

Draft Memorandum for the Record Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meeting

May 3, 2012 Meeting

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, State Transportation Building, Conference Rooms 2 & 3, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

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

Decisions

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization agreed to the following:

- release an amendment to the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), *Paths to a Sustainable Region*, for a 30-day public review period
- approve the minutes of the meeting April 19

Meeting Agenda

1. Public Comments

Wig Zamore, Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership, expressed appreciation to the MPO for programming the *Green Line Extension to Route 16* project in the draft FFYs 2013-16 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He also expressed support for the MPO's work program for the *South Station Expansion Support*. He raised the issue of the lack of an MBTA maintenance and repair facility on the south side and suggested that this issue be addressed, possibly during the course of the study. He suggested Wyatt Circle as a possible location for such a facility.

Mayor Scott Galvin of the City of Woburn asked the MPO to support a proposal by the city to amend the LRTP to reprogram two Woburn projects – the *New Boston Street Bridge* and *Montvale Avenue* projects – so that they will be moved from the FFYs 2020-25 timeband to the FFYs 2016-20 timeband. He noted that discretionary funding is available in the earlier timeband to accommodate the proposed amendment.

Franny Osmond, Acton Transportation Advisory Committee, asked the MPO to support the Town of Acton's Dial-A-Ride program, which is an applicant for Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom Program funds. (This program was previously funded through the MPO's Clean Air and Mobility Program.) She noted that the Dial-A-Ride program has been serving the developmentally disabled, the visually impaired, and young adults. She stated that the program has been working well, in concert with other programs, including the MAGIC subregion's suburban mobility program, and a state grant program that is enabling GPS equipment to be put on vehicles. She stated that the program is a catalyst and a demonstration project for a larger area.

2. Chair's Report – David Mohler, MassDOT

The MassDOT Board of Directors tabled a decision regarding the contract for the South Station expansion at its last meeting. The board is expected to take up the topic again at

their next monthly meeting. This delay will not affect the MPO's discussion of the work program for the *South Station Expansion Support*.

3. Committee Chairs' Reports

Lourenço Dantas, Massachusetts Port Authority, announced that that Congestion Management Process (CMP) Committee will meet at 1PM today.

4. Regional Transportation Advisory Council Report – Steve Olanoff, Chair, Regional Transportation Advisory Council

The Advisory Council will meet next on May 9 at 3PM. On the agenda is a presentation on the Mystic Valley Parkway Green Line Community Visioning Process by Eric Halvorsen, MAPC. Also, Sean Pfalzer, MPO staff, will give an update on the draft FFYs 2013—16 TIP. The Advisory Council will be preparing comment letters on the draft TIP and draft FFY 2013 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

5. Executive Director's Report – Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff

K. Quackenbush announced that Sean Pfalzer has been appointed TIP Manager. S. Pfalzer holds a B.A. from Grinnell College and an M.A. from Boston University. K. Quackenbush also announced that Michael Callahan, MPO staff, will be leaving his position to take a job with a consulting firm in Virginia.

The MPO staff has been receiving information on earmarks, including an earmark for the *Boston – Commonwealth Avenue* project. The MPO will have the opportunity to discuss the earmarks the next time the TIP is on their agenda.

6. Long-Range Transportation Plan Amendment – Pam Wolfe, Manager, Certification Activities Group, MPO staff

P. Wolfe explained that two actions that the MPO took on April 19 necessitate an amendment to the LRTP. The MPO programmed the *Hanover – Route 53* project in FFY 2014 of the draft FFYs 2013—16 TIP and, because it is a capacity adding project, it must be programmed in the appropriate timeband of the LRTP. The MPO also tabled a motion to reprogram two Woburn projects – the *New Boston Street Bridge* and *Montvale Avenue* projects – from the FFYs 2020-25 timeband to the FFYs 2016-20 timeband of the LRTP.

Staff distributed a table of projects in the LRTP, which incorporates the actions taken for the draft TIP, including projects costing over \$10 million, the Hanover project, known project cost changes, and changes in finances. It also shows, highlighted in red, the inclusion of the proposed Woburn projects in the earlier time band.

P. Wolfe also provided an update on the TIP. She reported that staff conducted a new air quality conformity determination for the TIP, which was necessary due to the programming of the Hanover project in FFY 2014. The determination shows that the TIP is within the region's emission budget and is in conformity.

During a discussion period, Jim Gillooly, City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department), raised the issue of adding the earmark amount for the *Boston – Commonwealth Avenue* project to the TIP. D. Mohler noted that the MPO could take that action to program the earmark when it takes action on the draft TIP.

