

# Memorandum for the Record

## Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

### April 30, 2015 Meeting

10:05 AM – 2:00 PM, State Transportation Building, Conference Rooms 2&3, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA

David Mohler and Clinton Bench, Chairs, representing Stephanie Pollack, Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

### Decisions

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) agreed to the following:

- approve the work program for the *Fairmount Line Station Access Analysis* study
- approve the minutes of the meeting of March 19, April 2, and April 9, 2015
- table proposed motions regarding project programming for the federal fiscal years (FFYs) 2016 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), *Charting Progress to 2040*, until the meeting of May 7
- prepare a five-year TIP, covering FFYs 2016-20, for the highway portion of the TIP with projects programmed in the FFY 2020 element considered illustrative (the FFY 2020 year would be for MPO planning purposes only and would not be reported in the State Transportation Improvement Program)

### Meeting Agenda

#### 1. Public Comments

Members heard a number of comments from advocates of transportation projects who are seeking funding through either the FFYs 2016-19 TIP or the new LRTP, *Charting Progress to 2040*.

State Representative William Galvin expressed support for the *Canton Interchange* project – the *Interchange Improvements at Interstates 93 and 95* and the *Ramp Construction on Interstate 95 (NB) and Improvements on Dedham Street/Canton Street (Canton, Norwood, Westwood)*. He expressed frustration that the Dedham Street portion may go unfunded and he discussed the impact that decision would have on the second phase of the University Station development project. He noted that the need for these roadway infrastructure improvements were identified at the outset of the University Station project, and that if those improvements are not funded, the development project will stall.

State Representative Carolyn Dykema spoke in support of the *Signal and Intersection Improvements on Route 135 (Hopkinton)* project. She was joined by Puja Mehta, Office of State Senator Karen Spilka, and a delegation from the Town of Hopkinton.

Representative Dykema discussed the project's importance to the MetroWest region. She noted that substantial planning on the project is underway, including for easements and right-of-way acquisition, and that it is important to maintain momentum on the project. She also discussed the economic development opportunities in the MetroWest area, along the Interstate 495 belt, and the Town of Hopkinton's support for statewide priorities on housing and commercial development. She pointed to the Legacy Farms housing development as an example. She expressed the importance of funding infrastructure to support new development and for distributing transportation funds in a geographically equitable manner. She also noted that the Route 135 project is one of the few projects in the MetroWest area in the current project list for the LRTP.

Ken Weismantel, Chairman of the Planning Board for the Town of Hopkinton, further discussed the need for the Route 135 project to alleviate traffic congestion, improve conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians, and support the revitalization of downtown Hopkinton. He remarked that Hopkinton is projected to grow by 28% this decade. Traffic congestion is already increasing on Route 135, he said, which could limit the ongoing economic development of downtown Hopkinton where new retail has been permitted and the library is undergoing an expansion. Further, the project would address the location of the Marathon starting point, where a Marathon International Center is being proposed, potentially bringing more traffic.

John Westerling, Director of Public Works for the Town of Hopkinton, reported that the town is pleased with the proposed TIP programming date of FFY 2016 for the Route 135 project. He discussed the town's investment in the project, which has included \$800,000 for a water main installation and \$400,000 for the 25% design. The 25% design is under review by MassDOT and a design public hearing is expected to take place in June. A portion of a \$5.5 million MassWorks grant – that is supporting a public-private partnership to develop Legacy Farms – will be used to fund the 75-100% design plans for Route 135. Those plans are expected to be complete in June 2016. He also noted that Eversource is planning to replace a gas main in the project area in 2016 and that no permanent easements required for the Route 135 project.

Puja Mehta, Office of State Senator Karen Spilka, also spoke in support of the Route 135 project. She noted that the project location is at the Marathon starting point. She also commented on the economic development occurring in the MetroWest region and the need to support that region.

State Representative John Fernandes spoke in support of the *Resurfacing and Intersection Improvements on Route 16 (Milford)* project. He was joined by a delegation from the Town of Milford. Representative Fernandes described the project location, which is at the intersection of Routes 16 and 140, and near the Milford Regional Medical Center. He discussed the recent and upcoming expansion of the hospital, which serves over 15 communities, and the increases in traffic that have been occurring. He noted that there have been a number of crashes at the location, one of which resulted in a fatality when an ambulance was struck by another vehicle. Representative Fernandes also relayed State Senator Ryan Fattman's support for the project. (Senator Fattman was unable to attend. Letters of support from both legislators were provided.)

Vonnie Reis, Engineer for the Town of Milford, further discussed the safety issues at the Route 16 intersection. A road safety audit was conducted at this location and issues identified include the following: a lack of emergency vehicle pre-emption in front of the hospital; a sight distance problem; poor bicycle and pedestrian accommodations; safety and capacity deficiencies; signal and lane marking deficiencies; poor level of service at peak hours; an average of 13 crashes per year (including a fatality); and inadequate turning radius for trucks. He noted that the town spent \$125,000 on the 25% project design, which has been approved. The project is expected to be fully designed by early 2017.

William Kingkade, Town of Milford Board of Selectmen, added that the town intends to spend another \$175,000 on the project design and implement some low cost recommendations from the road safety audit, such as vegetation removal and sign relocation. He emphasized the town's support for the project.

Richard Villani, Engineer for the Town of Milford, and John Morgan, CHA Consulting, were also among the Hopkinton delegation.

Mayor Carlo DeMaria of the City of Everett spoke in support of the *Reconstruction of Ferry Street (Everett)* project. He noted that Ferry Street is a regional route in the heart of Everett which is used by motorists travelling to Boston from the North Shore and surrounding towns. It serves a hospital, the Cambridge Health Alliance, as well as a high school, police and fire station, and a new park. He also noted that the project is in an environmental justice area.

