



HANOVER STREET CORRIDOR STUDY

includes the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Bridge



Community Advisory Panel (CAP) Meeting #3
Wednesday, January 18, 2017 – 9:30 AM to 11:00 AM

MEETING NOTES

MEETING ATTENDEES

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Rupert Denney	Baltimore Industrial Group
Jim Flannery	Brightside Associates
Bill Reuter	Casino LDC President
Jackson Fisher	Riverside Neighborhood Association
Kimiya Darrell	Sagamore Development
Caroline Paff	Sagamore Development
Peter Bartels	South Baltimore Neighborhood Association
Janie Tiedeman	AECOM
Josh Crunkleton	AECOM
Nick Corda	AECOM
Dennis Simpson	AECOM
Odessa Phillip	Assedo Consulting
Tranell Griffin	Assedo Consulting
Betty Smoot	BCDOT Planning
Graham Young	BCDOT Traffic

The purpose of the meeting was to present the analysis of the existing transportation network to the Community Advisory Panel (CAP) and obtain feedback prior to the January 31 public meeting.

Betty Smoot, BCDOT Lead Planner for the project, began by welcoming attendees to the meeting. All members introduced themselves and identified the community group they represented.

Janie Tiedeman, Consultant Project Manager, explained that the goal is to understand how the public would like to use the corridor to accommodate all modes of transportation. Janie gave an overview of the project including the importance of accessibility, mobility/connectivity and safety in the corridor and reviewed the following results of the analyses:

- Identifying various origins/destinations in the study area and mapping them provides a clear understanding of the types of places people want to go today and in the future in the study area
- The multimodal desire lines illustrate how people would like to get to various destinations today and in the future
- A review of the intersections highlighted specific locations where there are travel safety concerns (i.e. conflicting movements, convergence of numerous travel modes in the same space, and areas where pedestrians are directed to cross in the path of turning vehicles)
- There are many areas where crosswalks are not visible or are completely missing from the roadway
- Within the corridor, signage does not support pedestrian safety

- Although there is lighting in the corridor, it is high level lighting for vehicles rather than street lighting designed for pedestrians
- There is a noticeable lack of safe and accessible facilities for pedestrians or cyclists at the steel drawbridge section of the bridge
- The narrow sidewalks and the lack of protection between the sidewalk and the traffic on the bridge make walking on the bridge deck very intimidating

Nick Corda, Consultant Structural Engineering Manager, provided an overview of the condition of the existing bridges in the corridor including the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Bridge.

Bridges/Structures

- There are five bridges in the corridor: two I-95 interchange ramp bridges, two crossings of CSX tracks, and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Bridge
- The team reviewed AASHTO design requirements and the bridge inspection reports to obtain a better understanding of the conditions of the bridges
- The bridge inspection reports for the ramp bridges indicate short-term needs to keep the facility operational. The reports for the two crossings of CSX tracks indicate that they could require major rehabilitation or replacement
- The review of available information indicates that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Bridge needs major repairs, which will also require additional studies and testing to confirm. These studies and tests are not part of this study.
- The four northern bridges (all except the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Bridge) are included in either the Port Covington project or the I-95 Access Improvements Study being conducted jointly by MDTA and the BCDOT and our project team does not currently know what the investment will be for those structures. Coordination with the Port Covington and I-95 Access Improvements Study teams will continue so the Hanover Street study team can include future plans to remove or replace some of the existing ramps and bridges.
- The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Bridge is the most iconic structure in the inventory of BCDOT and needs to be recognized for its significance on a national scale when considering replacement versus rehabilitation of the bridge
- The team will need to coordinate with the Coast Guard in the future to gain insight on whether the movable span will still be required for the future condition.

Josh Crunkleton, Consultant Project Engineer, provided an overview of existing roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and transit services in the corridor.

Roadway Conditions

- The corridor is designed for vehicular travel which is evidenced by the wide 12-foot travel lanes and lack of pedestrian lighting in the corridor
- Poor pavement conditions are an issue – significant truck traffic causes pavement rutting
- Blocked inlets could lead to flooding/safety concerns
- There are no existing stormwater management facilities within the corridor

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

- The team identified a ½ mile walkshed area (30-minute walk time) and 3-mile bikeshed area (10-15-minute bicycle ride)

- The pedestrian signals in place are not all up to current design standards (countdown indicators and accessible pedestrian signals)
- Insufficient protected bike lanes; virtually all bike facilities are perceived to be unsafe
- There are no bicycle facilities/accommodations on the bridge itself
- As part of the Port Covington project, Phase I construction has started west of Hanover Street for the bike path

Transit Services and Operations

- Communities in the southern section (Cherry Hill) have a highly transit-dependent population
- Bus stops in the southern section have the highest ridership
- In the study area, there is limited transit service for Port employees and a transit gap to major employment centers within the City
- Bus stops in the study area were evaluated based on ridership and amenities
- Average daily ridership of 100 is MTA's threshold for adding pedestrian amenities such as shelters
- Changes to MTA bus routes through the BaltimoreLink project may address gaps in the existing transit service

Dennis Simpson, Consultant Transportation Planning Manager, provided an overview of existing freight operations and traffic and safety conditions in the corridor.

