

Technical Report

Maryland Transportation Plan Stakeholder Roundtable Workshops Summary Report



2035 Maryland Transportation Plan

March 2013

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

State and federal laws require the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to develop a new statewide long range plan for transportation, called the Maryland Transportation Plan (MTP), every five years. Maryland is in the process of updating its long range plan, which will be submitted to the Maryland General Assembly in January 2014.

In support of its efforts to update the MTP, MDOT convened a series of stakeholder roundtable workshops throughout the State, as follows:

- Frederick, Maryland – January 10, 2013
- Hanover, Maryland – January 22, 2013
- Chestertown, Maryland – January 25, 2013
- Greenbelt, Maryland – January 29, 2013

The primary purpose of these workshops was to engage stakeholders in the plan update process, provide a forum to gather input on the preliminary goals and objectives for the updated plan, and solicit the input of stakeholders to help brainstorm key strategies to achieve identified goals and objectives.

The stakeholder input will inform development of the 2035 MTP and will be shared with MDOT's modal agencies for consideration in their strategic, business and operational planning efforts. Summaries from each of the individual Stakeholder Roundtables can be found on MDOT's website at:

www.mdot.maryland.gov/MTP.

2.0 ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

Participants at each of the Roundtables included representatives of key stakeholder groups, public officials, and the general public. In total, nearly 200 individuals participated in the Roundtables, as further detailed below. Those who registered but were unable to attend still benefited from receiving summary materials and are being kept abreast of continued opportunities to provide input.

Location	Pre-Registrants	Participants
Frederick	51	44
Hanover	95	66
Chestertown	42	28
Greenbelt	75	40
TOTAL	263	178

Following is a breakdown of Roundtable participants by the type of organizations represented.

Organization Type	Number of Participants (Total Across 4 Roundtable Sessions)
Local Government	54
State Government	22
Federal Government	4
Advocacy	37
Not-for-Profit (non-Advocacy)	3
University	3
Private Firm (including Engineering, Construction, Trucking, Environmental, Media, Architecture, Real Estate, Legal, and Consulting)	41
Private Citizen	14

3.0 ROUNDTABLE FORMAT

The Roundtables were structured as interactive sessions. Each session was initiated with a brief presentation on the MTP process, state and federal requirements, highlights of key trends and conditions to be addressed in the plan, and a description of the preliminary goals and objectives offered for consideration. Participants were then divided into small groups, based on six identified preliminary MTP goal areas, and asked to offer their input on the draft goals and objectives and then focus on their perspectives on strategies MDOT can implement to make progress toward achieving the desired goals. Each goal area group was then asked to share their top three strategies with all the workshop attendees. After a “wrap up” review of each group’s top strategies and underlying thinking, all participants were asked to vote on their top three strategies across all six preliminary goal areas. The results of this voting exercise, as well as the full results of each group’s brainstorming, will be used as key inputs as MDOT updates the MTP.

The agenda followed for each of the four Roundtable sessions is provided below. The background presentation can be found on MDOT’s website at: www.mdot.maryland.gov/MTP

Roundtable Agenda

8:30 – 9:00 Registration

9:00 – 9:10 Welcome, Overview of Day, & Introduction to Maryland Transportation Plan

9:10 – 9:30 Current Conditions and High Level Preliminary Goal Areas and Objectives

9:30 – 9:45 Breakout Group Instructions and Transition

9:45 – 10:45 Breakout Groups

The objective is for Roundtable participants to weigh in on potential goals, objectives, and strategies. Each group was organized by a single Goal Area. The group was asked to:

- Identify additional strategies
- Identify the 3 strategies that are most deserving of attention
- Prepare a final flip chart with the goal area and the 3 top strategies
- Groups also had the opportunity to discuss potential funding options for the identified strategies
- The groups were also encouraged to comment on the goal areas and preliminary objectives in terms of completeness (“Is anything missing?”) and appropriateness (“Should anything be removed?”)

10:45 – 11:15 Report Out and Discussion

Each group selected a spokesperson to report the 3 strategies selected, along with any additional input on goals, objectives, and potential funding ideas.

11:15 – 11:30 Voting on Preferred Strategies

Participants were invited to circulate and vote with their stickers on their top three preferred strategies, creating a visual, interactive display.

11:30 Adjourn

4.0 ROUNDTABLE RESULTS & SYNTHESIS

The four Roundtables conducted in January 2013 were highly productive sessions in which MDOT was able to receive critical input from a wide range of stakeholder interests and members of the general public. The results of the Roundtables include: (1) general consensus around the preliminary goals offered for consideration by MDOT; (2) identification by Roundtable participants of extensive and varied strategies to meet the proposed goals; and (3) observations regarding similarities and differences across the State as it relates to both the importance of individual goal areas and the strategies to address them. Following is a synopsis of some of the key findings.

4.1 Priority Strategies

While participants across the Roundtables may have used different wording to express things, several priority areas surfaced across the Roundtable sessions. Some of these have been slightly modified to combine with similar strategies at other Roundtables. These are highlighted below by Goal Area.

