

Memorandum for the Record
Transportation Planning and Programming Committee of the
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

March 19, 2009 Meeting

10:00 AM –12:15 PM, State Transportation Building, Conference Room 4, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

David Mohler, Chair, representing James Aloisi, Executive Office of Transportation & Public Works (EOTPW)

Decisions

The Transportation Planning and Programming Committee voted to take the following actions:

- approve the minutes of the February 5 meeting
- approve an administrative adjustment to the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2009 element of the FFYs 2007 – 2010 Transportation Improvement Program for projects proposed for ARRA funding with the \$750,000 line item for the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
- approve the work program for *Route 126 Corridor Transportation Improvement Study, Bellingham to Framingham*, with recommended changes
- approve the work program for *Operational Improvements at Selected Congested and High-Crash Intersections*
- approve the work program for the *Potential MBTA Fare Increase Impact Analysis*
- approve an administrative adjustment to Amendment Two of the FFY 2009 element of the FFYs 2007 – 2010 TIP to reflect the actual amount of ARRA funds directed to CATA

Meeting Agenda

1. Public Comments

There were none.

2. Chair's Report – David Mohler, EOTPW

EOTPW has advertised \$30 million worth of projects being funded through the federal economic stimulus program, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Two are in the Boston Region. More projects will be advertised this week.

3. Subcommittee Chairs' Reports – Paul Regan, MBTA Advisory Board, and Marc Draisen, MAPC

The Administration and Finance Subcommittee will be ready to meet on April 2 at 9:30 AM to vote on the approval of two new hires at Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS). D. Mohler noted that he will need to review the paperwork before a subcommittee meeting is scheduled.

The MPO will be holding elections in May. When the date is selected, notices will be sent to municipalities providing them a 60-day notice. The seats currently held by the

City of Salem and Town of Bedford are up for election this year. Towns in the following subregions are ineligible to run this year: Inner Core Committee, MetroWest Growth Management Committee, and SouthWest Advisory Planning Committee (SWAP).

4. Regional Transportation Advisory Council – *Malek Al-Khatib, Regional Transportation Advisory Council*

There was no report from the Advisory Council.

5. Director's Report – *Arnie Soolman, Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS)*

Arnie Soolman reported on the progress of hiring for the vacancies at CTPS. There are five vacancies and CTPS is actively trying to fill three of them. A candidate accepted an offer for a position in the Certification Activities Group this morning. CTPS expects to make an offer to another candidate to fill a second vacancy in that group soon.

He also reported that Annette Demchur is transferring from the Certification Activities Group to the Transit Planning Group; this creates one more vacancy in the Certification Activities Group. A. Demchur will complete the conversations she has been having with representatives of organizations in environmental justice communities and will help with the transition of a new staff member into that position. In light of this transition, A. Soolman requested that members table their discussion of the work program for the *Pilot Project for Transportation Needs Assessment of Low-income and Minority Elderly Individuals*.

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Subcommittee met on February 5 and reviewed first quarter progress reports. The process for developing the FFY 2010 UPWP will be discussed at the next meeting on April 2. He noted that staff prepared an insert for *TransREPORT* to solicit input from readers on potential studies for next year. (See attached memorandum updating staff activities.) When the UPWP Subcommittee resumes meeting on April 2, the group will be on its normal schedule for UPWP development with completion of a draft document ready for members to vote to release for public review in June and to endorse by September 1. The Subcommittee will meet frequently during the development phase.

M. Draisen asked if there will be additional funding for transit planning from ARRA. D. Mohler replied that planning is not an eligible expense for the use of ARRA monies.

Mary Pratt, Town of Hopkinton, asked if the MPO should expect cuts in PL funds. D. Mohler replied that the state will be taking a rescission and EOTPW will not be prohibited from rescinding PL funds, but that so far, the rescission would only apply to unobligated balances.

M. Pratt inquired as to whether the Obama Administration has changed guidelines under which the MPO operates. Mary Ellen Sullivan, MPO staff, replied that the MPO is expected to adhere to the existing FHWA and FTA requirements.