A motion to approve the amendment to the LRTP, as presented (not including the proposed reprogramming of the two Woburn projects), was made by the MassDOT Highway Division (John Romano), and seconded by the Advisory Council (S. Olanoff).

A motion to amend the previous motion to reprogram the *Woburn – New Boston Street Bridge* and *Montvale Avenue* projects – so that they will be moved from the FFYs 2020-25 timeband to the FFYs 2016-20 timeband, was made by the North Suburban Planning Council (Ed Tarallo), and seconded by the City of Boston (BTD) (J. Gillooly). The motion carried.

During a discussion of the amended motion, E. Tarallo stated that the two projects are priorities for the City of Woburn. He also noted that the proposed change in programming would have no impact on other programmed projects.

P. Wolfe stated that staff would conduct another model run to incorporate the Woburn projects for 2020 and also additional runs for 2025 and 2035 by May 22. The LRTP amendment would then be released for a public review period, which would close by June 28. The MPO could then vote to approve the amendment on June 28, when it takes action on the TIP.

A motion to release the proposed amendment to the LRTP was made by MassDOT (Ned Codd) and seconded by the MBTA (Ron Morgan). The motion carried.

7. Meeting Minutes – Maureen Kelly, MPO Staff

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting April 19 was made by the Massachusetts Port Authority (L. Dantas), and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (Paul Regan). The motion carried.

8. Work Program for South Station Expansion Support – Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff

K. Quackenbush introduced the work program for *South Station Expansion Support*. Through this work program, CTPS would provide assistance to MassDOT as it conducts environmental and preliminary engineering work for the project to expand South Station. MassDOT will be conducting this preliminary work over the next three years.

The first task of the work program involves gathering information on the travel behavior of people who pass through South Station, including modes used for access to and egress from the station (i.e. buses, rapid transit, commuter rail, Amtrak, etc.) and within-station walking times among these modes. CTPS would then assist MassDOT and its consultant team to develop alternative transit service plans. Travel forecasting would be conducted for alternative land use and development scenarios. The alternatives would include

scenarios involving the use the space where the U.S. Postal Service facility currently exists, different commuter rail service plans, and different train platform configurations. Sixteen scenarios will be analyzed.

CTPS would also conduct analyses regarding crowding, revenue, economic impacts, environmental impacts, environmental justice, and air quality (including greenhouse gas emissions). The economic analysis would involve generating projections for tax revenue, labor market, and consumer market consequences for each of the scenarios. The environmental analysis would examine the environmental impacts of traffic pattern changes.

The work program budget is \$350,000, which would be funded by a Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) grant.

Members discussed the work program.

S. Olanoff discussed several problems regarding pedestrian accessibility at South Station and recommended that they be addressed as part of this work program. He noted that the commuter rail trains do not fully enter the station, leaving passengers to walk a length of the platform to board trains, which is particularly difficult for people with disabilities. The trains must stop before reaching the end of the platform, he said, because of an inadequate ventilation system. He also noted that there were plans to build a “people mover” between the bus terminal and train station, but that it was never built. Also, he said that there is temporary scaffolding in the station that appears to be permanent, and it is an impediment to pedestrians. S. Olanoff asked if those issues would be addressed. Stephen Woelfel, MassDOT, replied that bicycle, pedestrian, and accessibility issues would be considered.

Dennis Crowley, South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway), asked for more information about the amount of the FRA grant and the state match. S. Woelfel stated that the FRA grant is for \$32.5 million and MassDOT would provide the local match.

E. Bourassa asked if the traffic analysis would focus on the South Station area or if it would focus on regional impacts. K. Quackenbush replied that it would focus on the South Station area. If the MassDOT team decides to examine traffic impacts for a broader area, however, CTPS could conduct the work.

9. JARC and New Freedom Project Solicitation Update – Alicia Wilson, Regional Equity Manager, MPO Staff

A. Wilson gave an overview of two federal formula grant programs, the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom programs. JARC provides grants for programs that transport welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals to and from jobs and employment related activities. New Freedom provides grants for new public transportation services for people with disabilities that go beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

MassDOT is the eligible recipient for JARC and New Freedom funds in the Boston urbanized area. MassDOT works with MPOs to conduct a competitive application process. The process must be coordinated with the MPOs' Coordinated Human Services Plans.

This year for the Boston urbanized area (which includes five MPOs) there is \$2.1 million available from JARC, and \$1.6 million from New Freedom. Five applications for JARC funding came from three entities in the Boston region, totaling \$2.8 million. Twelve applications for New Freedom funding from eight entities were received, totaling \$4.3 million. The amount requested exceeds the amount available. A. Wilson provided details about the requests, and distributed a handout detailing the requests.