Jay Monty, Transportation Planner for the City of Everett, further discussed the Ferry Street project, noting that Ferry Street is a key corridor as well as a community street with significant pedestrian activity (this includes children who walk to school). Ferry Street is also used by MBTA buses that connect to Sullivan Square. The project, he

said, presents an opportunity to make Ferry Street a “complete street.” The project will include curb bump outs, full depth reconstruction of pavement, safety and traffic signal improvements, emergency vehicle pre-emption, and potentially, transit prioritization for buses.

Mayor Joseph Curtatone of Somerville spoke in support of the *Green Line Extension (from College Avenue to Route 16, Medford)* project. He noted that the first leg of the project (from Lechmere Station to Union Square and College Avenue) has received a \$1 billion federal commitment and is supported by the current administration. He also discussed the project benefits in terms of promoting environmental justice, promoting equity in the distribution of transportation funds, job creation, improving access to transit, and providing congestion relief. Regarding equity in funding, he noted that Somerville contributes greatly to the MBTA assessments, but has not received significant transit investments until recently. He also discussed the job creation that has occurred from recent investments in the city; 22,000 net new jobs were created from the new Orange Line station at Assembly Square and more are expected from the new Green Lines stations. He also discussed how the transit expansions will transform Somerville from a place where 15% of residents were within walking or bicycling distance of transit to a place where 85% will have access. The improvements will also provide benefits and congestion relief beyond Somerville to communities around Route 16, he said.

Mayor Curtatone also expressed support for the *McGrath Boulevard (Somerville)* project. He noted that the existing overpass is an example of a failure of past urban renewal that cut off neighborhoods from each other, brought more pollution to the city, and impeded economic development. He stated that the de-elevation of the highway would unlock hundreds of acres of developable land in the Brickbottom and Inner Belt area where new Green Line stations are being built, and that it could create new jobs, expand the commercial tax base, promote environmental justice, and create more livable neighborhoods.

William Buckley, Office of State Representative John Rogers, spoke on behalf of Senator James Timilty, and Representatives John Rogers, Louis Kafka, Paul McMurtry, and Shawn Dooley. The senator and representatives are in support of the *Reconstruction of Route 1A (Walpole)* project. He described the project area, which is between Walpole center and the Norwood town line, as a highly traveled section of roadway with two public schools and commercial areas. He noted that there have been a high number of accidents at the four intersections in the project area. This project is the highest priority for the delegation. (A letter of support was provided.)

Bob O'Brien, Town of Walpole Department of Public Works, reported that the Route 1A project has been on the books for over 17 years. He noted that a sewer and water main were reconstructed 16 years ago in anticipation of this project. Also, the Town of Walpole is investing over \$1 million in its downtown, including signalization in anticipation of project. He said that the project would enhance economic development, improve safety, and improve connectivity to contiguous towns. He also noted that Route 1A is used by ambulances that run to and from Norwood Hospital.

Elizabeth Dennehy, Director of Community and Economic Development for the Town of Walpole, also emphasized the importance of the project to Walpole and the surrounding region in terms for economic development and public safety. She stated that the project is at the 25% design phase. She also pointed out that the Three Rivers Interlocal Council subregion has not had a project funded through the MPO in the last five years.

Margaret Walker, Engineer for the Town of Walpole, also emphasized the importance of the project for the redevelopment of the area. She noted that the project area has discontinuous sidewalks and no accommodations for bicyclists. She stated that this is both a local and regional issue.

Anthony Schiavi, Town Manager for the Town of Ashland, expressed support for the *Reconstruction on Route 126 (Ashland)* project. He was joined by the following supporters of the project: Puja Mehta, Office of State Senator Karen Spilka; Cait McAndrews, Office of State Representative Tom Sannicandro; Yolanda Greaves, Town of Ashland Board of Selectmen; Paula Parker; David Manugion, Ashland Department of Public Works; Sara Hines, Co-chair of the Ashland Redevelopment Authority; and Nat Strosberg, Ashland Town Planner.

Mr. Schiavi discussed the importance of the project to Ashland and the surrounding towns, particularly in regards to economic development, providing access to thousands of residents who live along the two-mile corridor, and safety for bicyclists and pedestrians. He stated that the project is important for Ashland's economic development future as there are major land parcels waiting for development, which will create jobs and tax revenue. He reported that the project is at the 25% design stage, and that the design was funded by a local meals tax. The project has been designed as a complete street project, a standard that the town has adopted.

Mr. Schiavi also addressed concerns raised before the MPO previously about right-of-way takings and wetland impacts. He reported that the Ashland planning board has voted unanimously to work with property owners to accommodate any future design changes. (Letters of support from some property owners were provided.) Also, the

town's Conservation Commission has reviewed the 25% design plans and determined that the mitigation for impacts on wetlands is appropriate. MassDOT has informed the town that these issues will not preclude advertising the project in FFY 2018. The project is supported by Ashland legislative leaders. The town is fully committed to the project and the proponents are requesting that it be programmed in the FFY 2018 element of the TIP. Also, the town also supports the MPO producing a five-year TIP.

Puja Mehta, Office of State Senator Karen Spilka, also underscored the importance of the Route 126 project to the Towns of Framingham and Holliston.

Ms. Mehta also expressed Senator Spilka's support for the *Reconstruction of Route 27 (Natick)* project.

William Chenard, Deputy Town Administrator for the Town of Natick, spoke in support of the Route 27 project and requested that the MPO maintain the project as programmed in the FFY 2019 element of the TIP. He remarked on the importance of the project for addressing a major north-south corridor and its part in an ongoing 40R project. He also noted that drainage improvements will be conducted along with this project. He was joined by Jeremy Marsette, Public Works Director for the Town of Natick, and Jamie Erickson, Community and Development Director.

