

Memorandum for the Record

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

February 16, 2017 Meeting

10:00 AM – 11:16 AM, State Transportation Building, Conference Rooms 2&3, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

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

Decisions

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization agreed to the following:

- Approve the minutes of the meeting of January 19, 2017

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

See attendance on page 7.

2. Public Comments

There were none.

3. Chair's Report—*David Mohler, MassDOT*

There was none.

4. Committee Chairs' Reports

There were none.

5. Regional Transportation Advisory Council Report—*Tegin Bennett, Chair, Regional Transportation Advisory Council*

T. Bennett shared that the Advisory Council met on February 8 to discuss the 3C documentation process, RTA representation on the MPO Board, and the proposed Public Participation Plan Amendment currently out for a 45-day public review period. She reported that Advisory Council members expressed concern at the shortening of public comment periods proposed by the Amendment, and will be submitting a formal comment letter. Members believed the change would make it more challenging for certain stakeholders to comment. In particular, bodies meeting monthly, organizations with many layers of internal review and approval processes, and those not as engaged in the MPO process were mentioned. Members questioned the necessity of applying the

shortened period to all three certification documents, and asked whether this is the appropriate way to accommodate a schedule shift. They asked if it was possible for federal agencies to provide the numbers necessary to program the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) earlier so development can commence earlier. Advisory Council members asked that the MPO consider the impact of a shortened public comment period on various stakeholders and what other adjustments can be made to streamline document production.

6. Executive Director's Report—Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, MPO Staff

K. Quackenbush reminded members that the March 2 meeting will take place at the Wellesley Free Library. Details and directions will be provided in advance of the meeting. He introduced the new Manager of the Transportation Systems Analysis group at the MPO Staff, Florence Ngai.

7. Approval of January 19, 2017, MPO meeting minutes—Róisín Foley, MPO Staff

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of January 19, 2017 was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (Eric Bourassa), and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (Paul Regan). The motion carried.

8. Performance-Based Planning and Programming (PBPP): Update on Federal Requirements and Status of the MPO's Activities—Michelle Scott and Anne McGahan, MPO Staff

M. Scott and A. McGahan presented on topics related to the MPO's Performance-Based Planning and Programming (PBPP). Federal agencies have finalized performance measure rules and MPOs must respond to new requirements. The Boston MPO's planning processes already include many PBPP elements. To build on this foundation, in the coming months, staff will update members on PBPP developments and ask them to approve measures, targets, and other parts of the PBPP process.

Materials

1. Performance-based Planning and Programming: a multi-page handbook discussing the broader concepts and activities related to performance-based planning requirements
2. Key Decisions for the MPO and Short-Term Timeline: An extra sheet that highlights key upcoming decisions related to PBPP, and when they will happen. Staff will update this table as schedules and activities evolve.
3. Performance-based Planning and Programming PowerPoint presentation

PBPP Presentation

PBPP applies data to inform decisions and help achieve desired outcomes for the region's multimodal transportation systems. The process is cyclical and has three phases, outlined on page 3 of the handbook. The phases are Plan, Program, and Monitor and Evaluate.

PBPP flows from the national goals (page 5 of the handbook) established by MAP-21 in 2012, and federal rules set by USDOT in response to that legislation. States and MPOs are required to set targets (i.e. levels of performance to achieve in a specific timeframe) for federally required measures. States, MPOs, and public transit operators must coordinate on target-setting. MPOs can support state targets or set their own. PBPP allows MPO members to better understand how their spending choices affect outcomes, enhances accountability and transparency, and integrates planning processes.

Different aspects of PBPP will be emphasized in different MPO certification documents. Performance reports in the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP,) emphasize system performance and progress being made on performance measures. The performance report in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) will emphasize the links between proposed investments and MPO priorities and will describe how these investments may help achieve targets. Federal agencies will look at MPO performance as part of transportation planning process reviews and federal planning findings for the Massachusetts Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which includes individual MPO TIPs.

MPOs should have a PBPP process that not only meets federal requirements, but also the unique needs of an MPO. Federally-required measures, target setting, and reporting form a basis for the MPO to add on other measures and targets of regional interest and significance. The Boston Region MPO has already laid the groundwork for an effective PBPP process, which can be seen on pages 10 and 11 of the PBPP handbook.

The first finalized federal rule in response to MAP-21 relates to safety performance measures and has gone into effect. Others have been finalized and are expected to go into effect later this year. States will develop their targets for federally required highway safety performance measures during the first half of this year and report them this summer. In the six months that follow, the MPO will decide whether to support state targets, or set separate MPO targets. As these decisions are made, the MPO will explore other possible measures, continue ongoing development of the TIP and LRTP, and build on the PBPP requirements of these documents. Staff will continue coordinating with Commonwealth offices and agencies, other MPOs, transit agencies,

and other stakeholders on targets, reporting available measures and data in the TIP, and considering safety performance measures and targets.

Discussion

P. Regan asked M. Scott to clarify that the safety rule is the only federally mandated rule MPOs needs to deal with in the next six months. M. Scott said that is the main rule, though staff is also keeping an eye on what the MBTA is working on with respect to transit asset management measures. More information related to other measures is expected in March.

Jim Gillooly (City of Boston) (Boston Transportation Department) asked if M. Scott was aware of a specific congestion performance measure cited by an advocate. M. Scott replied that measures relating to congestion can be found on page 7 of the handbook. They agreed to speak more specifically outside of the meeting.

