Slide 1: ADA Transition Plan – Prioritization

Good evening.

My name is Valorie LaCour. I am a middle-aged white person and tonight I am wearing a red jacket and shirt. My pronouns are she and her. I am the Chief of the ADA Compliance Division at the Department of Transportation and the ADA Coordinator for the Agency.

This is a hybrid meeting tonight, meaning that we have some people attending in person here at the Humanim Offices on North Gay Street and we have some people attending virtually via Webex. Whether you are here in person or attending virtually, we appreciate your participation in tonight's meeting. Tonight, we will provide an update on the development of the ADA Transition Plan and present the prioritization methodology that is proposed to be included in the Plan.

Slide 2: Agenda

Briefly, the agenda for this evening's meeting will include:

Introductions

Rules for a successful meeting

A brief overview of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ADA Transition Plan

A status update on the development of the BCDOT Transition Plan

A summary of what we heard from you at the first public meeting earlier this year

A detailed look at the proposed prioritization methodology

And a chance for you to provide feedback and suggestions as we discuss the next steps for the Transition Plan development

Slide 3: Introductions

Joining me tonight from the Department of Transportation is our Meeting facilitator – Terenia Galloway. Terenia will monitor the Webex chat and summarize questions for discussion. Even if we don't get to all the questions, the questions will be forwarded to the project team for consideration.

Welcome our elected State Representatives attending virtually and in-person

Welcome to our Mayor, City Council President, Councilmembers, and Agency Directors in attendance

Welcome to each of you attending tonight.

Sign language interpreters assisting tonight are Ms. Ashly Drumwright (On-site Interpreter) and Mr. Ernest Williams (Webex/Virtual Interpretation)

Slide 4: Rules for a Successful Virtual meeting

For those that are attending virtually via Webex,

- Please mute your microphone
- Please turn off your video
- Please use the chat function for questions

For those attending in-person

- Silence your cell phone
- please hold your questions until the end of the presentation

For everyone, please note that the meeting materials were uploaded to the website and are available for your review.

Slide 5: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 was signed into law on July 26, 1990. The ADA is a wide-ranging civil rights law that prohibits, under certain circumstances, discrimination based on disability. It affords similar protections against discrimination to Americans with disabilities as the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The main section of ADA relating the pedestrian infrastructure is Title II – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services.

Slide 6: ADA Transition Plan Overview

One of the requirements of Title II is the development of an ADA Transition Plan. An ADA Transition Plan is a documented approach for how a local government will achieve full ADA compliance. It identifies existing programs, services, facilities, policies, and procedures that require changes, and outlines the steps necessary to become accessible.

Baltimore City DOT is responsible for the ADA-compliance of all city-owned pedestrian infrastructure within the Right-of-way, which includes sidewalks, curb ramps, driveway aprons, and pedestrian signals. We are currently developing an ADA Transition Plan to make pedestrian infrastructure ADA-compliant. Tonight, we'll be giving you an update on the development of Baltimore's ADA Transition Plan.

Slide 7: ADA Transition Plan Overview

The major elements of an ADA Transition Plan.

- The self-assessment section describes the current state of ADA-compliance.
- The next section is called methods for compliance, which explains how ADA-compliance will be achieved.

- There is a public input section to document the feedback we hear from all of you.
- And then there is the prioritization section which is our focus tonight. The prioritization section outlines the areas of highest need for ADA improvements within the city and provides a strategy for making future investments in ADA projects. We'll talk more about prioritization in a few moments.
- The commitments and funding section explains how the ADA improvements will be paid for and the schedule section outlines the timeframe to complete the upgrades.
- Finally, the Transition Plan designates an ADA Coordinator, who is a single person responsible for everything ADA-related within BCDOT.

Slide 8: BCDOT Transition Plan

The development of the city's Transition Plan is currently underway, and this slide gives the status of each major element. As you can see, most of the sections are currently in progress. The sections under development are dependent on the final prioritization process to be used. Two elements, the self-assessment and designation of an ADA Coordinator are complete.

Slide 9: Prioritization

So, what is prioritization? Generally speaking, prioritization is the process of ranking something by a relative level of importance. In terms of the City's ADA Transition Plan, prioritization is the process of determining where ADA upgrades would provide the most benefit to the public. The end result of prioritization is a tool that can help guide the implementation of specific projects. The proposed prioritization that we are presenting tonight incorporates public feedback that we've received at the first public meeting and over the past few months.

