

STATE FREIGHT ADVISORY COMMITTEE



State Freight Advisory Committee Meeting

Date: Wednesday, April 5, 2023 | Time: 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Attendees

Eric Almquist, RK&K for MDTA	Clay Barnes, CS for MDOT	Stacey Beckett, MDOT OPCP
Daniel Blevins, WILMAPCO	Melissa Bogdan, MDTA	Summer Bowman, FMCSA
Louis Campion, Maryland Motor Truck Association	Youngmin Choi, SHA	Jeff Cleland, Amazon
Grace Donovan, Calladium Group, Amtrak	Florence Dwyer, DDOT	Ali Faddis, Amazon Global AIR
Jeff Gerlach, Amtrak	Michele Gross, MVA	Chuck Heinze, Tradepoint Terminals
Jason Hoover, Amtrak	Tom Huesman, Terminal Corp.	Danelle Hunter, Amtrak
William Hwang, TTI for MDOT	Erik L. Johnson, VDOT	Nicole Katsikides, TTI for MDOT
Toria Lassiter, SHA	Kyle Leggs, Baltimore DOP	Alex Leslie, ATRI
John Magness, Canton Railroad	Parto Mazdeyasni, MPA	Peter Mazzeo, HNTB
Lydia E. McPherson, Norfolk Southern Railroad	Andrew Meese, MWCOG	Leslie Mesnick, Calladium Group
Denise Miller, Amtrak	Roxane Mukai, MDTA	Kevin Poad, HNTB
Kathy Robertson, MTA	Harry Romano, TTI for MDOT	John Rotz, SHA
Tina Sanders, SHA	Nanette Schieke, MVA	Dominic Scurti, MPA
Chris Smith, Specialized Carrier and Rigging Association	Jamie Snowden, MDOT MVA	John Thomas, MDOT TSO

Bihui Xu, MDP		
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Welcome

Welcome | John Thomas, Maryland Department of Transportation

John Thomas welcomed attendees and summarized the last meeting in October 2022. Previously covered topics included railroads, rail safety, an update on the Maryland freight and rail plans, women in trucking, airport cargo, and freight partnerships. Maryland has continued to make advances in the freight realm.

The I-695 Transportation System Management and Operations (TSMO) project and the MD 4 at Suitland Parkway Interchange Improvement projects are two of more than 20 major capital improvement projects considered for National Highway Freight Program (NHFP) funding. The TSMO project involves using shoulder and dynamic lane controls to create a new lane of traffic during peak hours for I-695 while the MD 4 project purpose is to construct a new diamond interchange to accommodate increased traffic volumes in the area. Speaking about highways and freight, Alex Leslie at the American Trucking Research Institute (ATRI) will share a trucking industry update with us today.

The Port has received more than \$15 million in funds from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to help build four new working rail tracks and two crane rail beams at the Seagirt Marine Terminal at Maryland's Port of Baltimore. This project will improve intermodal rail yard and compliment the work on the Howard Street Tunnel to allow double-stacked container trains. We will hear more about rail in the NE Corridor today from Jason Hoover at Amtrak.

The Port is also partnering with an intermodal logistics company, RoadOne, to provide drayage services using battery electric trucks from Nikola in a pilot program to move freight from the Port to the Ikea distribution center in Perryville, Maryland. The Port has expanded its cargo in and out of the Port with the introduction of the Mediterranean Shipping Company Santana service, which now will include port calls in Baltimore and Boston, as well as Da Chan Bay Port in China. Dominic Scurti is going to provide a more in-depth update about Port operations and capabilities with us today.

The State Freight Plan, State Rail Plan, and Rail Grade Crossing State Action Plan include strategies that MDOT is implementing towards improving motorist, truck, and rail safety statewide. Outreach and partnership with local jurisdictions on issues like truck parking are key to improving safety while supporting economic development and supply chain resiliency statewide. JT will provide an update on Maryland Freight and Rail plan implementation with us today.

BWI Marshall Thurgood Airport is the 25th busiest cargo airport out of both CY 2020 and CY 2021. With the opening of the new Midfield Cargo building in late 2019, BWI Marshall Airport became one of Amazon's top five busiest air cargo facilities in the nation (out of 35) and currently employs more than 1,200 people. We have Ali Faddis from Amazon here to share more about their air freight program.