Mr. Marsette pointed to the high score that the Route 27 project received in the TIP evaluation process. He noted that the Route 27 and *Cochituate Rail Trail, Phase 2* projects are complementary and should be completed in similar time frames to achieve the full benefits. The town has submitted 25% design plans for Route 27 to MassDOT and design public hearings are being planned. The town funded the 25% design plans. The project has support from town boards and commissions as well as many abutters to the roadway. He further discussed the roadway's importance as a prime bus route of the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority and for providing access to a commuter rail station and the U.S. Army Natick Soldier Systems Center, which employs 2,000 people. Recognizing the importance of the latter facility, the town advanced intersection improvements at Route 27 and Kansas Street; that project will be completed this summer. The town is also working on making improvements to other locations along the Route 27 corridor.

Mr. Erickson added that the Route 27 project is a top priority for the Town of Natick. He discussed the economic development work ongoing along the corridor and the need to improve connections to the commuter rail station and transit that serves nearby job centers.

Catherine Anderson, of the Office of State Senator Cynthia Creem, spoke on behalf of Senator Creem in support of the *Intersection and Signal Improvements at Route 9 and Village Square (Gateway East) (Brookline)* project. She was joined by the following: Mel Kleckner, Town Administrator for Brookline; Neil Wishinsky, Brookline Selectman; Todd M. Kirrane, Transportation Manager for Brookline; and Bob Bailey, Boston Children's Hospital.

Mr. Kleckner discussed the merits of the *Gateway East* project. The project will reunite neighborhoods currently separated by eight traffic lanes; make Brookline Village more accessible to all modes, including bicyclists and pedestrians; connect to the Emerald Necklace; and accommodate new commercial development, including the Brookline Place development. Regarding the latter, he noted that Children's Hospital will be helping to fund the local match for the project. The 25% design plans for the *Gateway East* project have been submitted to MassDOT, and issues regarding bicycle accommodation are being addressed. He asked that the MPO program the project in FFY 2017, noting that it would be problematic to program it later due to timing with private development and the Emerald Necklace projects.

Mr. Wishinsky then reported that the town will be presenting its plans to address bicycle accommodations in the *Gateway East* project to the public on May 13. He also noted the importance of the project as it addresses a roadway used by 44,000 vehicles a day and many ambulances. He asked that if the MPO must program the project at a later date that the delay is no more than one year.

Mr. Bailey spoke about the benefits of the *Gateway East* project in terms of providing access to the Longwood Medical Center and the new Brookline Place development. He also asked that the MPO not delay the *Gateway East* project significantly so that it can be coordinated with the work on the new development, which is already permitted and scheduled to be completed in 2018.

Jim Gillooly, City of Boston, commended the work that went into designing the *Gateway East* project.

Carmin Reiss, Board of Selectmen, Town of Concord, spoke in support of the *Improvements and Upgrades to the Concord Rotary (Routes 2, 2A, and 119) (Concord)* project. She noted that Route 2 is a major commuting corridor and that the rotary is a major bottleneck with a higher than average number of crashes. The project, she said, will address issues of safety, mobility, and impacts to neighborhoods from cut-through traffic. She also noted that benefits of coordinating the Route 2 improvements with the *Bruce Freeman Rail Trail* project. For the Route 2 project, the town plans to revive the

citizens' advisory committee that was active on the *Crosby's Corner* project. The rotary project will incorporate recommendations from a past CTPS study.

State Senator James Timilty spoke in support of the *Reconstruction of Route 1A (Walpole)* project and asked the MPO to invest in the project as the improvements are urgently needed. He noted that the Town of Walpole will take over the maintenance of the roadway in the future. Senator Timilty spoke on behalf of State Representatives Louis Kafka, John Rogers, Paul McMurtry, and Shawn Dooley.

Roland Bartl, Planning Director for the Town of Acton, thanked the MPO for its support for the *Bruce Freeman Rail Trail* project and he provided an update on the *Assabet River Rail Trail* project. He noted that the 75% design plans for the latter have been submitted and that the project will be ready for construction in August. The town is holding a public meeting about the project this evening.

Kristin Guichard, Assistant Planning Director for the Town of Acton, introduced a new project in the early stages of development that will address the intersection at Kelley's Corner in Acton. The project involves infrastructure improvements and zoning changes and is expected to support economic development and housing plans. The location is a heavily congested area in Acton's commercial district that attracts regional and local traffic. The project cost estimate is between \$8 million and \$10 million. This "complete streets" project involves widening the roadway, making sidewalks accessible, access management, creating turning lanes, and upgrading signals to meet modern standards. The town has spent \$277,000 to bring the project to the 10% design stage. The project will be reviewed by MassDOT's Project Review Committee shortly.

Timothy Kochan, MassDOT District 5, spoke in support of three projects: *Reconstruction of Route 1A (Walpole)*; *Reconstruction and Related Work on Derby Street from Pond Park Road to Cushing Street (Hingham) (ID# 607309)*; and *Intersection Improvements at Derby Street, Whiting Street (Route 53) and Gardner Street (Hingham) (ID# 600518)*. He noted that the Walpole project is at the 25% design stage and that MassDOT is awaiting the 75 % design plans. Both Hingham projects are at the 25% design stage. Project #607309 addresses safety issues at the ramps to Route 3 on Derby Street and includes ramp modifications, signalization, and multimodal accommodations along the corridor. A public design hearing is scheduled for May 6. Project #600518 is an intersection improvement project that includes signal upgrades, geometric improvements and bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. Combined, the Hingham projects are expected to cost between \$6 million and \$7 million.



Roger Fernandes, Engineer for the Town of Hingham, also advocated for the two projects in Hingham. He noted that there is overwhelming support for the projects in Hingham. Ten public meetings have been held. The engineering work is fully funded and there are no right-of-way or utility issues. He noted that the project has economic development benefits and that it scored highly in the MPO review process.

Amanda Griffith, Office of State Representative Frank Smizik, expressed the representative's support for the *Gateway East (Brookline)* project. She noted that the project will promote walkability, create opportunities for bicycling, and improve safety for pedestrians traveling from Brookline Village to Olmstead Park.

