

# Draft Memorandum for the Record

## Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

### May 16, 2013 Meeting

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM, 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:

- endorse Governor Deval Patrick's recommendation for the designation of federal transit grant funds from the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) *Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program* and *Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Grants Program*
- approve the minutes of the meetings of April 18 and May 2
- accept the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Committee's recommendation for programming additional PL funds in the draft federal fiscal year (FFY) 2014 UPWP and direct staff to circulate the revised draft FFY 2014 UPWP for public review

### Meeting Agenda

#### 1. Public Comments

There were none.

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

D. Mohler reported that the Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA) received a letter from the FTA stating that CATA is now in compliance with the federal Disadvantaged Business Enterprise requirements. CATA is now eligible to access federal funds again, and the MPO will program funds for CATA into the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) at the appropriate time.

#### 3. Committee Chairs' Reports

There were none.

**4. Regional Transportation Advisory Council Report—Steve Olanoff, Chair, Regional Transportation Advisory Council**

The Advisory Council met on May 8. Sean Pfalzer, MPO staff, provided an update on the draft Amendment Five of the FFYs 2013 – 16 TIP, and Anne McGahan, MPO staff, gave a presentation on the topic of climate change in the Boston Region. The Council also discussed their comments to the MPO regarding the TIP. The Council's Freight Committee also met to discuss ongoing funding for freight studies in the UPWP.

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

K. Quackenbush reminded members that the next MPO meeting will be held on June 6 in Woburn. There may also be an Administration and Finance Committee meeting, pending approval from the Committee Chair, following that MPO meeting. K. Quackenbush provided a list of the members of that committee toward the close of the meeting.

**6. Endorsement of Designated Recipients of Grant Funds in Urbanized Areas—David Mohler, MassDOT**

Members were provided with copies of a letter from Governor Deval Patrick to Mary Beth Mello, Regional Administrator of the FTA, in which the Governor designated recipients for federal transit grant funds from *the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program* and the *Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Grants Program*. The Governor recommended that MassDOT remain the recipient of funds from the *Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program*, and that the MBTA and the other regional transit authorities (RTAs) receive funds from the *Bus and Bus Facilities Formula Grants Program*.

A motion to endorse the Governor's recommendation for the designation of federal transit grant funds was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (Eric Bourassa), and seconded by Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (Tom Bent). The motion carried.

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

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of April 18 was made by the MassDOT Highway Division (John Romano), and seconded by the At-Large Town of Lexington (Richard Canale). The motion carried.

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of May 2 was made by the MassDOT Highway Division (John Romano), and seconded by the At-Large Town of Lexington (Richard Canale). The motion carried.

## **8. TIP Amendment Five Update—Sean Pfalzer, MPO Staff**

Members were provided with a spreadsheet showing updates to the draft Amendment Five of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is currently out for public review. These updates consist of revisions to the costs of three projects: *Arlington – Reconstruction of Massachusetts Avenue*; *Cambridge – Cambridge Common Improvements*; and *Danvers – Reconstruction of Liberty Street*.

The *Massachusetts Avenue* project has increased in cost by about \$530,000 due to the need to address deteriorating pavement. Staff proposes to use a \$475,000 earmark to cover the majority of the cost increase and then use funds previously programmed for the *Clean Air and Mobility Program* in the FFY 2016 element to fund the balance.

An \$850,000 cost increase to the *Cambridge Common* project is also due to the need to address deteriorating pavement. The total project cost is \$6.3 million. Of that amount, \$2.7 million is programmed in the TIP. The project also has an earmark and \$2.6 million would be provided by the City of Cambridge. The city has requested an additional \$400,000 to address the cost increase. Staff proposes to cover those costs with Regional Target funds and with funds previously programmed for the *Clean Air and Mobility Program* in the FFY 2016 element.

The *Liberty Street* project requires an additional \$222,000 to fully fund the project. The cost increase is a result of changes in utility agreements. Staff proposes to use funds previously programmed for the *Clean Air and Mobility Program* in the FFY 2016 element to address this cost increase.

Members then asked questions and discussed these changes.