Richard Canale (At-Large Town) (Town of Lexington) asked about the process of deciding possible differences between State and MPO targets. M. Scott explained that MPO staff is discussing new safety rules and data sources with other MPOs and the state via meetings of the Transportation Manager's Group. These meetings are laying the groundwork for MPOs and the state to be on the same page with target-setting, including what it will mean for MPOs to support a state target.

E. Bourassa asked how scenario planning fits into this process. M. Scott clarified that scenario planning represents an opportunity to inform and test performance measures the MPO wants to pursue.

P. Regan remarked that some of the new safety rules relate to data the MPO already collects i.e. crash rates. He asked how staff is planning for the ability to provide data beyond what is currently collected. M. Scott responded that part of the process will be identifying gaps so that resources can be put towards obtaining data for new metrics.

Steve Olanoff (Member of the Public) remarked that cost-effectiveness was not mentioned as a required measure. A. McGahan responded that staff has been discussing how to measure cost-effectiveness, particularly as part of the TIP development process. Staff is working with Transportation4America to identify ways they can help the MPO with this task. E. Bourassa added that T4America has the ability to collect data around how other MPOs across the country measure cost/benefit. Whether the MPO wants to include cost-effectiveness as part of its project evaluations will largely be a separate discussion from performance measures.

Dennis Crowley (South West Advisory Planning Committee) (Town of Medway) asked whether the state sets performance measures internally or in conjunction with MPOs. D. Mohler responded that none of these are set entirely internally, although they may be done by different departments within MassDOT. D. Crowley also asked whether the documents presented at this meeting represent a duplication of effort on the part of staff. A. McGahan replied that the document is fairly basic, but that it does include information specific to the process in the Boston region. M. Scott added that staff is sharing their PBPP materials with members of the Transportation Manager's Group and others, which should help avoid duplication of effort. E. Bourassa added that the MPO is required to set specific targets and that these are unique to each region. J. Gillooly asked if the federal government has indicated whether there will be repercussions if targets are not met. M. Scott answered that the more stringent requirements are at the state level. The federal agencies have said that they will not be directly assessing MPOs in the same way. Targets will likely come into play during the certification review process.

Performance Dashboard

A. McGahan built on M. Scott's presentation by demonstrating a new tool that MPO staff has developed to aid in target setting, trend monitoring, and outcome reporting as part of PBPP. The "State of the Region's Transportation System" Performance Dashboard is an online application that visually presents the data associated with various measures. Currently, the Dashboard includes information on performance measures required by federal regulations like crashes, congestion, bridge and pavement condition, and also includes measures that the MPO is interested in including the presence of sidewalks and bicycle facilities and demographic information associated with the MPO's transportation equity program. The dashboard will be revised as the MPO develops new performance measures and sets targets. A link will be sent to members so they can provide feedback to staff. The Dashboard will eventually be included on the MPO's website as part of a page on the PBPP process.

Discussion

Laura Gilmore (Massport) asked if staff is considering other measures to add to the dashboard, particularly those related to transit access or freight. A. McGahan responded that staff will add measures and targets to the dashboard as they are developed by the MPO. Federal rules specifically require a freight movement performance measure.

T. Bennett asked about the possibility of representing crashes as a rate. A. McGahan responded that the federally required safety measures includes some rate-oriented measures, so this will need to be done going forward.

J. Gillooly noted that the sidewalk data currently on the dashboard does not account for condition. A. McGahan responded that the federal government has no required measure related to the quality of sidewalks, but that this may be an area where the MPO wants to create its own measure beyond what is required.

Rafael Mares (Conservation Law Foundation) asked about the existence of data related to Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Vehicle Miles Traveled. A. McGahan responded that the collection of this data is underway as part the requirements for the Global Warming Solutions Act. The federal System Reliability rule, which has not yet been finalized, includes a measure regarding carbon dioxide levels as well.

E. Bourassa asked about next steps. A. McGahan responded that staff will hopefully come back to the board in April to discuss scenarios to pursue, as well as to present more information on the safety rules.

K. Quackenbush acknowledged the help of MPO Staff's IT group with the development of the dashboard, particularly Ben Krepp and Beatrice Jin.

9. Members Items

J. Gillooly announced that the next public meeting regarding the Rutherford/Sullivan Square project will be on February 28 at 6 PM at the Knights of Columbus on Bedford Street.

D. Mohler related that TIP targets were released to MPOs on Friday, February 10 and Readiness Days are being held on February 16 and 17.

10. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (P. Regan). The motion carried.

Attendance

Members

Representatives and Alternates

At-Large City (City of Everett)	Jay Monty
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	Laura Wiener
At-Large Town (Town of Lexington)	Richard Canale
City of Boston (Boston Planning & Development Agency)	Jim Fitzgerald
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Jim Gillooly
Federal Highway Administration	
Federal Transit Administration	
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	David Mohler
MassDOT Highway Division	John Romano
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	Eric Waaramaa
Massachusetts Port Authority	Laura Gilmore
MBTA Advisory Board	Paul Regan
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Bedford)	
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)	Denise Deschamps
North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn)	
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Tegin Bennett
South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree)	
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	Dennis Crowley
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC)	Tom O'Rourke

Other Attendees Affiliation

Matt Moran	Boston Planning & Development Agency
Sarah Philbrick	MAPC
Deborah Finnigan	City of Quincy
Steve Olanoff	TRIC
Ellen Spring	Office of State Rep. Denise Garlick
Rafael Mares	Conservation Law Foundation

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director
Lourenço Dantas
Róisín Foley
Ali Kleyman
Ben Krepp
Robin Mannion
Anne McGahan
Florence Ngai
Jen Rowe
Michelle Scott