Natalia Penna, Office of State Representative Jeffery Sánchez, expressed the representative's support for the *Gateway East* project and asked that it be maintained as a priority.

William Friel, Town Administrator for the Town of Canton, spoke in support of the *Canton Interchange* project – the *Interchange Improvements at Interstates 93 and 95* and the *Ramp Construction on Interstate 95 (NB) and Improvements on Dedham Street/Canton Street (Canton, Norwood, Westwood)*. He noted that the town has sent a letter to the Governor, the Secretary, and the MPO Chair further discussing the project's merits and calling for the state to maintain its commitment, and for the MPO to keep the project – particularly the Dedham Street portion – programmed on the TIP. He discussed how the failure to implement agreed upon roadway improvements would be a detriment to public safety, worsen congestion, and negatively affect economic development. He noted that the nearby University Station development is well underway and businesses are already operating there. The Town of Canton has already spent \$2 million on the project and the Board of Selectmen recently approved a further expenditure of nearly \$600,000 for traffic calming measures on the Dedham Street corridor.

Michael Jaillet, Town Administrator for the Town of Westwood, also called for support for the *Canton Interchange* project noting that the towns have been advocating for the project for the past 42 years. He called for the state to complete its longstanding promise to finance the roadway improvements. He discussed the economic development that is underway in University Station area and how the expectation of roadway improvements is fueling economic development there.

The counsel for the developer of the University Station project (whose name was not recorded) further discussed the economic development underway at University Station, which includes one of the largest affordable housing projects in the region, a hotel, and

retail development. He noted that the project has created 1,000 construction jobs. Hiring has recently occurred for 900 other jobs and 900 more are expected by the end of the summer. The developer has invested \$272 million in the project so far as well as \$1 million to construct a retaining wall for on the Dedham Street corridor. He asked for continued support for the project.

Ken Krause, Medford Green Line Neighborhood Alliance, provided an update on the *Green Line Extension* project and asked for the MPO to maintain its commitment to the extension to Route 16. He noted that the project was originally envisioned as extending to Route 16, but that MassDOT separated it into two projects – Phase 1, the extension to College Avenue and Union Square, and Phase 2 the extension from College Avenue to Route 16. He noted that Phase 1 is in its third year of construction, funded by \$1 billion in federal monies, and that 93% of the projected ridership is expected to be achieved in the first year of operation. He then discussed the planned economic development along the Green Line where Tufts University is planning to construct buildings and an aquatic center near the new College Avenue Station, and Cummings Properties is planning to expand its campus. The Green Line will link these Medford campuses to the life science campuses in Cambridge. He also discussed the opportunity that the Green Line will bring for significant mode shift, noting that Tufts University is developing a transportation demand management plan that will significantly change the way people access the campus. It includes creating a mobility hub for connecting various transportation modes and improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

Owen MacDonald, Engineer for the Town of Weymouth, spoke in support of the *Intersection Improvements at Middle Street, Libbey Industrial Parkway and Tara Drive (Weymouth)* project. He noted the project's importance in terms of improving safety and mobility, and promoting economic development.

James Freas, Planning Director for the City of Newton, spoke in support of the *Reconstruction of Highland Avenue, Needham Street, and Charles River Bridge (Newton and Needham)* project and asked the MPO to program the project on the TIP. He also provided members with a letter of support from the legislative delegation for Newton and Needham. He noted that the project is a "complete streets" project that will add bicycle lanes and improve pedestrian accommodations along the corridor. Also, he noted that improvements to the corridor have been planned since the 1980s. Recently, a \$3.5 million MassWorks grant has been secured that will reduce the project cost. Lastly, he discussed the economic development benefits of the project noting that there is one million square feet of new office and commercial space and 390 housing units

coming on the Needham side, and that there is a 30 acre parcel on the Newton side that is being considered for new office, commercial, and residential space.

James Marsh, Community Development Director for the City of Lynn, advocated for the *Reconstruction on Route 129 (Lynn)* project. He noted that the project addresses the main access route into the heart of Lynn and that the roadway, which is in serious disrepair, carries 35,000 vehicles per day. He remarked on the resurgence that is occurring in downtown Lynn and the importance of providing safe access to the city. He also noted that there is a hospital within the project limits.

David Knowlton, Engineer for the City of Salem, advocated for the *Reconstruction of Bridge Street (Salem)* project and asked the MPO to maintain the project in the LRTP. He discussed the new developments in the project area and noted that the Bridge Street improvements would provide connections for bicyclists and pedestrians to new developments and housing.

Catherine Anderson, of the Office of State Senator Cynthia Creem, spoke on behalf of Senator Creem in support of the *Reconstruction of Highland Avenue, Needham Street, and Charles River Bridge (Newton and Needham)* project.

## **2. Chair's Report—David Mohler, MassDOT**

D. Mohler reported that MassDOT has prepared its new Capital Investment Plan (CIP). At this time, the expectation is that the Commonwealth cannot afford to fund the *Canton Interchange* project with non-federal aid.

## **3. Committee Chairs' Reports**

Sreelatha Allam, Chair of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Committee, reported that the Committee is scheduled to meet today after the MPO meeting to discuss the FFY 2016 UPWP budget and project list.

## **4. Regional Transportation Advisory Council Report—Mike Gowing, Chair, Advisory Council**

There was none.

## **5. Executive Director's Report—Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS)**

K. Quackenbush informed members that staff has distributed materials about the Open Meeting Law. Members were asked to sign the materials and return them to the staff.

He also announced that this is the time for the annual review of the MPO's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). If members or the public wish to take the opportunity to raise any issues concerning the MOU, they may do so.

Lastly, he announced that public participation activities regarding the MPO's certification documents (the LRTP, TIP, and UPWP) have been scheduled for May and June. The documents will be discussed at upcoming subregional meetings of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and MPO workshops.