6. Meeting Minutes – Pam Wolfe, Manager of Certification Activities, CTPS

A motion to approve the minutes of the February 5 meeting was made by P. Regan, and seconded by M. Draisen. The motion passed unanimously.

M. Pratt reiterated a comment that she made at the February 5 meeting to emphasize that ARRA funding should be directed to projects that are in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process.

7. MetroWest Regional Transit Authority, ARRA Projects – Ed Carr, Director, MetroWest Regional Transit Authority

Ed Carr provided details on the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority's request for ARRA funds. (See attached handout.)

MetroWest RTA is requesting a total of \$750,000 in ARRA funds for the following items:

- Vehicle Replacement: \$300,000
 - to replace three 11-year old mini-buses the RTA acquired from Brockton Area Transit (BAT)
- Shelters: \$30,000
 - to add bus five shelters in the towns of Hopkinton, Holliston, Wayland, Natick, and Framingham
- Support Vehicle: \$30,000
 - to purchase a service vehicle with a plow (allowing the RTA to eliminate its current lease on a supervisory vehicle and direct those funds toward operating expenses)
- Architecture and Engineering: \$70,000
 - for preliminary design and engineering of maintenance and operations facility in Framingham by SEA Consultants, Inc.
 - the RTA leases its current property and the new location would be leased with an option to buy
- Intelligent Transportation System (ITS): \$270,000
 - to build and implement a “mobility management” center which will integrate fixed route and demand response services, including mobile data terminals in the vehicles
- Shop Equipment: \$50,000
 - including lifts for new facility

Members asked questions:

Regarding the bus shelters, has MetroWest RTA considered an arrangement similar to the one the MBTA has with a contractor to install shelters? (David Koses, City of Newton)

The RTA has not developed a policy addressing that issue yet. Some towns have requested capital assistance from the RTA for purchasing shelters that the towns would then maintain. The RTA would consider this idea. (E. Carr)

For the new location, is the RTA only seeking funds for the SEA Consultants contract? (M. Draisen)

The RTA is seeking funds for that contract and the shop equipment, which includes a lift. (E. Carr)

Can the funds for the new facility be obligated within the timeframe required by ARRA? (M. Draisen)

Yes, the RTA expects to sign the lease tomorrow or early next week. (E. Carr)

What will the installation of data terminals in the vehicles accomplish? (M. Draisen)

It will provide more data to the mobility management center and allow the RTA to move away from its current GPS/cell phone system. The terminals will allow for the automated collection of odometer readings and provide a hands-free communication system for drivers. The system can be used to help passengers flag down vehicles. (E. Carr)

At least half of the requested amount must be spent by September 2009, will the RTA be able to do that? (D. Mohler)

Yes, the RTA will spend all of it by September. (E. Carr)

Visit from Secretary Aloisi

Members suspended their discussion of MetroWest RTA when Secretary of Transportation James Aloisi arrived at the meeting.

The Secretary thanked the MPO members for their public service and commitment to regional mobility. He recognized how difficult members' work and decisions are. He stated that he will be attentive to the MPO, and voiced his commitment promoting regional (geographic) equity, and social and environmental justice.

M. Pratt thanked the Secretary for coming and suggested that the Central Artery funding be taken away from MassHighway and overseen by a separate entity. She expressed concern about the merger of transportation agencies. Secretary Aloisi stated that reforms and streamlining initiatives need to be taken seriously, and he noted that there is broad support for merging the transportation agencies. He emphasized his commitment to equity across all regions of the state.

Ginger Esty, Town of Framingham, thanked the Secretary for coming. She suggested that he support an increase in Chapter 90 monies to the region, and noted that those monies are distributed fairly based on miles of roadway. Secretary Aloisi stated that the idea merits attention.

