

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL



Regional Transportation Advisory Council Meeting

April 9, 2014 Meeting

3:00 PM, State Transportation Building, Conference Room 4, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA

Draft Meeting Summary

Introductions

David Montgomery, Chair (Needham) called the meeting to order at 3:05 PM. Members and guests attending the meeting introduced themselves. (For attendance list, see page 6)

Chair's Report—*David Montgomery, Chair*

At the April 3, 2014 MPO meeting, Sean Pfalzer presented on the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), including public comments on TIP Amendment Two. He also discussed the TIP First Tier List of Highway Projects and the TIP Development Memorandum which explains the development of the FFYs 2015-18 TIP. There are fiscal constraint limitations to adding new projects to the FFYs 2015-18 TIP. Cost increases and schedule adjustments for some projects - such as the Route 128 Add-A-Lane project and the reconstruction and widening of Route 18, Main St. in Weymouth-Abington - and the funding of Phase 2 of the Green Line Extension (a very large project), leaves only a small amount of MPO funding for smaller, municipally-sponsored projects.

Chair Montgomery noted that the municipalities and organizations without a direct MPO voice may want to register concerns regarding their projects. S. Olanoff added that the cost of the Green Line Extension, Phase 2, and the amount of additional MPO funds potentially needed for the project is still unknown.

Committee Reports and Upcoming Activities

Chair Montgomery gave a brief summary of the Council's Transportation Improvement Program/Unified Planning Work Program committee meeting which had taken place immediately beforehand, and which included overview presentations from Pam Wolfe on the TIP, and Michelle Scott on the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

The Freight Committee will be meeting in the near future to discuss their comments and the co-chairs will provide input on the committee's views for incorporation into the

Advisory Council's comment to the MPO on the TIP and UPWP. The Advisory Council wants to underscore that freight concerns should be taken into account whenever possible within both documents.

It was noted that Frank DeMasi resigned from various transportation related activities and commitments, including membership on the Advisory Council and the Freight Committee. His many contributions over the years were noted with thanks.

Update on Long-Range Transportation Plan and the Role of Demographics in the Travel Demand Model – *Scott Peterson, Director of Technical Services, MPO Staff*

Scott Peterson gave a brief overview of the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and recent work within the LRTP to develop performance measures to gauge how well the MPO's programs are meeting goals and objectives set forth in the LRTP.

The LRTP Needs Assessment is the basis for understanding transportation issues that should be addressed in the LRTP including identifying locations of congestion and other problems and understanding traffic flows between where people live and where they want to go. Data developed by the Congestion Management Process and the Travel Demand Model helps further this understanding.

A new modeling tool entitled Cube Land is being used this year to help the MPO understand how population and employment are going to shift within the region over the span of years covered by the LRTP. Transportation scenario planning, which will incorporate differing mixes of future transportation facilities, will then be undertaken as an integral part of further analysis. This scenario planning will help the MPO understand how different transportation network scenarios affect population and land use across the region. For example, it will show how much development would occur in a corridor with a newly built Green Line, in addition to the impact on growth and employment across the region.

The Travel Demand Model requires different inputs from different demographics and plays an integral role in the LRTP to help the MPO better understand how the region is growing, as well as where improvements are needed to roadways and the transit system.

Discussion:

An Advisory Council member posed the question of how long-term planning might figure into the kinds of analyses being done relating to the Urban Ring. S. Peterson said that it is up to the MPO Board as a whole to determine whether to consider projects that include the Urban Ring.

S. Olanoff noted that there was a large amount of input from the public on the last Needs Assessment and inquired as to whether or not there would be a similar outreach this time around. He also wondered when communities would be able to voice their concerns. S. Peterson replied that public comment on the Needs Assessment document is welcome at any time, and including the upcoming public review of the document (which is not yet scheduled). Based on the Needs Assessment and comments, scenarios will be developed to address chokepoints and congestion areas to target in the LRTP.

A member asked if rail and the movement of goods are part of the modeling process that goes into the LRTP. S. Peterson responded that the MPO is tracking truck traffic based on land use changes, but there has been little focus on modeling rail independently.

Development of Demographic Data for the Long Range Transportation Plan – *Meghna Hari, Research Analyst, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)*

Meghna Hari addressed recent trends in population, housing, and employment, and their projected levels for the future. She also discussed two scenarios for growth in the MPO region: the “Status Quo” scenario (SQ), which is a continuation of trends at the current rate, and the “Stronger Region” scenario (SR), which forecasts projections based on trends greatly increasing. Employment projections and the land use model were also covered in this presentation.

Based on recent trends, Metro Boston will have a net positive in-migration for people between the ages of 15-29 and a net negative out-migration for all other age groups. The region is losing people to other states and the rest of Massachusetts due to migration; however the region attracts many highly trained and skilled workers needed to fill the kind of jobs projected in the region.

While population is stable, there is a greater need for more housing units for people moving to the region. Area population will be up by 6.6%, but households are up by 17%, meaning about 60% of future demand is just to house the current population.