## **6. Work Program—Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, CTPS**

K. Quackenbush introduced the work program for the *Fairmount Line Station Access Analysis*. Through this study, staff will select four stations along the Fairmount commuter rail line and analyze them to determine where there are impediments to accessing the stations by bicycle or walking. Staff will make recommendations for how to overcome those impediments.

### ***Discussion***

J. Gillooly asked if fare structures will be considered in the study, as cost is a factor relating to ridership. K. Quackenbush replied no, that the study will only address physical impediments to accessing the stations.

A motion to approve the work program for the *Fairmount Line Station Access Analysis* study was made by At-Large Town of Arlington (Laura Wiener), and seconded by the City of Boston (J. Gillooly). The motion carried.

## **7. Meeting Minutes—Maureen Kelly, MPO Staff**

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 19 was made by MAPC (Eric Bourassa), and seconded by the City of Boston (J. Gillooly). The motion carried. The At-Large Town of Arlington (L. Wiener) abstained.

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of April 2 was made by MAPC (E. Bourassa), and seconded by the City of Boston (J. Gillooly). The motion carried.

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of April 9 was made by MAPC (E. Bourassa), and seconded by the City of Boston (J. Gillooly). The motion carried.

## **8. Transportation Improvement Program—Sean Pfalzer, MPO Staff**

D. Mohler introduced the discussion about the FFYs 2016-19 TIP by suggesting that, because of the number of motions expected, members make all of their motions today and then table them until the next meeting on May 7. Members concurred. Staff was directed to post all of the proposed motions on the MPO's website prior to the May 7

meeting so that the public and project proponents would be aware of the upcoming actions.

S. Pflazer then gave a presentation in which he discussed the letters of support for projects received by staff, the staff recommendation for programming projects on the FFYs 2016-19 TIP, and project evaluations. Members were provided with copies of the letters, memoranda describing the staff recommendation and evaluations, a table showing the staff recommendation, and a spreadsheet showing the project evaluations.

In developing the staff recommendation for programming projects on the TIP, staff considered the readiness of projects for construction, their status on the First-Tier List of Projects, geographic equity, project cost, and priorities in the LRTP for low-cost investment strategies.

The following proposed updates were reflected in the staff recommendation table:

- *Gateway East (Brookline)* project moved from FFY 2016 to FFY 2018 because of concerns about the design schedule
- *Reconstruction of Route 85 (Marlborough)* project moved from FFY 2016 to FFY 2017 because of concerns it will not be ready for advertising in FFY 2016
- *Reconstruction of Massachusetts Avenue (Lexington)* added to FFY 2016 as funding was made available from the movement of the Brookline and Marlborough projects in that year
- *Intersection Improvements at Middle Street, Libbey Industrial Parkway and Tara Drive (Weymouth)* project added to FFY 2016 as funding was made available from the movement of the Brookline and Marlborough projects in that year
- *Reconstruction and Related Work on Derby Street from Pond Park Road to Cushing Street (Hingham) (ID# 607309) and Intersection Improvements at Derby Street, Whiting Street (Route 53) and Gardner Street (Hingham) (ID# 600518)* added to FFY 2017 because of available funding in that year resulting from the changes above
- Additional funding available from changes above applied to the *Route 128 Add-a-Lane (Needham and Wellesley)* project's cash flows in FFYs 2016 and 2017
- *Reconstruction on Route 1A (Walpole)* project added to FFY 2018 because funding was made available in that year due to the changes in cash flows of the *Route 128 Add-a-Lane* project
- Funding programmed in FFY 2019 for ongoing commitments: *Green Line Extension to Route 16 (College Avenue to Route 16, Medford)* and *Reconstruction and Widening on Route 18 (Weymouth)*

- The following Tier One projects programmed in FFY 2019: *Signal and Intersection Improvements on Route 135 (Hopkinton)*; *Reconstruction of Ferry Street (Everett)*; *Reconstruction of Route 27 (Natick)*; *Improvements on Boylston Street (Boston)*; *Resurfacing and Intersection Improvements on Route 16 (Milford)*; and *Reconstruction on Route 129 (Lynn)*
- \$1.5 million of funding was left unallocated in FFY 2019 because no projects could be identified to fit into the funding constraints

An update regarding the readiness of several projects was provided based on consultation with the MassDOT Highway Division. The following projects are expected to be ready for advertising earlier than previously expected:

- *Reconstruction of Highland Avenue, Needham Street, and Charles River Bridge (Newton and Needham)* project has the potential to be advertised in FFY 2018
- *Reconstruction on Route 126 (Ashland)* project has the potential to be advertised in FFY 2018
- *Reconstruction on Route 1A (Walpole)* project has the potential to be advertised in FFY 2017

### **Discussion**

D. Mohler asked about the evaluation status of the two Hingham projects. S. Pfalzer replied that project #600518 was the lower scoring project, with a score of 59. (Project #607309 scored 71.)

Lourenço Dantas, Massachusetts Port Authority, inquired about the readiness of the *Middlesex Turnpike Improvements, Phase 3 (Bedford, Billerica, and Burlington)* and *Reconstruction and Widening on Route 18 (Weymouth)* projects, both of which are programmed in FFY 2016. David Anderson, MassDOT, replied that MassDOT is watching both projects closely. A variance from the Wetland Protection Act is still required for the *Middlesex Turnpike* project. The *Route 18* project design is proceeding well, however, impacts to abutting property owners must be addressed. There are about 200 property owners affected by this project.

E. Bourassa asked about the extent of the right-of-way needed for the *Route 18* project. D. Anderson explained that the right-of-way needed includes both residential and commercial properties, and that the takings would be significant. MassDOT has eminent domain power, but the agency is looking to be as fair as possible to the property owners.

Christine Stickney, South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree), asked if MassDOT must acquire 200 parcels still, or if some of the right-of-way has already been acquired.