Malek Al-Khatib, Regional Transportation Advisory Council, raised concerns about the MBTA's debt service and financial status. He stated that disruption of the MBTA's services would adversely affect this region. Secretary Aloisi stated that he needs help with people raising their voices about these issues, since service cuts and fare hikes may be coming if the legislature does not find a new revenue source for the MBTA. Legislators need to receive letters and hear from constituents.

The discussion of MetroWest resumed when Secretary Aloisi left the meeting.

Will there be full spectrum testing of the wells at the new site? (G. Esty)

This will be included in the SEA Consulting contract. The RTA will not buy the site if the wells are dirty. (E. Carr)

The new location and concentration on West Natick Station is a concern. Framingham Station is much busier. (G. Esty)

There was no site available in Framingham. (E. Carr)

What happens to the ARRA money for the RTA if it is not obligated within 180 days? (M. Al-Khatib)

Fifty percent of the ARRA money coming into the UZA must be spent in 180 days; if it is not, the unobligated funds may be lost to other states. However, the money will not be lost to the state because the MBTA can spend more than 50%, since the requirements refer to aggregate spending. (D. Mohler and Joe Cosgrove, MBTA)

What type of procurement regulations do RTAs have to adhere to? And has MetroWest gone through a procurement process? (Richard Reed, Town of Bedford)

RTAs adhere to 30B. To purchase vehicles, the RTA can piggyback on EOTPW's Mobility Assistance Program (MAP) procurement. And for ITS, it can piggyback with the Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority. The RTA has already gone through the procurement process for the SEA Consultants. (E. Carr)

What is the RTA's current fleet? Are all the buses interchangeable from a service perspective. (P. Regan)

The RTA has 22 25-foot El Dorado vehicles. The fleet includes five buses acquired from BAT, two acquired from the Nantucket RTA, and five acquired through the Job Access/Reverse Commute Program. The RTA wants to start replacing the BAT buses. All the vehicles are interchangeable from a service perspective. (E. Carr)

What paratransit vehicles will the RTA be using? (G. Esty)

The RTA has ten vehicles (five sedans and five cut-a-ways) that will go into service in July, when the RTA's paratransit obligations begin. The RTA will need to have 20 vehicles, however. The RTA expects to acquire eight vehicles through MAP. It will need to acquire two more sedans. (E. Carr)

Are THE RIDE replacement vehicles part of this request? (M. Draisen)

No. The RTA has been working closely with the MBTA on this transition. The MBTA has offered assistance in the event that the RTA does not have all the vehicles by July. (E. Carr)

Do the mobile data terminals give the ability to track vehicles? (Jim Gallagher, MAPC)

Yes. It provides data on location (longitude and latitude) and vehicle speed. This data can be archived. (E. Carr)

Would the RTA allow CTPS to sample this data to supplement the Mobility Management System? (J. Gallagher)

Absolutely. Jonathan Belcher, MPO staff, is already using this data. (E. Carr)

Does the architectural and engineering request include construction? (Thomas Bent, City of Somerville)

No, those funds will come from another source. (E. Carr)

M. Pratt voiced her opposition to the proposed new site and stated that there is not enough parking for the buses there. She stated that the money should go toward paratransit vehicles instead.

A motion to approve an administrative adjustment to the FFY 2009 element of the FFYs 2007 – 2010 TIP for projects proposed for funding with the \$750,000 line item for the MetroWest RTA was made by J. Cosgrove, and seconded by P. Regan. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Work Program – Route 126 Corridor Transportation Improvement Study, Bellingham to Framingham – Karl Quackenbush, Deputy Director, CTPS

This work program is a corridor study in the current UPWP. The Route 126 corridor was identified in the MMS as a corridor with considerable congestion and mobility issues. The SWAP and MetroWest subregions are supportive of this study.

The objective of the study is to look at a 20- to 25-mile section of Route 126 to identify safety, mobility, and access issues and to develop solutions. The work will involve a task force with members who are able to identify hot spots and help guide the way to implementable recommendations. CTPS has funding to study seven to ten locations along the corridor. CTPS will conduct micro-analyses of intersections (looking at crash data and level of service), and look at macro issues (like bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and access management issues). This will be a highly multi-modal approach. This is a 12-month study costing \$116,437 (3C funds).