D. Mohler commented that the *Clean Air and Mobility Program* in the FFY 2016 element has now been reduced from \$1.5 million to \$375,000. S. Olanoff pointed out that the MPO originally intended to fund that program at the \$3 million level.

D. Mohler asked staff to post these updates on the MPO's website so that the public is aware that the MPO will be considering these changes when it votes on the amendment.

Marie Rose, MassDOT, noted that MassDOT would like to advertise the *Liberty Street* project as soon as possible and asked what is the earliest date that MassDOT could advertise the project based on this amendment. D. Mohler stated that these changes would likely not require another public review period. It is expected that the MPO will vote to incorporate these changes into the TIP amendment on June 6.

Tom Kadzis, City of Boston, inquired about the cash flow changes to the *Needham and Wellesley – Route 128 Add-a-lane (Contract V)* project. S. Pfalzer explained that funding for the project decreased in the FFY 2013 element and increased by \$1.1 million in FFY 2016.

In closing, S. Pfalzer noted that there were also changes in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to the Grant Anticipation Notes (GANs) payments for the *Central Artery/Tunnel* project; these changes will be reflected in the TIP amendment for informational purposes.

### **9. Revised Draft Unified Planning Work Program—Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, CTPS, and Michelle Scott, MPO Staff**

M. Scott reported that MassDOT notified the MPO last week of the availability of an additional approximately \$330,000 in PL funds for programming in the FFY 2014 UPWP. The MPO staff made recommendations for the allocation of these funds, which were discussed and approved at the UPWP Committee meeting held earlier this morning. Members were provided with materials referencing these recommendations and changes to the CTPS and Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) budgets.

M. Scott discussed the recommendation for the CTPS projects. It was recommended that a portion of the funds be directed to two new activities. The first is the *Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Strategy Cost-Effectiveness Analysis* study, which would identify cost effective strategies for the reduction of GHG emissions. This study supports the MPO's sustainability goals and MassDOT's GreenDOT goals. The second activity is *Roadway Safety Audits*.

The recommendation would also add funding to the *Addressing Safety, Mobility, and Access on Subregional Priority Roadways –FFY 2014* project, and increase the funding for *Direct Support* and *Professional Development*. The budget for the following ongoing activities would also be increased:

- Supporting certification requirements, including the TIP and UPWP
- Public participation activities
- Transportation equity activities
- Making materials available in accessible formats
- Graphics support
- Air quality support
- Regional model development
- Bicycle and pedestrian support activities
- Livable Communities Workshops

- Information technology resources
- Freight planning

E. Bourassa discussed the recommendations for the MAPC projects. MAPC is proposing to direct the additional funds to support the following already planned activities:

- Alternative mode planning and coordination
- Corridor/subarea planning studies
- Community Transportation Technical Assistance Program
- MetroFuture engagement

Members asked questions and discussed the changes:

Christine Stickney, South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree), asked if the *Livable Communities Workshop Program* is a duplication of work that MAPC conducts and whether the funds allotted to that line item should be reprogrammed under another line item. Eric Bourassa, MAPC, replied that MAPC and CTPS conduct this work jointly.

S. Olanoff expressed the Advisory Council's support for the increase in funding for freight planning. The Freight Committee of the Advisory Council has recognized the need for sufficient funding to conduct studies that would gather data on truck movements in the region.

D. Mohler asked for a description of the *Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Strategy Cost-Effectiveness Analysis* study. M. Scott stated that the project, which is in the conceptual stage, would consider activities that the MPO might be likely to program, or that MassDOT might be likely to operate, in order to reduce GHG emissions. These activities could involve improving traffic flow, reducing traffic idling, or encouraging the use of alternate transportation modes. The study would also consider which of those activities are the most cost-effective to implement.

D. Mohler asked for more details about the line item for *Direct Support* and the distinction between that line item and the one for *Professional Development*. K. Quackenbush explained that these line items would support professional development and learning activities for the staff. The *Direct Support* line item would be used to cover the cost of travel to conferences and workshops, while the *Professional Development* line item would cover the cost of staffs' time at those events.

Richard Reed, Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Bedford), asked whether MAPC or CTPS would be adding staff for these projects. E.