D. Anderson confirmed that MassDOT must still certify that it has right-of-way on the 200 parcels.

Dennis Crowley, South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway), asked for clarification about whether the eminent domain option would be executed by the state or the town, and how it would be handled if there is opposition from the town or property owners. D. Anderson explained that, in this case, the highway is state owned, so the state holds the eminent domain power.

Trish Domigan, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., provided more detail about the status of the *Middlesex Turnpike* project. The project, which has gone through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, has received a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The project proponents wish to confirm that the FONSI is still active for all phases of the project. Regarding right-of-way needs, the Town of Bedford has secured half of the land needed and the Town of Billerica has voted in town meeting to use eminent domain to acquire the land in that town.

L. Dantas asked if any other projects are ready for programming in FFY 2016 in the event that the *Middlesex Turnpike* or *Route 18* projects are not ready for advertising in that year. The MassDOT representatives replied that it may be difficult to find projects ready for advertising.

Mike Gowing, Regional Transportation Advisory Council, asked why staff selected the particular years for reprogramming the *Gateway East (Brookline)* and *Reconstruction of Route 85 (Marlborough)* projects. S. Pfalzer replied that the decision was made in consultation with MassDOT Highway Division. MPO staff defers to MassDOT on questions of project readiness. Significant right-of-way is required for the *Route 85* project.

J. Gillooly then discussed some of the intentions of the City of Boston. He expressed interest in getting input from MassDOT regarding the programming for FFY 2017, and the possibility of moving the *Gateway East (Brookline)* project into that year if the project would be ready then. He also expressed interest in programming \$20 million for the *Reconstruction of Rutherford Avenue (Boston)* project in the FFY 2020 element of the LRTP, and programming the *Traffic Signal Improvements at 10 Intersections (Boston)* project in the TIP. The latter is a project that affects environmental justice communities in the Boston neighborhoods of Roxbury, Mattapan, East Boston, Dorchester, and the South End. Several of the proposed signal upgrades will allow for traffic signals to be operated from the city's traffic operations center.

D. Mohler asked about when the city expects the *Traffic Signal Improvements at 10 Intersections (Boston)* project to be ready for advertisement. J. Gillooly replied that the project could be ready by FFY 2016.

D. Crowley raised the issue of preparing a five-year TIP, covering FFY 2016-20, and suggested that the issue be considered today. (This would allow members to make recommendations for programming in FFY 2020.) D. Mohler reported that MassDOT has discussed this possibility with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). FHWA responded that it would consider the programming in the fifth year of the TIP to be illustrative. Further, for the purposes of preparing the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which is a compilation of all the TIPs in the state, FHWA would require all of the MPOs in the state to prepare a five-year TIP. This is not possible at this time. Therefore, MassDOT is suggesting that the Boston Region MPO may prepare a five-year TIP, but only the first four years would be reported to FHWA in the STIP.

Dennis Giombetti, MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham), expressed support for leaving open the concept of a five-year TIP. He also expressed his intention to make a motion to move the *Reconstruction of Route 126 (Ashland)* project onto the TIP.

Several other members announced their proposed motions for consideration at the meeting of May 7.

The City of Boston (J. Gillooly) proposed the following motions:

- Program \$20 million of the *Reconstruction of Rutherford Avenue (Boston)* project in the FFY 2020 element of the LRTP and TIP with the remainder of the project cost programmed thereafter in the FFYs 2021-25 time band of the LRTP
- Program the *Traffic Signal Improvements at 10 Intersections (Boston)* project in either FFY 2016 or 2017; if in FFY 2016, reduce funds in that year for the *Route 128 Add-a-Lane (Needham and Wellesley)* (or another project); if in FFY 2017, move out *Intersection Improvements at Derby Street (Hingham)* (ID# 600518) (or another project)
- Move the *Gateway East (Brookline)* project to FFY 2017 if possible, based on MassDOT's assessment of project readiness

J. Gillooly discussed the rationale for moving out the Hingham project. This project had a lower evaluation score than the Boston project. Also, the Hingham project is only at the 25% design stage while the Boston project is at the 75% design stage.



The MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham) (D. Giombetti) proposed the following motion:

- Program the *Reconstruction of Route 126 (Ashland)* project in FFY 2018; move the *Reconstruction of Route 1A (Walpole)* project out of FFY 2018

D. Giombetti discussed the rationale for replacing the Walpole project with the Ashland project, which is based on the higher evaluation rating of the Ashland project. Also, questions about the readiness of the Ashland project have been resolved with MassDOT confirming that the project will be ready for advertisement in FFY 2018.

The At-Large City of Newton (D. Koses) proposed the following motion:

- Program the *Reconstruction of Highland Avenue and Needham Street (Newton/Needham)* project in FFY 2018; move the *Reconstruction of Route 1A (Walpole)* project out of FFY 2018

D. Koses explained the rationale for this motion. He noted that the MPO has heard many comments about the benefits of the project in terms of improving safety, creating “complete streets,” and promoting economic development. He also pointed out that the project has for years been the highest rated project based on the MPO’s evaluation criteria.

Tom O’Rourke, Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce), asked why the cost of the *Ramp Construction on Interstate 95 (NB) and Improvements on Dedham Street/Canton Street (Canton, Norwood, Westwood)* project has increased from \$38 million to \$51 million and whether the project could be phased. D. Anderson noted that part of the reason for the cost increase is due to utility relocation costs, and that from a construction standpoint it does not make sense to phase this project. D. Mohler added that there is a possibility that the Commonwealth may receive redistribution funds at the end of the year and that a project such as this one could be a candidate to receive those funds; however, it is unlikely that redistribution funds will be enough to fund the entire project.

Steve Olanoff, Three Rivers Interlocal Council, noted that the *Dedham Street* corridor project is programmed in the FFY 2015 element of the current TIP (for \$38 million) and is ready to be advertised now. He asked what the advertising cost would be, if the project were advertised today. D. Anderson replied that the current cost estimate is \$52 million and that MassDOT is in the process of determining what portion of the cost is federal aid eligible. He also noted that the project design is nearly complete and the

permitting is complete. The right-of-way certificate is expected to be in place by September.