M. Pratt suggested that the study should address how GATRA's and the MetroWest RTA's services could connect at the Natick/Framingham border and how the services could work together.

G. Esty noted that links to bus and railroad stations should be addressed.

J. Gallagher noted that SWAP requested involvement in the task force and asked that future plans be considered when developing recommendations. K. Quackenbush stated this would be considered.

M. Draisen stated that MAPC will be glad to assist CTPS with land use related issues.

A motion to approve the work program for *Route 126 Corridor Transportation Improvement Study, Bellingham to Framingham*, with recommended changes, was made by T. Bent, and seconded by M. Draisen. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Work Program – Operational Improvements at Selected Congested and High-Crash Intersections -- *Karl Quackenbush, Deputy Director, CTPS*

This work program is also a current UPWP study. It is similar to previous work programs that CTPS has conducted looking at selected intersections for improvement, such as the recently completed work program for *Safety and Operational Improvements at Selected Intersections*.

For this study, CTPS is proposing to use crash data and MMS data to select 20 candidate intersections for possible study, and then winnow candidates to nine intersections that will be studied for means to enhance safety and operations. There will be a focus on selecting locations for study where there is interest from municipalities in implementing recommendations. Staff will interact with town officials and MassHighway District officials throughout the study. This is a seven month study costing \$45,000 (3C funds).

Lynn Duncan, City of Salem, expressed support for the focus on implementation and asked how the MPO has fared so far in getting its recommendations implemented. K. Quackenbush replied that out of 26 studies completed between 1999 and 2004 (with approximately 200 recommendations), about 55% of intersection and other study recommendations have either had recommendations implemented, partially implemented, or are still alive in local planning. (Of all study recommendations, not just those related to intersections, approximately 27 % have been implemented in full, 16% have been partially implemented, and 11% are still alive.). L. Duncan noted that the rate was a good response and she stated that it is important to continue monitoring the implementation rate.

Lourenço Dantas, Massport, recommended that the Committee should help facilitate the implementation of study recommendations by setting aside TIP programming funds. M. Draisen agreed that the MPO should connect recommendations with programming.

M. Draisen asked whether the recommendations that were implemented were largely funded through the TIP, Chapter 90, or other sources. K. Quackenbush replied that the UPWP Subcommittee has asked that he look into that question and others and see if there is a pattern. He added that he would distribute a memorandum that he prepared for the UPWP Subcommittee on this subject.

M. Pratt asked if the Committee would be shown the candidate intersections. K. Quackenbush stated that he would bring the intersections before the Committee.

G. Esty requested that staff continue to pay attention to hazardous locations that have been studied, but for which recommendations have not been implemented.

A motion to approve the work program for *Operational Improvements at Selected Congested and High-Crash Intersections* was made by T. Bent, and seconded by M. Draisen. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Work Program – Potential MBTA Fare Increase Impact Analysis – Karl Quackenbush, Deputy Director, CTPS

The objective of this work program is to forecast the consequences – in terms of ridership, revenue, air quality, environmental justice – of an MBTA fare increase. CTPS will use its regional travel model and a spreadsheet tool for this work, similar to the study it did in 2007 that focused on changes to both the MBTA fare structure and fare levels. Staff will adjust these tools based on knowledge gained from that prior study. (The prior study forecast a revenue increase of 21.2%. The actual increase was 23%.) The current study would look at three scenarios with combinations of fare increases and service cuts. It is a six month effort costing \$86,000 (MBTA funds).

Members made comments and asked questions:

Could the study be completed before the summer when the MBTA would likely make service cuts? (P. Regan)

The schedule is to produce a draft report for the MBTA by mid-June. (K. Quackenbush)

The scale of the proposed service cuts and fare increases will be a new experience for this region and could significantly affect congestion. Is there a way to emphasize this issue in the report? (P. Regan)

CTPS will be tracking emissions implications and, therefore, will have estimates of increases in congestion levels. (K. Quackenbush) P. Regan then suggested that that data be translated into additional travel time.