Slide 10: Prioritization

We received a lot of public feedback on the prioritization at our public meeting in January of this year. We heard that access to destinations such as work, medical facilities, post offices, banks, and grocery stores is critical to daily life. We heard that there must be connectivity within and between neighborhoods, and that neighborhoods must be connected to transit. We heard that we need better pedestrian signals with features including audible countdowns, especially at complex intersections. And we heard that pedestrian safety and lighting needs to be improved, especially near transit stops.

This is all great feedback, and the transition plan will address each of these issues. Specifically, for tonight, you'll see how we incorporated the access to those important destinations and transit into our proposed prioritization.

Slide 11: Prioritization

So now let's talk about how we developed our proposed prioritization methodology.

The prioritization is based on land use and demographic factors throughout the city. As mentioned earlier, the goal is to determine where ADA upgrades would provide the most benefit. We can do that by prioritizing the areas that serve the most critical functions.

Using the feedback we received so far, we developed 10 criteria and assigned each a point ranking. We then used GIS or Geographic Information Systems to score areas within the city based on how they met each of the 10 criteria, we combined the scores, and created a heat map to show the results.

I would like to now turn over the presentation to Ryan Snyder from RKK to discuss the methodology and prioritization process.

Slide 12: Prioritization

Here are the 10 criteria that we selected to use for the prioritization. You can see that they include various types of facilities and land uses. We specifically incorporated the feedback from the last public meeting by including criteria such as proximity to health care facilities, employment areas, and government offices.

On the right side of the chart are the maximum possible point values that we assigned to each criterion. They are in order from highest priority at the top to lowest priority at the bottom.

Slide 13: Equity Priority Areas

So, let's start with the highest weighted criterion that we identified: equity priority areas. The equity priority areas were established using Baltimore City's Equity Composite Score and Healthy Food Priority Areas. These are two data sets that Baltimore City developed outside of this ADA Transition Plan study.

The equity composite score factors in multiple demographic measures such as the percentage of the population with a disability, race, vehicle ownership, and unemployment rates. Healthy Food Priority Areas are locations with limited access to healthy food. People living in these areas are more likely to experience greater reliance on transit and pedestrian travel, and therefore these are areas where improvements to pedestrian infrastructure may provide greater benefit.

The map on the right shows the Equity Composite Score areas shaded in yellow, orange, and brown. The lowest scoring equity areas in yellow earned 2 points, the orange areas earned 4 points, and the highest scoring areas in brown scored 5 points. Any area within a Healthy Food Priority Area earned an additional 2 points for a maximum possible score of 7 points for this criterion. Areas with just gray shading did not earn any points for this criterion.

Slide 14: Mobility Corridors

The next criterion is mobility access. The intent of this criterion is to prioritize any locations within the city that are near public transportation. Pedestrian facilities in the vicinity of public transit provide an important connection for people to access those transit services. Any location within 1/8 mile of a gateway corridor, priority bus transit corridor, Charm City Circulator route, or separate bike lane network earned 5 points. Additionally, any area within ¼ mile of a SubwayLink, RailLink, Amtrak, or Water Taxi stop also earned 5 points. One additional

point was earned for any area also within 300 feet of any bus stop, for a total maximum score of 6 points.

The map shows the areas that earned 5 points in red and the areas that earned 1 point in gray.

Slide 15: Health Care Facilities

Prioritizing medical facilities is one comment theme we've heard reiterated from the public throughout this process. Any location within ¼ mile of the various types of health facilities listed here on the screen earned 5 points. The red areas on the map represent a ¼ mile radius around every health care facility in the city.

Slide 16: Educational Facilities

Similarly, we also applied a ¼ mile radius around all educational facilities in the city, and all of those areas earned 4 points. Educational facilities include all Baltimore City Public Schools, public libraries, higher education institutions, and all other schools.

Slide 17: Employment Areas

Areas of high job density were prioritized next, to ensure residents have ADA accessible pedestrian connections to employment. We used U.S. Census data to identify the areas of high job density, and assigned 4 points to those areas, as shown in red on the map.

Slide 18: Pedestrian Safety

The next criterion focuses on pedestrian safety. We gathered all of the crash data throughout the entire city from 2019 and isolated the crashes that involved pedestrians. That allowed us to develop the heat map shown here on the screen. The yellow areas are the medium density pedestrian crash locations and earned 1 point towards the ADA prioritization. The orange areas are high density and earned 2 points. And the red areas are very high density and earned 3 points.

