induce changes in the behavior of the freight industry.

He presented on the importance of land use and freight merged as a policy. He cited examples of the Port of New York and New Jersey, whereby cargo used to move from Manhattan but has migrated to New Jersey but still needs to move to New York City, Long Island, and points north. He stressed the need for compact supply chains to minimize negative externalities and improve efficiencies. His team has [developed a tool](#) to evaluate freight-efficient land uses (FELUs) and output results based on topics and policies. He cited Paris as an example city that has concentrated freight activity to the north of the city center.

### Economic and Workforce Development | Debbie Bowden | Caroline County Economic Development

Debbie Bowden is Director of Economic Development for Caroline County. Prior to joining the County, Ms. Bowden worked as a regional representative with the Maryland Department of Commerce after serving as the freight and economic policy analyst for the Maryland Department of Transportation. Her time in public service follows 20 years in the private sector owning and operating small businesses. Ms. Bowden sits on the boards of the non-profit Maryland Rural Development Corporation, Adkins Arboretum, the Chamber of Commerce, and is a member of the Maryland Economic Development Association.

Ms. Bowden delivered background information on Caroline County. It is a rural community on the Eastern Shore, with a population of more than 32,000, bordered with Delaware. The perspective of the county is bistate, looking at issues from a Delmarva [Delaware, Maryland, Virginia] lens. In terms of employment generators, the following three industries top the list:

- Farming intensive
- Amenities and services (central, Denton, county seat)
- Logistics and freight

For the transportation network, available assets include:

- State highways and county roads
- Active Short line Railroad
- Airport

In terms of workforce transportation, Bowden indicated that the focus is on developing the whole picture for worker access. Relevant concerns in Caroline County include:

- The primary mode of transportation is single-occupancy vehicles (SOVs). Carpooling may be an option for people who work at the same site, but employees are working in large sites (warehouses, poultry processing) and they are geographically sprawling.
- There is a need for truck drivers and people are too busy to get their commercial driver's license (CDL). One of the barriers has been the expense of training. Through the workforce investment board, the county is offering grants to folks wanting to get a CDL.
- Workforce development is an economic development issue and transit, along with hours of operation, can be an issue.
- Business sentiment survey: <https://www.carolinebusiness.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Eastern-Shore-Business-Sentiment-Survey-Summary-Report-1.pdf>

### **Freight Poll | Laura Richards | Cambridge Systematics**

Open question: What is the freight land use or workforce program, project, or initiative you would most like to see advanced?

Responses included the following:

- More truck parking
- Training programs in logistics
- Preservation of industrial land along rail corridors
- Develop more education opportunities to train commercial drivers focused on those groups like veterans and other underserved groups
- Workforce development: Educating professionals with the academic and career pathway options available for related employment. Aligning with local workforce training educational partners and community college to support academic and training options
- CDL training for remote operators
- Minority/women focused freight workforce development and outreach
- Hubs for transfer of loads between long-haul automated vehicles and local deliveries
- Targeted outreach to jurisdictions on freight efficient land use and economic development

## **FHWA Update**

### **Federal Highway Administration Update | Tiffany Julien and Brandon Wilcox | Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)**

Tiffany Julien joined the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Freight Management and Operations in 2013. As a Transportation Specialist assigned to the Office of Freight Management and Operations, Tiffany supports the development and delivery of freight-related programs and initiatives. This includes working closely with the public sector at all levels of government and the affected industry sectors to conceptualize and implement freight transportation programs and initiatives. She also supports efforts to build consensus on implementation of border wait-time measurement systems at mutually determined high priority U.S. – Canada and U.S. – Mexico border crossings. Tiffany is also the English-Speaking Secretary for the World Road Association/PIARC's Freight Technical Committee 2.3.

Brandon Wilcox joined the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Freight Management and Operations in April 2020. His responsibilities include management of the Infrastructure For Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program and the National Highway Freight Program (NHFP). Prior to joining FHWA headquarters, he worked as a Community Planner for the FHWA Massachusetts Division where he was directly involved in the development and adoption of the Massachusetts State Freight Plan.

Together, they discussed the following developments:

- **Freight Provisions of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)**
  - There is now an Office of Multimodal Freight Infrastructure and Policy. This office is led by the new Assistant Secretary for Multimodal Freight. The office will administer the INFRA, RAISE and new discretionary grant programs.
  - The National Strategic Plan has new elements related to impacts of freight movement on environment and rural, underserved and historically disadvantaged communities, resilience, decarbonization, and economic growth.
  - State Freight Plans have new requirements in categories such as e-commerce, supply chains, ports, military installations, climate and resiliency, etc.
  - State Freight Advisory Committees: IIJA/BIL expands the list of organizational perspectives to be represented on a state freight advisory committee and establishes qualifications for advisory committee members.
- **Changes to National Highway Freight Program**
  - States may use 30% or more (vs. 10% under current law) of NHFP funding on freight intermodal or freight rail projects, subject to certain restrictions.
  - Locks and dams and marine highway corridors are added to eligibility if they are functionally connected to the National Highway Freight Network and likely to reduce on-road mobile source emissions.
  - More miles were added to critical freight corridors.
- **Truck Size and Weight Provisions**
  - These apply to Kentucky, North Carolina, and Oklahoma.
- **Local and Regional Project Assistance Program**
  - This new discretionary program provides \$7.5 billion for FFY 2022-2026 to projects with a significant local or regional impact that improve transportation infrastructure.
- **Changes to the Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight & Highway Projects (INFRA) Program**
  - Adds eligibility to multistate corridor organizations such as [The Eastern Transportation Coalition \(TETC\)](#) and the [I-81 Corridor Coalition](#); Maryland is a member of both organizations.
  - Also adds eligibility to marine highways, wildlife crossing projects, and highway, bridge, or freight projects on the National Multimodal Freight Network.
- **Rural Surface Transportation Grants**
  - This new discretionary program provides \$2 billion FFY 2022-2026 to improve and expand the surface transportation infrastructure in rural areas to increase connectivity, improve the safety and reliability of the movement of people and freight, and generate regional economic growth and improve quality of life.
- **National Infrastructure Project Assistance Program (aka “Mega” grants)**
  - This new program provides \$5 billion in discretionary grant funding from federal fiscal year (FFY) 2022-2026. IT sets aside 50 percent of grant funding for projects costing more than \$100 million but less than \$500 million, and 50% for projects costing \$500 million or more.
- **Reduction of Truck Emissions at Port Facilities Program**
  - This is a pilot program that provides \$400 million from FFY 2022-2026. Grants are intended to test, evaluate, and deploy projects that reduce port-related emissions. More information on eligibility is forthcoming.

- **Changes to Railway-Highway Crossings Program**

- Increases the maximum incentive payment that a State may pay a local government for closing a public at-grade railway-highway crossing from \$7,500 to \$100,000 (subject to certain conditions). Increases Federal share from 90 percent to 100 percent.

- **Changes to the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)**

- For freight, added eligibility includes modernization or rehabilitation of a lock and dam or marine highway corridor, connector, or crossing (10 percent or less of CMAQ funds can be used for this).
- Requires, to the maximum extent practicable, prioritizing disadvantaged communities or low-income populations when obligating funds to reduce particulate matter (PM) 2.5 emissions.

### **Bipartisan Infrastructure Law | Robert King | Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration**

Robert King is the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Maryland Division Administrator. With over 28 years of Highway Transportation experience in the Federal, State and Private sectors, he has held positions as a Dispatcher, Risk Manager, CMV Inspector, Safety Investigator, and Highway Safety Specialist. He has served on multiple FMCSA teams and workgroups to include Electronic Logging Devices (ELD), FMCSA NTC Associate Instructor and developing numerous policies and training curriculum. He is an US Army combat veteran and earned his degree from the University of Baltimore.

Mr. King discussed the changes to FMCSA grants and priorities based on the BIL enacted Nov. 15, which provides the agency more than \$3.2 billion in resources over five years. Other changes include the following:

- Formula grant funding provided through Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP) increases by approximately 61% .
- Discretionary funding increased by approximately 90%.
- BIL provides supplemental grant and general operating expense funds.
- Agency's staff increasing significantly, with 134 new Safety Investigators being hired.

Special initiatives include the following:

- Human trafficking is a priority for the commercial vehicle (CMV) grant program. It is incorporated in FMCSA outreach programs, and FMCSA must report to Congress on human trafficking violations involving CMVs.
- Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee (MCSAC). BIL revises the MCSAC to include small business motor carriers and extends the committee through September 2025.
- Promoting Women in Trucking Task Force
  - Establishes the Women of Trucking Advisory Board to explore trends and barriers that impact women minority groups, supporting training and employment opportunities for women in trucking, and to address safety risks unique to women in trucking.
  - 2 years for Board to submit report.
  - 3 years for FMCSA to submit report to Congress.
- Apprenticeship Pilot Program and Driver Compensation
  - Establishes the Women of Trucking Advisory Board to explore trends and barriers that impact women minority groups, supporting training and employment opportunities for women in trucking, and to address safety risks unique to women in trucking.
  - 2 years for Board to submit report
  - 3 years for FMCSA to submit report to Congress



## Maryland State Update

### Maryland State Freight Plan Update | Michelle D. Martin | Maryland Department of Transportation and Chad Reese | WRA

Michelle Martin has been with MDOT for more than 27 years, including working with the MDOT State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) before moving up the ranks from Transportation Planner to Deputy Director. She has been instrumental in MDOT programs, including our long-range transportation plans and our performance measurement reports, which requires communicating with all our units.