Will the inputs to the study assume cuts to specific routes or more general assumptions? (D. Mohler)

The study would look at the results of service cuts to specific routes. (J. Cosgrove)

M. Draisen recommended that this study be accelerated, even at the expense of delaying other work, since it will provide valuable information on the impacts of the service cuts and fare hikes on MBTA riders and on drivers. The sooner this information can be prepared, the more useful it will be to the Administration and to the MPO as it provides input on the MBTA financing issue.

Will there be an analysis by range of fare increase? (Thomas Kadzis, City of Boston)

CTPS will model three packages and each one will have specific details about the assumed fare levels. (K. Quackenbush)

Does each package assume fare increases with service cuts? (D. Mohler)

The packages have not been defined yet, but they likely will assume both. (J. Cosgrove)

Have any calculations been done on the impact of the parking fee increases at MBTA lots? (T. Kadzis)

The increase had no impact on ridership, but parking usage is down about 18%. The MBTA has gained revenue from the fee increase. (J. Cosgrove)

If more staff is devoted to the study, could it be completed sooner? (J. Gallagher)

That will be looked into. (K. Quackenbush)

A motion to approve the work program for the *Potential MBTA Fare Increase Impact Analysis* was made by M. Pratt, and seconded by T. Bent. The motion passed unanimously.

11. Administrative Adjustment to the FFY 2009 Element of the FFYs 2007 – 2010 TIP – Marc Draisien, MAPC

The Chair and Vice Chair received a letter from Paul Talbot, Administrator for Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA) requesting an administrative adjustment to Amendment Two of the FFY 2009 element of the FFYs 2007 – 2010 TIP to adjust the amount of ARRA monies awarded to CATA based on the additional money awarded through the MBTA/RTA split agreement. CATA would like to use the additional funds to buy two American-made low-floor buses instead of one.

A motion to approve an administrative adjustment to Amendment Two of the FFY 2009 element of the FFYs 2007 – 2010 TIP to reflect the actual amount of ARRA funds directed to CATA was made by M. Pratt, and seconded by G. Esty. The motion passed unanimously.

12. Members' Items

Members discussed the schedule for Municipal TIP Input Day and agreed to have the meetings on May 21 and 28 starting at 9AM. Hayes Morrison, MPO staff, reported that there will be a separate TIP Input Day scheduled in September to review pre-25% design projects.

J. Cosgrove reported that the MBTA's agreement with the Utah Transit Authority for commuter rail vehicle procurement is not going through.

P. Regan advised members to relay information to their communities regarding the proposed MBTA fare increase and service cuts, and the MBTA's \$161 million shortfall. He suggested they weigh in with the MBTA Advisory Board and their state representatives.

13. Adjourn

Transportation Planning and Programming Committee Meeting Attendance
Thursday, March 19, 2009, 10:00 AM

Member Agencies

EOTPW

City of Boston

City of Newton

City of Salem

City of Somerville

MAPC

Massport

MBTA

MBTA Advisory Board

Regional Transportation
Advisory Council

Town of Bedford

Town of Hopkinton

Town of Framingham

Representatives and Alternates

Sec. James Aloisi

David Mohler

Thomas Kadzis

David Koses

Lynn Duncan

Thomas Bent

Marc Draisen

Jim Gallagher

Lourenço Dantas

Joe Cosgrove

Paul Regan

Malek Al-Khatib

Richard Reed

Mary Pratt

Ginger Esty

MPO Staff/CTPS

Maureen Kelly

Anne McGahan

Hayes Morrison

Sean Pfalzer

Karl Quackenbush

Arnie Soolman

Mary Ellen Sullivan

Pam Wolfe

Other Attendees

Ed Carr

Steve Olanoff

John Stasik

Wendy Stern

MetroWest Regional Transit Authority

Regional Transportation Advisory
Council

MetroWest Regional Transit Authority

MBTA



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James A. Aloisi, Jr.
Secretary of Transportation
and MPO Chairman