Bourassa replied that while MAPC will not be hiring new staff, it will be able to use staffers on these projects who worked on a grant-funded project that is now ending. K. Quackenbush added that CTPS has no immediate plans to hire more staff.

D. Mohler noted that CTPS staff are all funded with transportation dollars and questioned whether, without hiring new staff, CTPS would be able to spend all the funds allotted to it. K. Quackenbush noted that the CTPS operating budget is being crafted, and it is this budget that must demonstrate a balance between revenues and expenditures. Thus far, CTPS has not identified sufficient revenues to cover expected expenditures. For that reason, CTPS has no immediate plans to hire new staff.

A motion to accept the UPWP Committee's recommendation for programming additional PL funds in the FFYs 2014 UPWP and to direct staff to circulate the revised draft FFY 2014 UPWP for public review was made by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (T. Bent), and seconded by the MassDOT Highway Division (John Romano). The motion carried.

### **10. Air Quality Conformity Update—Anne McGahan, MPO Staff**

At the MPO meeting on May 2, the MPO voted to release the draft FFYs 2014 – 17 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for public review pending confirmation that the set of projects included in the TIP will produce a positive air quality conformity determination.

Anne McGahan, MPO staff, explained that a new air quality conformity determination is required for the following reasons:

- there are changes in programming to two projects that would add capacity to the transportation system: the *Needham and Wellesley – Route 128 Add-a-Lane, Contract V* project and the *Weymouth and Abington – Reconstruction and Widening on Route 18* project
- the MPO must use a new emissions model, MOVES, as required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- the MPO must only report on carbon monoxide emissions for the nine municipalities in the Boston carbon monoxide maintenance area
- the MPO no longer has to show conformity to ozone budgets; the EPA has reclassified the full MPO region as in attainment for ozone standards
- the conformity determination must include the status of projects included in the State Implementation Plan (SIP) and show that these projects are moving forward in a timely manner

She then reported that, since the last meeting, staff ran the travel model for the FFY 2016 TIP element and applied the new emission factors to the new FFY 2016 model results, as well as to the previously run FFYs 2025 and 2035 model results.

The results were provided to members in a handout. The results show that the MPO is meeting the carbon monoxide emission budget set by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection for the Boston maintenance area and therefore the TIP conforms in that respect.

Members were also provided with a summary of the status of projects in the SIP. MassDOT reports on the status of the SIP projects to the MPO on a monthly basis. The information in the conformity determination is from the April SIP status report.

### **11. Overview of Public Review and Comment Period Activities for Revised Draft UPWP and TIP—*Pam Wolfe, Manager of Certification Activities, MPO Staff***

Members were provided with a draft flyer showing the proposed revised schedule for the MPO's public outreach events in May and June. This schedule was changed to accommodate a delay of the public review period for the TIP and UPWP (necessary due to revisions to the UPWP that incorporate an increase in PL funds).

P. Wolfe noted that the MPO will be holding two workshops – one in Lynn on May 29 and another in Framingham on May 30 – as well as two Be Informed, Be Involved sessions in Boston on June 5. At these events there will be discussions of the TIP, the UPWP, the Transportation Equity Program, and the Public Involvement Plan (which must be updated this year).

During the public review period, the MPO staff will also be conducting outreach to almost all of the MAPC subregions.

Members asked questions.

D. Mohler inquired as to which subregions the staff is not meeting with and why. P. Wolfe replied that staff is waiting to hear responses from the MetroWest Regional Collaborative, North Shore Task Force, and South Shore Coalition. E. Bourassa stated that MAPC is working on scheduling those meetings. D. Mohler asked staff to inform him of which subregions do not schedule meetings.

### **12. State Implementation Plan Update—*David Mohler, MassDOT***

D. Mohler provided a status report on the projects in the SIP.

Since MassDOT's last report in April, there have been no updates on the *Fairmount Line Improvement* project.

MassDOT is still awaiting the finalization of a regulation that would remove the *Red Line – Blue Line Connector* project from the SIP.

The *Green Line Extension* project is technically in the “engineering” stage. (Due to changes in the New Starts rules, the stages previously called “preliminary engineering” and “design” are now referred to as “engineering.”) When the Governor and legislature pass a bill providing revenue for transportation, the project will moving into the next stage of the New Starts submittal. Phase 1 of the construction is underway, as is survey work and negotiations for the acquisition of real estate, the updating of vehicle bids, and the procurement of an Independent Cost Estimator (under the Construction Manager/General Contractor approach).

A member asked questions.

E. Bourassa asked whether the procurement of an Independent Cost Estimator has been approved by the MassDOT Board of Directors. D. Mohler replied that the board has given approval to do the procurement. When a consultant is selected, the board will have to approve the selection.

### **13. Members Items**

In response to members' questions, D. Mohler reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule and activities, noting that the MPO will meet on June 6 to vote on Amendment Five of the FFYs 2013 – 16 TIP. The meeting of May 30 is cancelled. The MPO will meet next in Woburn on June 6.

Dennis Crowley, South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway), asked whether, based on the transportation revenue bills being advanced by the legislature, municipalities could expect to see a 50% increase in their Chapter 90 monies. And Ed Tarallo, North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn), asked when municipalities would be informed of Chapter 90 allocations.

In response to these questions, D. Mohler reported that the Governor has stated his intention to veto the \$500 million House bill. The Senate bill would offer \$800 million in revenue. The increase to Chapter 90 is dependent on the available revenue. A decision has not been made about the amount of money that will be available for Chapter 90 this year. The Lt. Governor has indicated that it might be possible to release Chapter 90 monies to the municipalities in portions, even if a final revenue figure has not been



determined, so as not to miss an entire construction season. D. Mohler offered to inform members when those letters are released to municipalities.

Marie Rose, MassDOT, informed members that Alex Bardow, MassDOT, has agreed to give a presentation to the MPO on MassDOT's Bridge Program.

On behalf of the Mayor of Somerville, Friends of the Community Path, and other advocates of the *Community Path* project, T. Bent thanked the MPO for supporting the project. The City of Somerville recently held a groundbreaking for the portion of the Path from Cedar to Lowell Street.

James Errickson, At-Large City of Everett, asked how communities are notified of actions regarding non-MPO discretionary funding. P. Wolfe noted that the MPO notifies every municipal TIP contact when changes to the TIP are to be discussed.

Members then heard a comment from a member of the public. Rafael Mares, Conservation Law Foundation (CLF), informed members that CLF has posted a budget calculator on its website, [www.clf.org](http://www.clf.org), that allows a user to see what portion of projects included in the Governor's transportation plan, *A Way Forward*, would be funded under the various pending transportation finance bills in the state legislature. He noted that the Governor's bill would provide an average of \$858 million a year for five years, the House bill would provide an average of \$500 million a year, and the Senate bill would provide an average of \$600 million a year. He added that the \$800 million figure that is discussed regarding the Senate bill only refers to the final year of that bill, FFY 2018.

#### **14. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (T. Bent) and seconded by the MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham) (D. Giombetti). The motion carried.

## Attendance

<b>Members</b>	<b>Representatives and Alternates</b>
At-Large City (City of Everett)	James Errickson
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 Redevelopment Authority)	Lara Mérida
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Tom Kadzis
Federal Highway Administration	Michael Chong
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	David Mohler
	Marie Rose
MassDOT Highway Division	John Romano
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	Ron Morgan
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Bedford)	Richard Reed
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)	Denise Deschamps
North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn)	Ed Tarallo
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Steve Olanoff
South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree)	Christine Stickney
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	Dennis Crowley
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC)	Tom O'Rourke

<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Kyle Emge	MassDOT RTD
Diane Madden	MassDOT Environmental
Rafael Mares	Conservation Law Foundation
Joe Onorato	MassDOT Highway Division
Jeff Rosenblum	City of Cambridge
Sheri Warrington	MassDOT

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**MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff**

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Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director

Maureen Kelly

Robin Mannion

Anne McGahan

Elizabeth Moore

Scott Peterson

Sean Pfalzer

Michelle Scott

Pam Wolfe

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