Slide 19: Parks and Recreation

Access to public parks and recreational facilities is another important consideration for ADA improvements. This next map shows a 1/8-mile radius around each of those locations. Any area in red earned 3 points for this criterion.

Slide 20: Government Offices

City, State, and Federal government offices, including post offices are the next criterion. Those locations are shown with a ¼ mile radius on the map, and they earned 2 points towards the ADA prioritization.

Slide 21: Police and Fire Stations

All areas within a ¼ mile radius of a police or fire station earned 1 point.

Slide 22: Land Use

And finally, we come to our last prioritization criterion which is land use. All residential or commercial areas earn 1 point towards the ADA prioritization. This accounts for the locations where people are living and shopping throughout the city. As you can see on the map these areas cover a good portion of the city.

Slide 23: Prioritization Results

So now we've looked at all the criteria and point values for each, so next we'll show the results when we combine all of the criteria together. When we overlay all 10 of the criteria, there is a maximum possible score of 36 points and a minimum possible score of 0. Areas with higher scores indicate higher priority areas for ADA improvements. We displayed the prioritization results on a heat map which divides the results into 5 categories based on percentile, as listed here.

Slide 24: Prioritization Results

This is the heat map showing the prioritization results. We applied green, yellow, orange, and red colors to the 5 percentile groups to help show where the highest and lowest priority areas are located. The red areas on the map represent the top 10th percentile in prioritization score, which makes them the highest priority areas for ADA upgrades in the city. The orange areas represent the 74th-89th percentiles and would be the 2nd highest priority areas. The 3rd highest priority areas are in yellow and represent the 50th-74th percentile areas. The 4th highest priority areas are in light green and represent the 25th-49th percentile areas. And the lowest priority areas are in dark green and represent the bottom 25th percentile.

Slide 25: Prioritization Results

Here's a blow-up of the prioritization map. One of the important things to keep in mind is that everything in the city will be upgraded to ADA compliance. These results are not saying that only the red or only the red and orange areas will be improved. All ADA infrastructure within the city, including the areas in green, will be upgraded, but it's not all going to happen at once. As funding becomes available and the DOT starts to define individual projects, this map will be used as a reference tool to identify where the greatest needs are. As projects are completed, DOT will move onto the next highest priorities and continue making upgrades until the entire City is in ADA compliance.

I'll now hand off the presentation to Valorie to finish the remaining slides.

Slide 26: Next Steps

The next steps for the ADA Transition Plan are to first collect input from all of you on the prioritization process. We're going to have a question-and-answer session in a few moments but there will also be an opportunity to provide comments online, via email, or via mail. We want to know your thoughts on the criteria and scoring system that we just walked through. Do you agree or disagree with the criteria we are using? What did we miss? How can we make it better? These are the types of things we want to hear from all of you.

The proposed prioritization will be posted to the project website so that those who could not attend tonight can review and provide comments.

The project team will take the feedback we receive and refine the prioritization methodology as necessary. We'll also continue to advance other portions of the Transition Plan, such as Methods for Compliance, Commitments and Funding, Schedule, and the Public Grievance Process.

Slide 27: Contact DOT

The meeting materials presented tonight are on the DOT website for your review and reference. There are several ways to communicate your comments on the proposed prioritization to DOT.

On DOT's website:

https://Transportation.Baltimorecity.gov/ada-transportation

By email:

ADACoordinator@baltimorecity.gov

Or

Valorie.lacour@baltimorecity.gov

By mail:

Baltimore City
Department of Transportation
Attn: Valorie LaCour, ADA Coordinator
417 East Fayette Street, 5th floor
Baltimore, MD 21202

Slide 28: Question & Answer Session

We're now going to open it up for a Q&A session. We'll take our first question from someone that's attending in-person and will then alternate back and forth between our in-person attendees and those attending virtually using the chat feature to ask their questions.

[Q&A Session]

On behalf of the DOT ADA Transition Plan team, we thank you for spending your evening with us to learn about the progress on the ADA transition Plan. Remember there is plenty of time to provide DOT with your thoughts and ideas. DOT has an open public comment period starting tomorrow and through the end of October. Once we compile the comments received over the next 30 days, we will review how they can be incorporated into the ADA Transition Plan and make those adjustments as necessary. We anticipate having another public meeting to update you on the project status in January, after the holidays.

Thanks again and have a good evening.