Arnold J. Soolman
Director, MPO Staff

The Boston Region MPO, the federally designated entity responsible for transportation decision-making for the 101 cities and towns in the MPO region, is composed of the following:

Executive Office of Transportation
and Public Works

City of Boston

City of Newton

City of Salem

City of Somerville

Town of Bedford

Town of Framingham

Town of Hopkinton

Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Massachusetts Bay Transportation
Authority Advisory Board

Massachusetts Bay Transportation
Authority

Massachusetts Highway Department

Massachusetts Port Authority

Massachusetts Turnpike Authority

Regional Transportation Advisory
Council (nonvoting)

Federal Highway Administration
(nonvoting)

Federal Transit Administration
(nonvoting)

TO: Transportation Planning and Programming Committee
FROM: Mary Ellen Sullivan, UPWP Manager
DATE: March 19, 2009
RE: Status of FFY 2010 UPWP Development

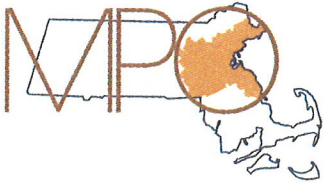
The purpose of this memo is to inform the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee members of the status of the development of the FY 2010 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

FFY 2010 budget information is not yet available; however, staff has begun the process of determining the status of current studies as of October 1, 2009 and the cost to complete them, and will shortly begin the process of identifying ongoing activities and their estimated costs.

In addition, staff has prepared an insert for Transreport soliciting feedback (see attached) that will help identify specific areas in need of study. Staff has conferred with FHWA and FTA on their UPWP guidance and is in the process of reviewing the Regional Transportation Plan, the PMT, the Mobility Management System Report, MetroFuture, other major planning documents, and comments on the FFY 2009 UPWP and other major planning documents to identify potential study ideas.

The UPWP Subcommittee will meet on April 2 and over the course of the next three months to continue its work in defining budgets and developing a recommended set of FFY 2010 UPWP projects for the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee approval in June.

Do You Have a Mobility or Safety Concern?



The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has begun developing its next Unified Planning Work Program, which will set forth transportation-planning studies to be conducted in federal fiscal year 2010. To help us in this process, we would like to hear about mobility and safety issues that could be addressed through a study. Using the space below, describe your issue(s) as specifically as possible, including details such as location(s), travel mode(s) involved, and length of delay.

The information provided will also be shared with the Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works as they continue to develop "You Move Massachusetts," the new transportation plan for the commonwealth. Thank you!

May we contact you for further information about your study idea? Y ___ N ___

Telephone: _____ E-mail address: _____

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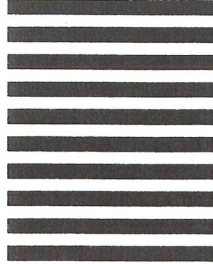


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MetroWest RTA

Economic Stimulus Request:

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Vehicle Replacement | 300,000 |
| Shelters | 30,000 |
| Support Vehicle | 30,000 |
| ITS | 270,000 |
| Arch/Eng | 70,000 |
| <u>Shop Equipment</u> | <u>50,000</u> |
| Total | <u>750,000</u> |

Vehicle Replacement-replace (3) 11 year old mini-buses acquired from BAT.

Shelters-add 5 shelters to the system, Hopkinton, Holliston, Wayland, Natick & Framingham

Service Vehicle –service vehicle with plow

Arch/Engineering –Preliminary design and engineering of maintenance & operations facility in Framingham by SEA Consultants, Inc. Included in task 1, is a feasibility and alternative analysis as well as a project plan. Task 2 is focused on conceptual design.

ITS- continue to build and implement “mobility management” center which will integrate fixed route and demand response service provided by MWRTA.
Purchase 55 Mentor Mobile Data Terminals. (33 paratransit-22 fixed route)