Baby boomers are reaching retirement age; 40% of the current labor force will have retired by 2030. Assuming a small positive in-migration in the Stronger Region scenario, 175,000 workers will need to be added to the labor force, increasing it by 7% in the SR. In the SQ, around 10,000 workers over the next 30 years will enter the labor force. Regarding housing demand, there would be a need of 435,000 housing units (SR) or 300,000 units (SQ) needed to accommodate the assumption of positive in-migration in the future.

Most housing demand increase is predicted to be in urban communities following the diversified demographic profile and preferences of those moving into the region. The SR predicts the current number of renters in the region will go from 37,000 to 60,000.

The housing preferences for different age groups were reviewed in detail. Trends in employment are also being tracked by job category to compare to national trends. Urban communities have seen a 65% increase in job growth, and Inner Core communities specifically have had the highest increase.

A key trend identified in the demographics analysis is that school-attending children populations have peaked. This is concurrent with an aging population. None of the towns will see major increases in their 5 – 14 age groups.

Discussion:

D. Montgomery asked how the number of housing units needed was decided. M. Hari responded that it is based on the economy remaining the same or better and on the net positive in-migration.

In response to a member's question, M. Hari indicated that condo ownership is part of the multifamily category which includes everything that is not a single family detached.

A member asked where the influx of 175,000 new people will live and what the price points will be due to a polarization of income. M. Hari said that the MAPC did not look at the price points with regards to community polarization. The majority of influx will be in the urban communities which is most popular with the 20-35 age groups.

The same member followed up by questioning the likelihood of achieving housing targets in light of affordable housing availability. M. Hari noted that achieving the projections for housing and employment for a robust economy depends on interactions of these two key variables for growth.

A member requested further explanation of the predicted household size figures, and asked what assumptions drive it. M. Hari stated that the MAPC has the total population and knows what percentage of each age group tends to be in households or heads of households. The MAPC also knows that the population is aging and that in the future the population over age 65 will be larger with smaller households, not as many individuals within the same household, and a smaller number of older heads of households. An increase in younger professionals choosing to have smaller families, higher divorce rates, changing demographics, and a smaller share of each age group being in households results in the smaller average household size.

In response to a question about the base numbers before projections are made, M. Hari said that Census data as well as fertility rates, survival rates, and migration data from 2010 are used.

A member stated that re-examination and inclusion of the Urban Ring by the MPO and the Needs Assessment is missing. M. Hari responded that the SR will be used as part of the demographic input to the models and public transportation is not delineated in the trend analysis of populations.

Multiple questions were posed relating to determining which scenario is being pursued. M. Hari said there is a process to track data resulting in a number that MAPC uses to inform the municipalities of the demand that needs to be accommodated and incorporated into their planning process.

D. Montgomery asked how municipalities, organizations, and members of the council could utilize this data. M. Hari directed those interested to visit www.mapc.org/projections to view maps, charts, and data for each municipality.

Approval of Meeting Minutes of February 12, 2014 - *David Montgomery, Chair*

Approval of the February 12, 2014 meeting minutes was deferred to the next meeting, pending the presence of a quorum required under the Advisory Council bylaws.

Old Business: There was none.

Members' Views: There was none.

Take Away Points for MPO:

M. Wellons expressed concern over the fiscal constraints of the MPO and the lack of funding for the addition of new transportation projects.

New Business and Member Announcements:

B. Steinberg announced that the Association for Public Transportation's newsletter is out.

D. Montgomery announced that the Advisory Council meeting on May 14, 2014 would have an LRTP committee meeting beforehand, at 1:00 PM. A discussion of LRTP committee members took place.

Members discussed the Government Center Green Line Station detour.

Adjourn:

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded at 4:40 PM. The motion passed, unanimously.

ATTENDANCE

Agencies (* MPO & other non-voting)

TRIC*

EOEEA

Agencies (Voting)

MassRides

Municipalities (Voting)

Cambridge

Millis

Needham

Weymouth

Municipalities (Non-voting)

Boston(MPO Member)

Citizen Groups

AACT

American Council of Engineering Companies

Association for Public Transportation

Boston Society of Architects

Massachusetts Bus Association

MassBike

MASCO

National Corridors Initiative

Riverside Neighborhood Association

WalkBoston

Guests

Chris Reilly

Danielle McKnight

William Crawford

Rhain Hoyland

Ed Lowney

MPO Staff

David Fargen

Matt Archer

Scott Peterson

Attendee

Steve Olanoff

Theodora Fisher

Leon Papadopoulos

Cleo Stoughton

Dom D'Eramo

David Montgomery

Owen MacDonald

Tom Kadzis

Mary Ann Murray

Thomas Daley

Barry M. Steinberg

Schuyler Larrabee

Chris Anzuoni

David Ernst

Tom Yardley

John Businger

Marilyn Wellons

John McQueen

Town of Lincoln

Town of North

Reading

Town of Nahant

Town of Needham

Malden Resident