There are several highway improvements on the way for the state that will support freight movement and reduce congestion. In April 2022, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision (FEIS/ROD) for the Chesapeake Bay Crossing Study marking the completion of the Tier 1 NEPA Study. In June 2022, the Bay Crossing Study Tier 2 NEPA Study began to relieve congestion for generations to come at the Bay Bridge and along its 22 miles of approach highways. We are going to hear more about the next steps for the Bay Bridge NEPA today.

State of the Practice

NE Corridor Projects and Updates | Jason Hoover, Amtrak; Peter Mazzeo and Kevin Poad, HNTB

Jason Hoover serves as Interim Project Manager for Amtrak's Susquehanna River Bridge Project. He is an Assistant Vice President for Amtrak's Major Bridge Programs, working within the Capital Delivery portfolio where he is responsible for delivering safe, on-time, and on-budget quality major bridge projects. Prior to Amtrak, Jason served in a variety of roles within the engineering and construction segments of the infrastructure industry. Jason

has been with Amtrak since 2022 and has been leading the Susquehanna River Bridge team as Interim Project Manager since that time.

Peter Mazzeo is the HNTB Project Manager for Amtrak's Susquehanna River Bridge Project. He is a Senior Project Manager with over 30 years of structural engineering experience, during which he has led a variety of bridge projects through preliminary, final, and post-design. His bridge-related experience includes the modern design of fixed and movable bridges, including multiple major river crossing. Peter has been with HNTB since 2005 and has been leading the Susquehanna River Bridge Design team since 2019.

Kevin Poad is the HNTB Deputy Project Manager for Amtrak's Susquehanna River Bridge Project, responsible for overseeing civil engineering, survey and right-of-way, utility design and coordination, and environmental planning and permitting disciplines. He has 14 years of experience in leading the design of transportation engineering projects. His project experience has ranged in scope from routine maintenance and rehabilitation work to city streetscape improvements, large-scale railroad and airport site infrastructure planning, development, and design. Kevin has been with HNTB since 2016 and has been leading the civil and environmental disciplines since that time.

They discussed the Amtrak Susquehanna River Rail Bridge Project, scope, status, and next steps. The project replaces 2-track bridges along a corridor between Baltimore and Wilmington Delaware. The bridge supports Amtrak (80-90 trains daily), MARC (12-14 trains daily), and Norfolk Southern (8-10 trains daily). The project benefits include improved reliability, passenger comfort, trip times, and frequency. It reduces operating and maintenance costs, highway congestion, and provides future increased capacity for both passenger and freight.

Next steps include the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) programmatic agreement requirements, public outreach on the [Amtrak website](#), early action procurement and construction, real estate activities, and final design.

Project schedule is in two phases: Phase 1 construction of the west Bridge beginning in 2025, with planned completion in 2030. Phase 2 would begin in 2031 with expected completion in 2036.

Amazon Air Cargo | Ali Faddis, Director, Amazon Global Air Safety and Operations

Ali Faddis is currently the director of Air Safety & Operations for Amazon Global Air, hired January 2022. Previously she spent 19 years with Horizon Air, the regional airline partner to Alaska Airlines. She started there as a full-time pilot in 2000 and moved into leadership in 2005. Throughout her time in leadership there she remained qualified as a Captain of the Bombardier Dash-8 400 first and then the Embraer 175/195. She held a variety of positions of the years, including System Chief Pilot and Director of Operations.

In 2019 she accepted the role of Vice President, Flight Operations for Insitu. Insitu is a Boeing subsidiary that designs, manufactures, and operates mid-size unmanned air vehicles for global Defense Operations. I oversaw training, safety, and flight operations. She is thrilled to be at Amazon and part of a historic combination of aviation and e-commerce, lives in Vancouver, WA and has two sons ages 19 and 16.

Faddis discussed the Amazon AIR network across the United States, Canada, and Europe. She emphasized that Amazon is not a certificated carrier; AIR uses multiple contract carriers to operate our aircraft to bring speed and selection to customers. Amazon will continue to rely on partners like DHL and UPS even as it builds its air network. About half the volume AIR carries is "tail inventory" that is sold by third-party (3P) sellers, making AIR is a massive enabler of 3P sellers' ability to offer their products to customers across the United States, supporting these business and opening up a wider selection of inventory and sellers.