The applicants and requests for JARC funds are as follows:

- 128 Business Council
 - Alewife A3 Route 128 Corridor Plan/Reverse Commute Program
 - Waltham Innovation – Route 128 Corridor Plan/Reverse Commute Program
- MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
 - JARC Route 9 Extended Service
 - Wellesley Reverse Commute and Mobility Manager
- Salem North Shore Career Center (NSCC)
 - Mobility Management and Employment Express

The applicants and requests for New Freedom funds are as follows:

- Town of Acton
 - MinuteVan Dial-a-Ride
 - LRTA Road Runner
 - Mobility Manager
- Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA)
 - Enhanced Medical Travel
- Friendship Home
 - Wheels to Work
- Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)
 - Reaching Beyond Borders: The GLSS Mobility Links Projects (two projects)
- MBTA
 - Taxi Vouchers for Paratranist Customers Program
- MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
 - Mobility Management and Training Support
 - New Freedom Call Center
- New England Paralyzed Veterans of America (NEPVA)
 - NEPVA Transportation Program
- Salem North Shore Career Center (NSCC)
 - Mobility Management and Employment Express

Members discussed the applications.

In response to questions, A. Wilson stated that after the MPO develops its recommendations at the May 17 MPO meeting, the next step in the process is to forward the MPO's recommendations for funding to MassDOT, which will review the Boston Region applications along with those recommended by other MPOs in the Boston urbanized area.

As the amount requested from applicants exceeds the amount available, J. Romano raised the question of whether the MPO could award lesser amounts than the applicants requested. A. Wilson replied yes and noted that staff distributed a table showing the requested amounts by year so that members could consider how many years of funding to award applicants.

E. Tarallo asked for more information about whether projects were ongoing projects or new. Staff will revise the working table prepared for this discussion to include that information.

Christine Stickney, South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree), inquired about the request from the NSCC which requested the same amount of money from both JARC and New Freedom. She expressed concern about one program accessing the two revenue sources. Norm Ketola, NSCC, explained that the NSCC serves populations that are eligible under both the JARC and New Freedom programs (both the low-income and disabled). NSCC is requesting a total of \$2.7 million. The NSCC plans to expand its Mobility Management and Employment Express program – which currently provides paratransit service in Salem, Peabody, and Danvers – to Beverly and Lynn to serve people who may no longer be eligible for THE RIDE.

David Koses, At-Large City (City of Newton), asked whether the applicants had provided projected ridership numbers for their programs. A. Wilson stated that the information was not required on MassDOT's application. N. Ketola added that the NSCC application includes ridership projections based on its operations since April 2011 and the number of people that are no longer eligible for THE RIDE. E. Bourassa asked staff to reach out to applicants that did not provide ridership projections and to request that information from them.

In response to questions about requests for funding over multiple years, A. Wilson explained that applicants could request funding for multiple years, but that the funding would come out of this year's pot of money.

J. Romano asked if applicants for multi-year funding could operate with only one-year of funding. Sandra Efstratov, NSCC, provided the perspective of her organization. She noted that the NSCC provides transportation to employment and that multi-year funding is important. If funding is only for one year, clients who have no other means of getting to work could risk losing their jobs. She stated that NSCC can provide data on the number of trips made by its customers.

James Errickson, At-Large City (City of Everett), asked staff to provide additional information about the number of towns that would be served and the number of stops.

A. Wilson noted that the complete applications are available at the MPO's FTP site. Staff will recirculate the link to this information to members and make a staff recommendation at the next MPO meeting.

D. Koses suggested that applicants make presentations on their programs. P. Wolfe noted that all applicants have been invited to attend the May 3 and May 17 MPO meetings, which have the topic on the agenda.

S. Olanoff suggested funding the lower cost projects first in order to get more projects on the ground.

A. Wilson gave more information on the matching funds. Capital projects are funded at 80% federal with a 20% state/local match, and operating projects are funded at 50% federal with a 50% state/local match. Mobility management projects are considered to be capital projects. Some projects have a combination of capital and operating funds, so the matches shown on the handout distributed reflect those combinations.

Staff will be developing a staff recommendation based on the MPO's scoring criteria for JARC and New Freedom applications.

D. Crowley asked staff to notify any applicants that would not be included in the staff recommendation so that they can advocate for their projects at the next MPO meeting.

S. Olanoff asked for more information about the MBTA's application. Ron Morgan, MBTA, explained that the goal of the Taxi Vouchers for Paratransit Customers Program is to supplement THE RIDE service. P. Regan added that the program, which would provide taxi vouchers to customers of THE RIDE who live in the area where premium fares will be instituted, could result in substantial savings for the MBTA. A. Wilson noted that several communities are already using taxi vouchers as part of their Council of Aging operations.