Freight Operations

- Hanover Street is a restricted route (no trucks from 7:00pm to 7:00am) from Wells Street to I-95 and a through truck route from I-95 to Reedbird Avenue and points south
- Based on stakeholder discussions, the majority of truck traffic using the corridor and bridge is domestic freight (local deliveries, etc.) and not maritime freight traveling to and from the Port
- Permitted loads are currently traveling up MD 2 to Frankfurst Avenue instead of using I-95 to Hanover Street and crossing the bridge

Traffic Operations and Safety Assessment

- The BCDOT and MDTA elected to accept a single set of peak hour traffic volumes for the Hanover Street Corridor Study and the I-95 Access Improvements Study to avoid confusion and discrepancies
- The southern end of the study area (south of Waterview Avenue) includes intersections that are not part of the I-95 Access Improvements Study Area
- The BCDOT considers an overall Level of Service (LOS) D or better to be acceptable for traffic operations
- All intersections in the study area operate with an acceptable LOS during the AM and PM peaks. Hanover Street at Cromwell Street is LOS D in the PM, but all other intersections are LOS A, B, or C in both the AM and PM peaks.
- The reversible lane was analyzed under existing traffic using the Hanover Street/Cromwell Street intersection and is necessary during the PM peak to achieve LOS D
- In absence of more detailed accident reports, the team used summary crash data, field observations, and existing traffic operations analysis to evaluate safety deficiencies in the corridor
- Sideswipes and other accidents can occur when drivers cannot see the lane markings
- Poor pavement conditions lead people to swerving unexpectedly

- There is a high number of U-turns in the corridor because people are unable to make the movements that they want to make (i.e. missing connections to I-95)
- Ongoing roadway maintenance can cause a safety issue because it is often unpredictable with abrupt lane closures
- South of the study area, there is a missing connection from westbound Frankfurst Street to southbound Potee Street for truck traffic, which IAG members indicate as the reason trucks use Waterview Avenue. Southbound Potee Street would be the more desirable route for trucks if the connection existed.
- 2040 No-Build traffic forecasts are being developed for the I-95 Access Improvements Study and will be used as improvement options are developed for this project

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION

- Will the City consider the entire Gwynns Falls Trail (including the area behind the Casino) as part of the desire lines? There are several trails being used or at least advertised for use within the corridor (i.e. Patapsco Greenway and East Coast Greenway).
 - Yes, since the Gwynns Falls Trail travels through Westport (a key origin/destination), it is included as a desire line
- Suggestion was made to include the current transportation network as well as plans approved by BCDOT for improvements to be made as part of the I-95 Access Improvements Study.
- Is the reason only two Rall spans exist in the country because they did not work well?
 - Rall spans mainly catered to railroads, and because they were trying to be a unique supplier, they weren't used extensively on roadway applications.
- Would the historical designation of the bridge preclude the City from strengthening/solidifying it so that it can accommodate future traffic, including trucks and other heavy vehicles?
 - No, but it may impact the methods used to make those improvements.
- What is the rate of silting on the west side of the bridge? There is concern that blocking off the navigation channel would create a marsh area that would be impassable.
 - While barges and small tugs can pass under today, there is already some silting occurring that affects movement for marine vessels.
- Would the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) or the United States Coast Guard (USCG) still be interested in dredging the area in the future if the waters are not navigable?
 - Future coordination will be required with ACOE and USCG as the project progresses
- The Port Covington development and the region could be damaged by the area being allowed to silt over and become marsh.
 - It was noted that the Port Covington developer looked at the silted areas to help decide what areas silt over so that the transit and recreational uses can still exist.
- What types of crashes have occurred at Potee Street and Waterview Avenue?
 - Three pedestrian-related crashes occurred at this intersection in the 2010-2014 timeframe (most in the study area)
- Who recommends the 24" buffer for pedestrians?
 - The National Association of Transportation Officials (NACTO) provides guidance on sidewalk widths and zones, which suggests providing a minimum 2 foot buffer for street furniture and utilities.

- Port Covington has a bike network planned along McComas Street, Cromwell Street, and Hanover Street, and would incorporate the CSX swing bridge. Phase I construction has started west of Hanover Street for the bike path and will be realigned once Hanover Street is reconstructed.
- The Baltimore Industrial Group (BIG) feels there is no need for the reversible lane on the bridge; they are more concerned with providing a physical barrier for pedestrians/bicycles across the structure (such as a Jersey wall).
- There is concern about future emergency egress from the City. Hanover Street should be designed for emergency relief because it will be the only way out of the city if there was a major incident on the Interstate.

Following the presentation, the team held a brainstorming discussion to determine how the CAP members use the bridge and how they would like to use the bridge in the future. The results of that discussion are tabulated below.

Existing Uses	Desired/Future Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commute to work (toward airport and other employment centers) • Route to Glen Burnie • Haul trash to dump • Access Ridgley’s Delight • Harbor Hospital • Access Anne Arundel County • Access I-895 • Domestic transportation • Access Waterview Avenue/Annapolis Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk and bike • Better transit (MTA & Circulator) • Opportunities for a circuit to use for recreation • Would like pedestrians to be safer by adding physical barriers • Want communities to have access to meaningful (blue collar) employment • Lighting for pedestrians and vehicles • Host events (regattas/rowing events) • Community can access Port Covington by any mode • Coordinate bike network, especially trail around water • Want Middle Branch to be viewed as a Jewel of the City • Preserve history and historical asset that is the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Bridge • Connect people with natural resources • Bridge is only as good as landings • Capitalize on the structure as a civic asset