Amazon has invested widely in Maryland over more than a decade. Company-wide:

- Amazon has a significant presence in the state and near this site, including three fulfillment centers in Baltimore City and Sparrows Point (Baltimore County), multiple sort centers in Baltimore City and Baltimore County, and 8 AMZL Delivery Stations across the state.
- \$9+ billion invested in Maryland since 2010, including infrastructure and compensation to employees.
- 32,000+ full- and part-time jobs created in Maryland.

- 31,000+ small and medium business sellers and independent authors in Maryland grow their businesses with Amazon.

Questions

John Thomas asked what were the biggest challenges?

Faddis responded that disruption is the biggest challenge. Most recently, the high wind events last week were most disruptive. The pandemic, supply chain disruptions make it difficult. When we say you will receive your package in two days, we aim to honor that commitment.

Andrew Meese asked why was Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport chosen as a hub? Faddis replied that demand drives these decisions. Customers are the North Star in deciding the best way to get packages across the United States.

Trucking Industry Update | Alex Leslie, American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI)

Dr. Alex Leslie is a Research Associate with the American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI), the trucking industry's not-for-profit research organization. He serves as the primary author of numerous ATRI reports including *The Operational Costs of Trucking*.

Leslie discussed the top infrastructure issues facing the trucking industry: truck parking, bottlenecks, and electric vehicle trends. Truck parking remains the top issue from 2005 to 2022 and among both drivers and motor carriers. ATRI released its [2023 report on the Top 100 Truck Bottlenecks](#). Maryland bottlenecks ranked 79, 92, and 97, respectively. Electric vehicle charging remains a challenge for trucking because of the size and weight of batteries as well as the time to charge, and current lack of grid capacity and charging infrastructure. ATRI's [December 2022 report](#) dives into these challenges in greater detail.

Additionally, ATRI is seeing increased operational costs for trucking from 2017 to 2021, even in the face of improved efficiencies in miles per gallon, decrease in deadhead mileage (14.8%), and a trailers-per-truck ratio of 2.82 has so far remained higher in the 2020s than in the 2010s.

Questions:

- John Thomas asked about accessing funds. What are the spending priorities?
 - Mr. Leslie responded that the list is so long. You do not develop charging infrastructure overnight. Some manufacturers are looking into hydrogen. For discretionary, we are thinking about bundling EV, truck parking.
- Andrew Meese asked if trucks use hybrid technologies rather than pure EV.
 - Mr. Leslie responded that braking is not optimal under a hybrid vehicle environment, except in final-mile delivery situations.
- Jeff Cleland asked if hours of service and EV charging have been discussed.
 - Mr. Leslie replied that ATRI is aware of it, but there have not been efforts in that topic. Battery size is the biggest issue. It is a day-trip size currently. Trucks need capacity beyond 200 miles.
- Bihui Xu asked if there has been any success with MPOs on zoning.
 - Mr. Leslie asked Xu to send an email to discuss further.

Maryland State Update

Maryland State Freight and Rail Plan Implementation | John Thomas, Maryland DOT

John Thomas announced that the [Maryland State Freight Plan](#) was finalized in December 2022, and the [State Rail Plan](#) was finalized in November 2022. MDOT continues to conduct outreach to stakeholders and partners. A current opportunity is a Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) call for presentations for a panel discussion. Mr. Thomas cannot invite speakers, but he can provide a list of names to MACo for consideration.

Chesapeake Bay Crossing Study, NEPA, and Next Steps | Eric Almquist | RK&K

Eric Almquist is Director of Environmental Planning at RK&K in Baltimore. He has 25 years of experience as a planning consultant supporting and leading studies in the Mid-Atlantic region. Some of his projects include the Nice / Middleton Bridge Replacement, the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel Expansion Project in Norfolk, and Amtrak's B&P Tunnel Replacement in Baltimore.

Mr. Almquist discussed the timeline of the study. The Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) completed the Chesapeake Bay Crossing Study: Tier 1 NEPA (Tier 1 Study) in April 2022, when the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) issued a Final Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision (FEIS/ROD). The Tier 1 FEIS/ROD identified Corridor 7, the corridor containing the existing Bay Bridge, as the Selected Corridor Alternative. In June 2022, the MDTA launched the four- to five-year Chesapeake Bay Crossing Study: Tier 2 NEPA (Tier 2 Study). This Tier 2 Study will evaluate the environmental and socioeconomic impacts of a range of alternative alignments and transportation issues from the Severn River Bridge in Anne Arundel County to the US 50/US 301 split in Queen Anne's County. The range of alternatives will include a No-Build alternative and Build alternatives including various alignments, crossing types and modal and operational alternatives.