Chad Reese is an Associate with Whitman Requardt Associate's (WRA) Transportation Planning and Engineering group, he has been helping to lead the consultant team of WRA, Jacobs, and Remline in their role supporting MDOT's 2022 update to the Maryland State Freight Plan. Chad's 25 years of experience began with the North Carolina DOT before moving to the consultant side, including 18 years with WRA. Beyond Maryland, he has worked on state and regional freight plans in Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Hampshire, as well as a variety of other planning and engineering projects throughout the Mid-Atlantic.

Ms. Martin and Mr. Reese covered the following elements of the plan status:

- Freight Plan Overview
- Outreach highlights, which include the SFAC, as well as public opinion surveys.
- 11 Freight Focus Areas have been outlined in Maryland for the draft State Freight Plan:
  - Safety/Security
  - Technology and Operations
  - Asset Management
  - Congestion
  - Truck Parking
  - Supply Chains
  - Ports
  - Multistate Coordination
  - E-Commerce
  - Military Freight
  - Resilience and Environmental
- Implementation Plan
  - This includes integration of Maryland's freight background, stakeholder coordination, and the freight focus areas to identify freight projects, strategies, and prioritization.
- Plan Completion Schedule
  - MDOT is currently in the final draft plan compilation. Reviews by MDOT, SFAC and the public, as well as the Federal review will be forthcoming this spring and summer. The final plan is expected in late fall 2022.

### Maryland State Rail Plan Update | Harry Romano | Maryland Department of Transportation

3:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Harry Romano is the Rail Program and Policy Manager in the MDOT Office of Planning and Capital Programming Rail and Intermodal Freight (RIF) team. He manages the state-owned freight rail program, budget, and operating agreements, and the update to the State Rail Plan. Harry previously worked as a Project Planner for the MDOT

Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA), where he managed preliminary engineering and NEPA requirements for capital projects, feasibility studies, and contracts.

Mr. Romano discussed the State Rail Plan's background, outreach efforts, Vision & Goals, as well as an overview of the plan and next steps. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) offers an added opportunity for the plan to inform decisions on applying for discretionary grant opportunities.

The next steps in the process include the following:

- Work with partners to advance projects and initiatives, such as on the Northeast Corridor, improved access to the Port of Baltimore, and rail corridor preservation.
- Identify priorities for grade crossing safety improvements, and strategies for preventing trespassing.
- Assess potential revisions to state rail programs and oversight, including consolidation of state rail functions, multi agency program to assist short line railroads.
- Continue discussions and studies regarding the potential extension of MARC into Northern Delaware and/or Northern Virginia.
- Continue to monitor and explore opportunities for innovative rail technologies.

The draft plan completion is expected in the spring or summer of 2022 with the final plan anticipated in late fall of 2022.

## Closing

### Polls on Future Meetings | Laura Richards | Cambridge Systematics

Laura Richards asked members to weigh in on the focus for the next SFAC meeting. Responses included:

- Updates from MDOT MPA and port tenant partners
- Plans to implement climate change resilience policies and projects
- Updates from The MDDE RR on partnership with Purdue
- Maryland-specific guidance (laws/planning framework) and resources for local planners and jurisdictions
- Truck parking partnerships or ideas for pilots
- Freight related legislative updates/discussion
- Truck EV updates
- The Hitachi Rail Project in Hagerstown
- Major feedback on the Freight Plan and Rail Plan
- How can federal and state agencies help to facilitate funding for private industry rail projects

The next poll asked members what types of activities or actions would keep them engaged. Responses, in order of interest, included the following (5 is the highest attainable score):

- Identify emerging trends, issues, and potential solutions (4.2)
- Participate in site visits or freight infrastructure/projects around Maryland (3.1)
- Support /participate in an annual statewide freight conference (2.8)
- Review/guide freight studies/plans (2.6)
- Hold listening sessions, engaging local shippers around the state (2.5)
- Advocate for freight mobility policies, plans, and programs (2.3)
- Serve as a freight representative on other MDOT committees (1.9)
- Testify at the Legislature and in front of other elected bodies (1.3)



**Jeff Hirsch | MDOT Assistant Secretary | MDOT Assistant Secretary, Office of Transportation Policy Analysis & Planning**

Jeff Hirsch thanked everyone for attending.

***End Meeting***

***Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 5, 2022 | 2:00 p.m.***