Goal Area	Highlighted Strategies
Quality of Service	Use technology to improve the transportation system and inform the traveling public
	Increase financial resources to meet quality of service needs (including incentivizing transit-oriented development and connectivity)
	Integrate local land use planning with transportation planning across modes and improve coordination
System Preservation	Maximize long-term preservation as part of rehabilitation efforts and minimize long-term maintenance needs through project design practices
	Retrofit facilities to fit into communities better and enhance inter-connectivity of modes (e.g., bike racks, missing sidewalks, lighting)
Safety & Security	Improve communication and coordination among stakeholders, including during planning and design, to prevent and reduce the number and severity of crashes
	Conduct greater enforcement for cell phone use
	Implement improved and continued driver education, esp. for older and younger drivers and pedestrian safety
Environmental Stewardship	Reinforce planning practices that encourage citizens to live where they work and focuses on existing infrastructure needs, minimizes loss of natural areas (applying smart growth principles and linking to Plan Maryland)
	Encourage multimodal transportation and prioritize projects that minimize congestion and meet more transportation needs with non-highway solutions (e.g., public transit)

Goal Area	Highlighted Strategies
Economic Prosperity	Address funding and investment using public-private partnerships and other options, including possible creation of separate funding authority for transit
	Ensure easy movement of freight, including with the goal to expand economic viability of the Port of Baltimore by expanding truck and freight network
	Use existing and planned transportation infrastructure as an economic stimulator (e.g., transit oriented development, mixed use transportation facilities, value capture) and develop transportation investments to maximize return on investment across all modes and inter-/intra-regionally
Community Vitality	Increase use of technologies to reduce roadway traffic, create economic activity centers, and improve information sharing regarding public transit options
	Complete infrastructure networks within each mode, including increasing public transportation between rural centers and daily needs and improving efficiency of multi-modal system (e.g., access for non-drivers and elderly, scheduling/connection improvements)
	Secure funding streams that support communities and all transportation modes (e.g., tax increment financing, private investment, mileage-based tax (VMT), regional sales tax, community improvement districts)
	Lessen impact of transportation footprint (e.g., dual use medians, technology to lessen noise, etc) to provide opportunity for more transit in economically viable way, better streetscapes, aesthetics, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting

4.2 Common Themes and Key Differences

Drawing from the specific strategies outlined above and in the detail of each Roundtable meeting, a number of themes surfaced across Roundtable groups. Following is a brief overview of these emerging themes:

- **Advance multi-modal connections to meet needs** – this was a consistent theme across all Roundtable sessions, including both rural and urban settings, and was raised by breakout groups within almost every goal area.
- **Use technology to meet a broad spectrum of future needs** – technology was raised in some manner across all six goal areas and in every Roundtable session.
- **Identify additional and sustainable financial resources** – new funding resources was raised as a priority strategy in every Roundtable session and across multiple goal areas.

- **Improve coordination among levels of government, private parties, and the general public** – the issue of coordination was raised across a spectrum of goal areas and in every Roundtable session.
- **Focus investment on getting maximum value from existing infrastructure and coordinate land use and transportation investment** – across Roundtable settings, there was a strong emphasis on tying land use and transportation investment, encouraging citizens to live where they work, and focusing transportation investment to support this, including a focus on public transportation and multi-modal connections.
- **Target infrastructure investment to maximize economic return** – including both making investments as cost-effective as possible and targeting investment to support jobs creation and the economic vitality of the State’s communities.
- **Apply planning techniques to ensure long-term viability of infrastructure** – including designing and constructing projects that reduce operation and maintenance costs, factoring multi-modal needs into preservation and maintenance activities, and emphasizing multi-modal connections.

While there was significant consistency across the Roundtable sessions in identifying key issues and potential solutions, there were of course some differences across geographic settings, in particular between the more rural and urban settings. It was notable that the Roundtable conducted in the most rural setting – Chestertown – still identified multi-modal connections and public transportation access as priorities. While the “what” was notably consistent, the “how” differed – that is how the objective might be achieved in that locale (e.g., vans and small buses vs. mass transit). There also was sensitivity to ensuring that the different needs of rural areas such as proactive maintenance and rehabilitation and safety enhancements not be overshadowed in the context of the major multi-modal investment needs identified more urban settings. In addition, in the more rural areas of the State, there was some expressed desire to address environmental stewardship objectives with an eye to where the biggest return is rather than to impose universal requirements, such as stormwater systems, across all settings without consideration of the relative value of such measures in each setting.

5.0 PARTICIPANT COMMENTS & NEXT STEPS

MDOT was pleased to receive generally positive feedback on the format and substance of the Roundtable sessions from participants at the conclusion of the sessions. Following is a summary of the feedback received on the official comment sheets provided to participants.

- In response to the general question, “Did you find today’s Roundtable useful?”, 59 participants responded “yes” and only 4 responded “no.”
- In response to the question, “What did you like about today’s Roundtable?”, many respondents offered the following as positive attributes:
 - Cross-section of participants and variety of viewpoints
 - Small group discussions and opportunity to interact
 - Ability of smaller and more remote communities to have a voice
 - Voting exercise and how visual display of results was informative
- In response to the question, “What did you not like about today’s Roundtable?”, answers were varied but included:
 - Short time for discussion (although the ability to accomplish a lot in this short period was also recognized as a positive)
 - In some instances, limited space made multiple simultaneous conversations difficult
 - Limited background provided
 - Participation by western part of the State not facilitated by four locations
- In response to the question, “What is your opinion of the goal areas?”, the following feedback was provided:
 - The vast majority responded that the goal areas were on target
 - Some specific potential adjustments to the goal areas mentioned by a small number of respondents included:
 - More emphasis on funding
 - Including modal balancing as a goal area
 - Including congestion mitigation as a goal area
 - Including coordination among stakeholders as a goal area
 - Including regional sustainability as a goal area
 - Elevating system preservation to be the first goal (although it should be noted that the order of presentation at the Roundtables was not intended as a hierarchy)
 - Addressing transportation and energy intersection

MDOT is extremely grateful for the contributions of the Roundtable participants. The input gathered during the Roundtable sessions will be used immediately by MDOT and its modal administrations as they develop strategic and operational plans and in their day-to-day activities. It also will inform continued

development of the MTP and will be a significant contribution to the plan. All participant comments will be taken into account in designing future outreach activities related to the MTP and in the formulation of the plan itself.