Questions:

- Louis Campion asked how much improvement there has been in traffic flow since cash tolls were eliminated.
 - Mr. Almquist responded that MDTA is still removing toll gantries so there is still a reduction in capacity.

Port of Baltimore Update/Overview | Dominic Scurti, Maryland Port Administration (MPA)

Dominic Scurti is the Director of Planning of the Maryland Port Administration and has been with MPA for over 16 years. He leads the MPA's Capital Program and Strategic Planning efforts. Prior to working at the MPA, he worked for Titan Steel Corporation in Baltimore.

Mr. Scurti discussed the history and facts about the port. The Port of Baltimore is the largest port in the U.S. for the handling of automobiles and roll-on/roll-off (Ro/Ro) equipment. Companies in Maryland using the port of Baltimore come from all across the state. General cargo tons are up since the pandemic. Cruises in Maryland are also rebounding.

Mr. Scurti also discussed current port programs, projects, and initiatives. To keep those channels deep and wide enough for the cost-effective transport of cargo, MPA must successfully meet federal and private sector dredging needs within the available planned placement capacity options. To address these, there are the Dredged Material Management and the Dredged Material Containment Facilities programs. The port also has programs in place for improving air quality, water quality, as well as off-site conservation projects.

Howard Street Tunnel is a \$466 million project that that is funded by multiple entities including CSX, the State of Maryland, a USDOT INFRA Grant and PennDOT. The project will improve clearance in Baltimore City and 22 other locations where obstructions exist between Baltimore and Philadelphia.

The Port of Baltimore is healthy and continues to be a major economic engine for the State of Maryland. Working with the US Army Corp of Engineers, the MPA will be able to keep the marine channels open to handle the larger ships that are on the water for many years. MPA continues to be a good steward of the environment and is planning its terminals to adapt to the changing conditions in our environment.

Questions

- John Thomas asked what is the big picture issue for the port?
 - Mr. Scurti responded that the biggest issue is addressing aging infrastructure to keep the channels open for business.
- Andrew Meese asked if there were any activities regarding hazardous materials, given the recent chemical spill in East Palestine, Ohio.

- Mr. Scurti responded that port collaborates with federal partners and the Maryland Department of Emergency Management. Additionally, they take precautions, such as installed filter systems for storm drains.

Committee Roundtable

Legislative, Project, and Grant Updates from Committee Members

Nicole Katsikides announced the following items:

- Transportation Research Board (TRB) Supply Chain Workshop April 11-12:
<https://www.nationalacademies.org/event/04-11-2023/workshop-on-building-more-resilient-supply-chains>
- New truck parking bill in Congress: <https://www.ttnews.com/articles/congress-truck-parking-bill>
- FMRI Webinar (April 10) on Federal Highway Freight Programs Update:
<https://fau.webex.com/webappng/sites/fau/meeting/register/a9bfec8ec46c47c2ac11e5de9650c498?ticket=4832534b0000000665873513c5e4f5223b152967863b30945bee1a85ffbf40add14b97502e2622cc×tamp=1680893487242&RGID=rfb21bb814b6e66b58f2126be42d9ccde>
- There is an NCHRP project on local governments and truck parking. We are working on research to identify best practices and model codes for local governments through the NCHRP 08-141 project. More information is here: <https://apps.trb.org/cmsfeed/TRBNetProjectDisplay.asp?ProjectID=4952>

Closing

Polls on Future Meetings | Clay Barnes | Cambridge Systematics

Clay Barnes asked members to weigh in on what the committee's top priority transportation projects for freight movement in Maryland would be. Responses included the following:

- Truck parking (2 responses)
- Bottleneck reductions
- Electrification of fleet and rail vehicles
- Freight hubs
- Howard Street Tunnel
- Hazmat risk reduction
- Maryland is passing the California electric trucks mandate. We must look at truck parking and electrification. How many more trucks will be required to deliver the same amount of freight?
- Dredge disposal

John Thomas | Maryland DOT

John Thomas thanked everyone for attending.

End Meeting

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 | 2:00 p.m.