A motion to table the aforementioned motions until the meeting of May 7 was made by the MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham) (D. Giombetti), and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa).

During the discussion of this motion, staff was asked to record and post the proposed motions on the MPO's website. Staff was also advised to identify projects that could be made ready and programmed in the FFY 2018 element of the TIP, in the event that the motions to replace the Walpole project pass leaving several million dollars available in that element.

In response to a question about adding funds to the *Route 128 Add-a-Lane* project, D. Mohler cautioned members about changing the cash flows of multi-year projects already under construction. He noted, however, that there may be some limited flexibility to adjust cash flows on this six-year project.

Prior to the May 7 meeting, MassDOT will confirm the readiness and costs of the projects under consideration for programming.

Members resumed making proposed motions for consideration on May 7.

The Three Rivers Interlocal Council (S. Olanoff) proposed the following motion:

- Program the *Reconstruction of Route 1A (Walpole)* project in FFY 2019 in the event that the project is moved out of FFY 2018 by other motions

This motion is designed to preserve funding for the Walpole project if it is affected by other motions.

L. Wiener asked if MassDOT expects to have more information regarding the readiness issues of the *Middlesex Turnpike Improvements, Phase 3 (Bedford, Billerica, and Burlington)* and *Reconstruction and Widening on Route 18 (Weymouth)* projects by May 7. D. Anderson replied that MassDOT may not have clarity on those issues by then.

Richard Canale, At-Large Town of Lexington, suggested that the *Traffic Signal Improvements at 10 Intersections (Boston)* project be programmed in FFY 2016 and noted that there should be real projects programmed in that year in the event that one of

the projects noted above is not ready. He also reported that the *Reconstruction of Massachusetts Avenue (Lexington)* project will be ready in FFY 2016.

L. Dantas suggested that for this programming exercise, the MPO use the costs of projects in current dollars rather than the costs adjusted for inflation in outer years. D. Mohler noted, however, that in the document released for public review, the FHWA will require the project costs to reflect the year of expenditure (i.e. project costs are inflated 4% each year). Ken Miller, FHWA, confirmed that federal regulations require showing the inflated costs. John Romano, MassDOT Highway Division, suggested that staff prepare a chart showing the adjusted cost of projects for each year in which they could potentially be programmed.

Members then voted on the motion to table the proposed motions on the TIP until the meeting of May 7. The motion carried.

A motion to direct staff to prepare a five-year TIP, covering FFYs 2016-20, for the highway portion of the TIP with projects programmed in FFY 2020 considered illustrative (the FFY 2020 year would be for MPO planning purpose only and would not be reported in the State Transportation Improvement Program) was made by the South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway), and seconded by the At-Large City of Newton (D. Koses).

During a discussion of the motion, E. Bourassa expressed some concern that this action would result in new projects being proposed for the FFY 2020 element rather than allowing the MPO to focus on projects already in the pipeline.

In response to a question, D. Mohler clarified that projects already programmed in the FFY 2020 element of the LRTP would be included in the FFY 2020 element of the TIP.

Members then voted on the motion to prepare a five-year TIP. The motion carried. The South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree) (C. Stickney) voted no. The Massachusetts Port Authority (L. Dantas) abstained.

## **9. Long-Range Transportation Plan—Anne McGahan, MPO Staff**

As was done for the TIP discussion, members proposed motions relating to the LRTP, *Charting Progress to 2040*, for potential action at the meeting of May 7.

D. Mohler noted that motions that members proposed for the TIP concerning projects that would also be programmed in the LRTP (i.e. projects that add capacity to the system or that cost more than \$20 million) will hold true for the LRTP discussion on May 7. They include the proposed motions regarding the *Reconstruction of Rutherford*

*Avenue (Boston)* and the *Reconstruction of Highland Avenue and Needham Street (Newton/Needham)* projects.

Members proposed additional motions for consideration on May 7.

The North Shore Task Force (A. Clausen) proposed the following motion:

- Retain the *Reconstruction of Bridge Street (Salem)* project in the FFY 2020 element of the LRTP

It was noted that if this project were removed from the FFYs 2016-20 time band, there would be no project for North Shore Task Force subregion in that time band. This motion will be pending MassDOT's assessment of whether the project can be made ready by FFY 2020.

The Three Rivers Interlocal Council (S. Olanoff) proposed the following motion:

- Program MPO target funds for the *Canton Interchange* project – the *Interchange Improvements at Interstates 93 and 95* and the *Ramp Construction on Interstate 95 (NB) and Improvements on Dedham Street/Canton Street (Canton, Norwood, Westwood)* – in the LRTP if non-federal aid is not available; program each phase of the project separately

A motion to table the aforementioned motions until the meeting of May 7 was made by MassDOT (D. Mohler), and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

Following the discussion of motions, A. McGahan gave an update on several matters. She noted that staff has updated spreadsheets on the evaluations of Major Infrastructure projects to include the addition of the *Cypher Street Extension (Boston)* project. Also, staff was informed that the proponents of the *Reconstruction and Widening on Route 1 (Malden, Revere, Saugus)* project are considering phasing the project and that they are preparing comments to submit to the MPO.

She reminded members that, at the meeting of May 7, the MPO will have to make a decision about whether to program the *Route 3 South Express Toll Lanes* project and agree upon percentages for programming funding in the LRTP investment program categories.

Lastly, she noted that staff is in the process of developing the LRTP chapters and will post them on the MPO website as they become available.

### ***Discussion***

C. Stickney inquired about the cost estimate for the *Route 3 South Express Toll Lanes* project. A. McGahan replied that the estimate is \$800 million; staff will confirm the cost estimate by the May 7 meeting.