Franny Osman, Acton Transportation Advisory Committee, asked members not to focus too heavily on whether applicants applied under JARC or New Freedom, or on the number of years of funding they requested. As an applicant, she noted that it is somewhat unclear to applicants which program their project fits under. She asked members to consider funding every program at reduced amounts, rather than cutting programs.

10. I-495/MetroWest Development Compact Plan – Barry Keppard, Regional Planner, MAPC

B. Keppard gave a PowerPoint presentation with an overview of the *I-495/MetroWest Development Compact Plan*, a joint effort between MAPC, Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Council, Mass Audubon, the 495 Metro Partnership, and the

Metrowest Regional Collaborative. CTPS contributed transportation modeling services to the project. The project was primarily funded by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED).

The project was part of EOHED's Planning Ahead for Growth program, which involves identifying priority areas for growth in the state. As part of MAPC's MetroFuture plan, MAPC is also seeking to identify areas for growth and preservation. The principles that drove the study process included consideration of operation and maintenance of new growth, preservation activities, the Global Warming Solutions Act, the balance between jobs and housing, the need for public transit, and coordination across jurisdictions.

The study area along the I-495 corridor encompassed 37 communities spanning five regional planning agency districts. MAPC mapped priority development areas (PDAs) and priority preservation areas (PPAs) based on input from municipalities and the public.

The communities identified 293 PDAs. These areas contain 140,500 jobs now. If fully developed, these areas could support 204,000 new jobs (four times as much as current employment projections to 2035). At build out these areas could also support 30,800 new housing units, which is more than current housing projections. The communities also identified approximately 500 PPAs.

The PDAs were then screened to identify Regional Significant Priority Areas. This was accomplished using a GIS analysis that took into account land use, environmental resources, environmental justice, water resources, the location of transportation facilities, and cultural and historic resources. As a result, 91 PDAs (16,300 acres of land) and 190 PPAs (21,000 acres) were developed.

The study compared job growth, housing development, and traffic congestion under the local and regional scenarios. The regional scenario proved more beneficial in terms of job creation, reducing the need to extend infrastructure such as sewers farther out, and in providing opportunities for mode shifts to transit.

The study also examined regionally significant transportation investments considering the roles of commuter and freight rail, regional transit authorities, highway interchanges, bridges, connector roads to I-495, bicycle and pedestrian connections, and interactions between roads and rail.

The results of the study were provided to the EOHED, which has developed PDA clusters statewide.

11. Members Items

L. Dantas reminded members that the CMP Committee will meet at 1PM.

12. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by P. Regan and seconded by J. Romano. The motion carried.

**Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting Attendance
Thursday, May 3, 2012, 10:00 AM**

Members

At-Large City (City of Everett)
At-Large City (City of Newton)
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)
At-Large Town (Town of Lexington)
City of Boston (Boston Redevelopment Authority)
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)

Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)
Massachusetts Department of Transportation

MassDOT Highway Division
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)
Massachusetts Port Authority
MBTA Advisory Board
Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination
(Town of Bedford)

North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)
North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn)

Regional Transportation Advisory Council
South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree)
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC)

Representatives and Alternates

James Errickson
David Koses
Wayne Chouinard
Richard Canale
Lara Mérida
Jim Gillooly
Tom Kadzis
Hayes Morrison
David Mohler
Ned Codd
Stephen Woelfel
John Romano
Ron Morgan
Lourenço Dantas
Paul Regan
Eric Bourassa
Eric Halvorsen
Richard Warrington

Denise Deschamps
Mayor Scott Galvin
Ed Tarallo
Steve Olanoff
Christine Stickney
Dennis Crowley
Tom O'Rourke

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director
Daniel Amstutz
Michael Callahan
Maureen Kelly
Robin Mannion
Elizabeth Moore
Scott Peterson
Sean Pfalzer
Alicia Wilson
Pam Wolfe

Other Attendees

Roland Bartl	Town of Acton
Callida Cenizal	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
John Covey	City of Woburn
Kristen Domurad Guichard	Town of Acton
Sandra Efstratiou	North Shore Career Center
Emily Kearns	Greater Lynn Senior Services
Barry Keppard	MAPC
Norm Ketola	North Shore Career Center
Erin Kinahan	MassDOT District 6
Judy LaRocca	Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee
Victoria Maguire	Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development
Linda Malone	Friendship Home
Rafael Mares	Conservation Law Foundation
Joe Onorato	MassDOT Highway
Franny Osman	Acton Transportation Advisory Committee
Wig Zamore	Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership