Draft Memorandum for the Record Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

July 10, 2014 Meeting

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

Clinton Bench, 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 the federal fiscal years (FFYs) 2015-18 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- approve two work programs: Barriers and Opportunities Influencing Mode Shift and MBTA 2015 Title VI Program Monitoring
- approve the minutes of the meetings of May 15 and June 5, 2014

Meeting Agenda

1. Public Comments

Lee Auspitz, Somerville resident, expressed his support for the *Green Line Extension* project and asked the MPO to modify the terminology used in the TIP to describe the project's Medford Hillside station. He pointed out that there are discrepancies between place names used on the maps for the *Green Line Extension* project and those on official federal maps. He expressed concern that federal approvals for the project could be at risk if federal naming standards are not adhered to. He also requested that staff research the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circular and executive orders that provide those standards.

At the meeting of June 26, Mr. Auspitz recommended that the name of the proposed station at Boston Avenue and College Avenue in Medford be referred to as "Tufts University" rather than "Medford Hillside." Today, he withdrew this proposal and suggested instead that the station be named "Tufts Medford," in keeping with suggestions made by Mayor Michael McGlynn of Medford.

Eric Bourassa, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), asked Mr. Auspitz to speak further about his concerns regarding the possible legal implications of using the place name "Medford Hillside." Mr. Auspitz explained that while state agencies are exempt

from false claim suits, at issue is the fact that the terminology used does not conform to standing laws. This topic was discussed further under Agenda Item #6.

2. Chair's Report-Clinton Bench, MassDOT

C. Bench reported that MassDOT will be starting this fall to update the Program for Mass Transportation (PMT), the 25-year vision for the MBTA. This PMT will be a fiscally-constrained document, but will include visionary ideas. The PMT development process will coincide with the development of the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Multiple entities will be involved in the creation of the PMT, including the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) and consultants. The Regional Transportation Advisory Council will be another important partner for conducting public outreach.

3. Committee Chairs' Reports

Sree Allam, Chair of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Committee, reported that the committee will meet next on August 7 at 9:00 AM.

4. Regional Transportation Advisory Council Report—David Montgomery, Chair, Regional Transportation Advisory Council

D. Montgomery reported that the Advisory Council met on July 9th and heard a presentation on bicycle and pedestrian planning from Beth Isler, MPO staff. During a discussion, one Advisory Council member expressed concern that bicycle and pedestrian planning often neglects the issue of wheelchair accessibility. Plans for bicycle paths, for example, may put protective structures in place that block access for people in wheelchairs. The member also pointed out issues regarding the positioning of accommodations for people with disabilities on transit vehicles.

The Advisory Council is preparing to hold its elections this fall. The current terms of the chair and vice chair expire in October. D. Montgomery encouraged interested parties to get involved.

The Advisory Council will not meet in August.

Following D. Montgomery's report, C. Bench asked staff to consider the concerns raised about accessibility during the development of the LRTP and consider how to have more robust input on these issues. He also asked staff to add the topic of accessibility to the list of potential future agenda topics for MPO meetings.

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

K. Quackenbush noted that the MPO is not scheduled to meet on July 24. The next MPO meeting is scheduled for August 7.

6. FFYs 2015-18 Transportation Improvement Program Endorsement— Sean Pfalzer, MPO Staff

S. Pfalzer gave an update on changes made to the draft FFYs 2015-18 TIP since it was released for public review, and he summarized public comments received during the public review period. Members were provided with revised TIP tables and a matrix summarizing the public comments.

One update to the TIP is an adjustment to the programming of the *Boston – Bridge Replacement, Massachusetts Avenue (Route 2A) over Commonwealth Avenue* project. This will be a three year project starting in FFY 2015. The amounts programmed for utility relocation work are included in the FFY 2015 element under a different project number. The remainder is funded in the FFY 2016 and 2017 elements. The total cost of the project remains the same.

Another update is a modification to the programming of debt service payments for the Accelerated Bridge Program. Since the Accelerated Bridge Program applied to the whole state, those payments will be reflected on the State TIP, but not on the MPO's TIP.

The public comments received expressed the following:

- support for the Assabet River Rail Trail project from the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Maynard, and a resident
- support for the *Bruce Freeman Rail Trail* project from residents of Concord, Belmont, and other communities
- opposition to the *Bruce Freeman Rail Trail* project from residents of Sudbury who are concerned about environmental impacts and that the project will not comply with local bylaws and storm water regulations
- support for the Green Line Extension project both for the extension to Union Square and College Avenue, and the extension from College Avenue to Route 16 – from the Conservation Law Foundation (CLF), Tufts University, Mayor McGlynn of Medford, and residents of Somerville and Medford
- concern about potential land takings near 200 Boston Avenue, Medford for the Green Line Extension from College Avenue to Route 16 project from Mayor McGlynn

- opposition to the Green Line Extension from College Avenue to Route 16 from Medford residents, the Green Line Advisory Group for Medford (GLAM), and the Mystic Valley Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; the commenters state that the legal terminus for the extension is at College Avenue, and that the extension to Route 16 will negatively impact the African-American community and disabled populations in the vicinity of the project
- proposal to use funding that would go toward the *Green Line Extension* from College Avenue to Route 16 to remove an MBTA car barn in Haines Square, Medford
- concern from residents about the use of the term "Medford Hillside" to define the terminus of the *Green Line Extension* project
- request that staff research the geospatial standards used in the development of the New Starts application for the *Green Line Extension* project
- request for the *Community Path* project to move forward along with the *Green Line Extension* project from residents of Somerville and the Friends of the Community Path
- request that the construction of the extension of the Community Path, from Cedar Street to Lowell Street, be completed by September 2014
- support for the *Brookline Intersection and Signal Improvements at Route 9 and Village Square (Gateway East)* project from state legislators, Children's Hospital, and the Medical Academic and Scientific Community Organization (MASCO)
- support for the *Burlington, Bedford, and Billerica Middlesex Turnpike Improvements, Phase 3* project from the Middlesex 3 Coalition
- support for the Medway Route 109 project from state legislators and the Town
 of Medway
- support for the *Marlborough Reconstruction of Route 85* project from the Mayor of Marlborough
- support for the Brookline Pedestrian Bridge Rehabilitation over MBTA off Carlton Street project from the Town of Brookline's Department of Public Works
- opposition to the *Canton Interchange* project from the Friends of the Community Path
- support for the Stoneham, Winchester, and Woburn Tri-Community Bikeway project, including from the Boards of Selectmen in Stoneham and Winchester, the Town of Stoneham Bikeway/Greenway Committee, residents of Stoneham and Winchester, and Friends of the Community Path
- proposal for revisions to right-of-way plans for the *Tri-Community Bikeway* project from a Winchester resident
- support for a number of projects in the Longwood Medical Area from MASCO

- support for investments in transit maintenance, roadway modernization, bridge preservation, and transit expansion – including several specific roadway and transit projects in Boston, such as improvements to the Urban Ring Corridor, the Red Line – Blue Line Connector (Design), and Silver Line Phase 3 – from A Better City
- support for a number of projects in the MetroWest area including some unfunded projects that are in the TIP Universe of Projects – from the 495/MetroWest Partnership
- support for a number of projects in the Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC) subregion, and a request to fund the *Lexington* – *Reconstruction of Massachusetts Avenue* project if funding becomes available, from MAGIC
- request from the CLF that the MPO make available greenhouse gas (GHG) impacts of all projects that the MPO is considering
- proposal from a Sudbury resident for revisions to the methodology used to calculate GHG impacts for shared-use paths
- concern from the Advisory Council about the balance in programming large- and small-scale projects
- concern from the Advisory Council and MAGIC subregion about the impact of project cost increases on the TIP program
- concern from the 495/MetroWest Partnership that the scoring system for the TIP favors urban communities
- suggestion from the 495/MetroWest Partnership that economic benefit be included in the TIP scoring criteria
- request to from the Advisory Council and a Sudbury resident to put a greater emphasis on freight movement in the TIP scoring system
- support for more investment to achieve MassDOT's mode shift goal and less investment in highway expansion from Somerville residents and the Friends of the Community Path
- guidance from MassDOT encouraging the MPO to incorporate performancebased planning metrics in the TIP process; ensure that the MPO process is accessible to all, including people of limited English proficiency, and people protected under Title VI and environmental justice laws; and seek new ways to incorporate GreenDOT goals
- a number of ideas from a Somerville resident, including projects to close gaps in bicycle network; expand Hubway stations to new locations; make bicycle path connections from Fresh Pond Parkway to the Charles River, and from Paul Revere Park to the Northern Strand Community Trail; improve the Green Line;

explore the feasibility of a new MBTA bus route; and address accessibility issues at MBTA stations

 request from a Sudbury resident for enhanced reporting of bicycle and pedestrian improvements to account for these accommodations in Complete Streets projects

Discussion

Laura Wiener, At-Large Town of Arlington, asked for MassDOT to speak to the issue raised by Mayor McGlynn about changing the station name referenced for the *Green Line Extension* project from "Medford Hillside" to "Tufts Medford." C. Bench indicated that MassDOT is not at the point of naming the new Green Line stations.

David Koses, At-Large City of Everett, asked for more information about Mayor McGlynn's concern about potential land takings near 200 Boston Avenue, Medford and whether the *Green Line Extension* project would affect that property. E. Bourassa explained that the property is owned by the Cummings Foundation and houses research space for Tufts University. It is an economic development site for the City of Medford. Mayor McGlynn is supportive of the *Green Line Extension* as long as it does not impact that property, he said. E. Bourassa also noted that the MBTA has said that the property will not be affected, though there may be issues concerning fire access that could be worked out in the project design.

Speaking to the issue regarding the naming of the new Green Line station, Dennis Crowley, South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway), suggested that the MPO's responsibility might be to send a letter recommending a station name based on guidance from the Mayor McGlynn.

Members then discussed the decision making process for naming the station. Ron Morgan, MBTA, stated that the recommendation for the station name should emanate from the host community's mayor. The General Manager of the MBTA would make the decision. C. Bench noted, however, that the MPO could have some influence on naming the station.

D. Crowley asked if the legal issue raised by GLAM concerning the legal mandate for the terminus of the *Green Line Extension* project has been resolved and whether there is an outstanding court case that could prevent the extension of the line beyond College Avenue. S. Pfalzer noted that it is his understanding that the legal mandate is to extend the line at least to College Avenue. C. Bench added that to his understanding there is no outstanding court case about this issue.

Hayes Morrison, Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville), noted that Mayor Joseph Curtatone of Somerville has sent requests to the MBTA regarding the renaming of Green Line stations in Somerville. The City of Somerville has no issue with the naming of the station in Medford.

A motion to endorse the FFYs 2015-18 TIP, with the changes presented today, was made by the MassDOT Highway Division (John Romano), and seconded by the MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham) (Dennis Giombetti).

Members continued their discussion

Tom Kadzis, City of Boston, asked whether the inclusion of funding in the TIP for the procurement of Red Line and Orange Line vehicles is serving as a placeholder considering that the Commonwealth plans to fund the project with state monies through the Capital Investment Program. He noted that funding for that procurement project recently was shifted to the Green Line signal upgrades project through an amendment to the current FFY 2014-17 TIP. S. Pfalzer replied yes, that the project remains programmed in the FFY 2015 through FFY 2018 elements of the TIP. The MBTA plans to remove the project from the TIP by an amendment, when those years arrive, and replace it with another state-of-good repair need, he said.

T. Kadzis asked if the reason for using state monies, rather than federal, for the Red Line and Orange Line vehicle procurement project is so that the Commonwealth can stipulate that the cars be built in-state and thereby create manufacturing jobs here. C. Bench confirm this.

C. Bench reminded members of the ballot question this November that seeks to repeal the gas tax indexing law. He noted that the project to purchase new Red and Orange Line vehicles is the type of project whose funding could be affected if the question passes.

D. Crowley expressed that while the South West Advisory Planning Committee will support the endorsement of this TIP, the group has concerns about potential cost overruns on the *Green Line Extension* project and the impact that those overruns could have on the MPO's ability to fund other projects in the future.

Members then heard two comments from the public.

Lee Auspitz followed up on the discussion that took place under Agenda Item #1 regarding the use of proper place names in the *Green Line Extension* project. He noted that once a Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) is signed, the OMB will have the

option of denying or reducing federal matching funds for expenditures incurred during the period of non-compliance with federal standards. He called for the MPO to revise its documents before the FFGA for the *Green Line Extension* project is signed.

Rafael Mares, Conservation Law Foundation, further discussed the issue. He stated that the State Implementation Plan requires that the *Green Line Extension* go to Medford Hillside. He asserted that the College Avenue station is not considered to be at Medford Hillside, and therefore, the line must run to Route 16 to fulfill the legal mandate. He agreed with Mr. Auspitz that the MPO's documents are inconsistent with federal requirements regarding the naming of geographical locations, in this case. He advised removing the reference to Medford Hillside from the TIP and referencing the station at College Avenue.

D. Montgomery then suggested that the MPO allow for flexibility by noting in the TIP that the geographic names could change in the future. Tom O'Rourke, Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC), asked the chair if there was any reason why the MPO should not do that. C. Bench advised that more research should be done to understand the implications of making any change to the geographic references in the MPO's documents, considering the sensitivity of this issue and the fact that the TIP is a critical document for the *Green Line Extension* project to move forward toward a FFGA.

L. Wiener stated that she would not be comfortable changing the geographic references in the TIP without a recommendation from MassDOT.

C. Bench spoke of the breadth of planning that has gone into the *Green Line Extension* project involving MassDOT and three cities, and he noted that the geographic references in use have not come to be by accident. He recommended that the MPO move forward to approve the TIP, and if the issue continues to be of concern to the MPO, this topic could be revisited in a future meeting.

Steve Olanoff, Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC), addressed the comment from the Friends of the Community Path, which expressed opposition to the *Canton Interchange* project. He noted that the project will add substantial bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including a connection across Interstate 95 to a trail system, a pedestrian underpass at Dedham Street, a pedestrian crossing at Neponset River connecting to a new park with paths, and new bicycle facilities providing access to a commuter rail station. He commended MassDOT for its work to provide bicycle and pedestrian facilities as part of this project. A motion to end the debate was made by the MassDOT Highway Division (J. Romano), and seconded by the MBTA (R. Morgan). The motion carried.

Members then voted on the motion to endorse the FFYs 2015-18 TIP, with the changes presented today. The motion carried.

7. Work Programs—Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff

Members were presented with two new work programs.

Barriers and Opportunities Influencing Mode Shift

K. Quackenbush reported that the work program for the *Barriers and Opportunities Influencing Mode Shift* study relates to a topic central to the MPO's goals and the goals of MassDOT's GreenDOT policy – increasing transit mode share while reducing singleoccupant vehicle mode share.

Through this study, the CTPS staff will use various resources – including the Massachusetts Household Travel Survey, the MPO's travel demand model, and literature searches – to develop an information store on this topic. The results of the study will help the MPO members and others to better understand the factors influencing mode share and strategies that could be used to increase transit mode share. In addition to providing a resource for the MPO members, this study is consistent with the type of data collection called for by GreenDOT.

MAPC will be conducting a companion study that will focus on factors that affect mode shift from single-occupancy vehicles to walking and bicycling. E. Bourassa added that MAPC will be working closely with CTPS to identify areas where there are existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities that are under-used. The study will seek to understand the reasons for the low usage (gaps in the network, land use, or demographics, for example), and identify interventions that could increase usage of those facilities.

Discussion

Christine Stickney, South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree), expressed support for the study and inquired if the study would be considering all modes of transit. K. Quackenbush replied yes, all sub-modes of transit would be considered.

S. Allam asked if the final report would combine the results from CTPS's study and MAPC's study. K. Quackenbush and E. Bourassa agreed to take the idea under advisement.

D. Koses asked if cost considerations (i.e. tolls, gas, parking fees, and fares) would be addressed as factors influencing mode shift. K. Quackenbush replied that these factors would be considered as much as possible. Through the process of developing new travel demand models, staff has obtained highly specific information about the influence of price levels on mode share.

Richard Canale, At-Large Town of Lexington, remarked on the GreenDOT policy that seeks to triple the number of trips taken by transit, walking, or bicycling. K. Quackenbush noted that the results of this study would have the potential to inform the GreenDOT decision-making process.

A motion to approve the work program for the *Barriers and Opportunities Influencing Mode Shift* study was made by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (H. Morrison), and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa).

Members continued their discussion.

H. Morrison asked if the Hubway bicycle share system would be considered among the transit sub-modes in this study. E. Bourassa replied yes.

H. Morrison noted that the City of Somerville will be conducting a transportation census this fall to quantify mode shift. The census will be large enough to be statistically valid. The city plans to conduct a census every year to determine if new projects are having an effect on mode share.

Members then voted on the motion to approve the work program for the *Barriers and Opportunities Influencing Mode Shift* study. The motion carried.

MBTA 2015 Title VI Program Monitoring

K. Quackenbush presented the work program for *MBTA 2015 Title VI Program Monitoring*. Through this work program, CTPS will continue to assist the MBTA with data collection and reporting that is used to show that the MBTA is in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act 1964. The data collected through this work program will form the basis for the next Title VI triennial report, which the MBTA must submit to the Federal Transit Administration in 2017. Work will proceed in the same manner as it has in recent years with one exception. That is, the MBTA's Disparate Impact Policy has been codified, enabling comparisons between minority and non-minority populations to be done with reference to that policy. A motion to approve the work program for *MBTA 2015 Title VI Program Monitoring* was made by the City of Boston (T. Kadzis), and seconded by the MBTA (R. Morgan). The motion carried.

8. Meeting Minutes-Maureen Kelly, MPO Staff

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of May 15 was made by MAPC (E. Bourassa), and seconded by Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC) (T. O'Rourke). The motion carried. The following abstained: Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (H. Morrison); At-Large City of Everett (T. Sousa); and MBTA Advisory Board (Micha Gensler).

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of June 5 was made by MAPC (E. Bourassa), and seconded by the At-Large Town of Lexington (R. Canale). The motion carried. The following abstained: South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree) (C. Stickney); Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (H. Morrison); At-Large City of Everett (T. Sousa); and MBTA Advisory Board (M. Gensler).

9. Metro North Priority Development and Preservation Planning—Eric Halvorsen, MAPC Staff

E. Halvorsen gave a presentation on the Metro North Land Use Priority Plan, which was developed as part of MAPC's work to identify Priority Development Areas (PDAs) and Priority Preservation Areas (PPAs) in the region. MAPC conducts this work in cooperation with the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED) and the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA).

The process for developing the PDAs and PPAs began with meetings with municipal officials and planners to identify potential areas to target for development and preservation. Then MAPC screened the identified areas through a series of metrics to determine where the most appropriate areas for growth and preservation are in the communities. Additional feedback was gathered from a regional forum. This feedback informed revisions to the PDAs and PPAs. Those regionally significant locations were then forwarded to EOHED and EOEEA to be screened based on state priorities and as a means to identify opportunities for regional and state investment.

The land use priority plan for the Metro North area focused on nine communities: two Boston neighborhoods (East Boston and Charlestown), Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Melrose, Revere, Somerville, and Winthrop. There have been significant public and private investments made in this area. In 2013, EOHED made nearly \$8.5 million in infrastructure commitments through its MassWorks program. The Boston Region MPO has also made significant transportation investments in the Metro North area. (A map was shown that depicted the location of recently completed, under construction, and planned developments in the area.)

In addition to identifying development areas, MAPC examined residents' access to open space in the densely-settled Metro North area. (A map was shown depicting the degree of access available to residents in the area and the location of protected lands.) This information can be a resource for agencies and municipalities as they consider the need for open space when large parcels of land are eyed for development.

The communities in the Metro North area identified 86 local priority development areas, representing more than 2,000 acres of land. MAPC screened these area based a series of criteria, considering transportation access, walkability, access to open space, watersheds, population and employment density, and growth potential. The screening yielded a composite score that helped place proposed sites into a development typology (i.e. mixed-use infill development, transformational mixed-use development, and commercial and industrial development). The screening process resulted in 26 final sites representing 1,100 acres of land, 12,250 housing units, and 12.5 million square feet of commercial development.

This summer EOHED and EOEEA will be conducting the state prioritization. MAPC will be finalizing its report in August. More information is available at, www.mapc.org/metronorth.

Discussion

E. Bourassa and E. Halvorsen noted that the proximity of TIP projects to PDAs and other growth districts is factored in the TIP project evaluation process.

L. Wiener inquired about the next steps regarding PPAs and whether there are resources to purchase those lands or other strategies for preserving them. E. Halvorsen noted that EOEEA has been upgrading some existing publicly owned properties and is interested in acquiring certain privately owned properties.

C. Stickney asked if MAPC would be developing a plan for the South Shore. E. Halvorsen replied that MAPC hopes to do so, if funding can be maintained.

C. Stickney asked if water capacity issues are factored into MAPC's screening process. She noted that this is an issue for developers in some communities that are not on the MWRA water system. E. Halvorsen replied that MAPC uses GIS for screening and that one of the layers represents the water system. Also, when MAPC meets with municipalities they discuss local infrastructure needs.

10. Members Items

The next MPO meeting will be on August 7 at 10:00 AM. The UPWP Committee will prior to the MPO meeting, at 9:00 AM.

11.Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree) (C. Stickney) and seconded by the MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham) (D. Giombetti). The motion carried.

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Tony Sousa
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 Transit Administration	Leah Sirmin
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Hayes Morrison
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Clinton Bench
	Sree Allam
MassDOT Highway Division	John Romano
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	Ron Morgan
MBTA Advisory Board	Micha Gensler
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of	Richard Reed
Bedford)	
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)	Aaron Clausen
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	David Montgomery
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

Other Attendees	Affiliation
Lee Auspitz	Somerville resident
Sarah Bradbury	MassDOT District 3
Kristen Guichard	Town of Acton
Eric Halvorsen	MAPC
Rafael Mares	Conservation Law Foundation
Steve Olanoff	Three Rivers Interlocal Council

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director Maureen Kelly Robin Mannion Anne McGahan Scott Peterson Sean Pfalzer Pam Wolfe