J. Gillooly asked staff to provide a breakdown of the current proposed percentages for programming funding in the LRTP investment program categories prior to the May 7 meeting.

In response to a question from K. Miller, A. McGahan clarified that the scoring system for LRTP projects was based on the MPO's new goals and objectives for the LRTP.

J. Romano alerted members that there is a possibility that MassDOT will make a motion on May 7 to remove all projects from the outer two time bands of the LRTP (FFYs 2031-40). Clinton Bench further explained that recommendations from the Project Selection Advisory Council are forthcoming and that it may be in the best interest of the region to not identify specific projects in those outer time bands, but to focus on identifying strategies for programming in those years.

M. Gowing expressed the need to notify proponents of projects that may be affected in the outer time bands. C. Bench confirmed that all MPO actions and the status of those projects will be communicated to the public.

K. Miller asked if MassDOT is contemplating taking a similar action with the LRTPs of other MPOs in the Commonwealth and pointed out that this action would have an impact on air quality modeling. C. Bench replied that the Boston Region MPO programs the outer years of the LRTP with more specificity than other MPOs in the Commonwealth. He noted that FHWA's point is well taken and will be considered.

## **10. State Implementation Plan**

This item was deferred to the May 7 meeting.

## **11. Members Items**

C. Bench announced that he will be leaving MassDOT to take a new position. He praised the MPO members for their commitment. Members also applauded C. Bench for his service.

## **12. Recess**

A motion to recess until May 7 was made by the MassDOT Highway Division (J. Romano), and seconded by the North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) (Tina Cassidy). The motion carried.



## Attendance

<b>Members</b>	<b>Representatives and Alternates</b>
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Mayor Carlo DeMaria
At-Large City (City of Newton)	Jay Monty
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Lexington)	Laura Wiener
City of Boston (Boston Redevelopment Authority)	Richard Canale
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Lara Mérida
Federal Highway Administration	Jim Gillooly
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Kadzis
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Ken Miller
MassDOT Highway Division	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Port Authority	David Mohler
MBTA	Clinton Bench
MBTA Advisory Board	David Anderson
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	John Romano
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham)	Lourenço Dantas
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Bedford)	Janice Ramsay
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)	Paul Regan
North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn)	Eric Bourassa
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Dennis Giombetti
South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree)	Roy Sorenson
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	Aaron Clausen
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce)	Tina Cassidy
	Mike Gowing
	Christine Stickney
	Dennis Crowley
	Tom O'Rourke
	Steve Olanoff

<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Sreelatha Allam	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Catherine Anderson	Office of State Senator Cynthia Creem
Bob Bailey	Boston Children's Hospital
Roland Bartl	Town of Acton
Rich Benevento	World Tech Engineering
Sarah Bradbury	MassDOT District 3
William Buckley	Office of State Representative John Rogers
William Chenard	Town of Natick
Darren Conboy	Jacobs Engineering Group
David Daltorio	Town of Hopkinton
Elizabeth Dennehy	Town of Walpole
Trish Domigan	Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
Brian Drydale	Town of Westwood
Carolyn Dykema	State Representative
Jamie Errickson	Town of Natick
John Fernandes	State Representative
Roger Fernandes	Town of Hingham
Shawn Finn	IBEW Local103
James Freas	City of Newton
William Friel	Town of Canton
William Galvin	State Representative
Yolanda Greaves	Town of Ashland, Board of Selectmen
Amanda Griffith	Office of State Representative Frank Smizik
Kristin Guichard	Town of Acton
Eric Halvorsen	Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Sara Hines	Ashland Redevelopment Authority
Michael Jaillet	Town of Westwood
Norman Khamalo	Town of Hopkinton
William Kingkade	Town of Milford
Todd M. Kirrane	Town of Brookline
Mel Kleckner	Town of Brookline
David Knowlton	City of Salem
Timothy Kochan	MassDOT District 5
Ken Krause	Medford Green Line Neighborhood Alliance
David Linhart	Town of Westwood
Rafael Mares	Conservation Law Foundation
Owen MacDonald	Town of Weymouth
Diane Madden	MassDOT



<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
David Manugion	Town of Ashland, Department of Public Works
Jeremy Marsette	Town of Natick
James Marsh	City of Lynn
Cait McAndrews	Office of State Representative Tom Sannicandro
Owen McDonald	Town of Weymouth
Doug McGarra	Town of Canton / Foley Hoag LLP
Anne McKinnon	Jacobs Engineering Group
Puja Mehta	Office of State Senator Karen Spilka
Richard P. Merson	Town of Needham, Department of Public Works
John Morgan	CHA Consulting
Bob O'Brien	Town of Walpole, Department of Public Works
John Olivieri	MASSPIRG
Paula Parker	
Natalia Penna	Office of State Representative Jeffery Sánchez
Essek Petrie	HNTB
Constance Raphael	MassDOT
Vonnie Reis	Town of Milford
Carmin Reiss	Town of Concord, Board of Selectmen
Joe Reynolds	Town of Braintree
Anthony Schiavi	Town of Ashland
Patrick Shield	Office of State Senator Jim Timilty
Ellen Spring	Office of State Representative Denise Garlick
Arthur Strang	Cambridge resident
Nat Strosberg	Town of Ashland
James Timilty	State Senator
Melisa Tintocalis	Town of Lexington
Michael Trepanier	MassDOT
Richard Villani	Town of Milford
Margaret Walker	Town of Walpole
Ken Weismantel	Town of Hopkinton
Emily Wentworth	Town of Hingham
John Westerling	Town of Hopkinton

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<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Neil Wishinsky	Town of Brookline
Wig Zamore	Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership / Mystic View Task Force

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**MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff**

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Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director  
Robin Mannion, Deputy Executive Director

Maureen Kelly  
Anne McGahan  
Elizabeth Moore  
Scott Peterson  
Sean Pfalzer  
Natalie Raffol  
Pam Wolfe

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