

Memorandum for the Record

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

April 18, 2013 Meeting

10:00 AM – 1:20 PM, State Transportation Building, Conference Rooms 2&3, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

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

Decisions

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization agreed to the following:

- approve the work program for the *Roadway Network Inventory for Emergency Needs: A Pilot Study*
- approve the minutes of the meeting of April 4 with a correction
- approve Amendment Four of the federal fiscal years (FFYs) 2013-16 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as presented with the addition of a grant for the *Essex Coastal Scenic Byway Wayfinding Signage System* project
- release Draft Amendment Five of the FFYs 2013-16 TIP for a 30-day public review period
- move the Intersection Improvement Program towards implementation

Meeting Agenda

1. Public Comments

Stephanie Mercandetti, Town of Walpole, requested that the MPO program the *Walpole – Reconstruction of Route 1A* project in the FFYs 2014-17 TIP. She noted that the project has been on the books for 15 years and scored higher in the TIP project evaluations than several other projects that are included in the staff recommendation. She also suggested that the MPO consider geographic equity and program a project from the Three Rivers Interlocal Council (TRIC) subregion. She reported that the project would address a dangerous intersection where there was a fatal accident and an accident involving a school bus. The 25% design hearing is expected to be held soon. David Anderson, MassDOT Highway Division, reported that the project cost is estimated to be \$14.1 million.

Mark Kaepplein, East Arlington Concerned Citizens, spoke regarding the *Arlington – Reconstruction of Massachusetts Avenue* project. He asked that the project be returned to the 25% design stage to address concerns of Arlington residents who expressed

opposition to the design – which would reduce the number of lanes from four to three – in a recent town ballot question. He expressed concern that the lane reduction would increase congestion and worsen air quality. He expressed support for preserving two federal earmarks for the project for use in a design that serves the needs of the public. He suggested that other municipalities look at this example and involve residents in the project design process early.

Dick Williamson, Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, thanked the MPO for programming the *Acton, Carlisle, and Westford – Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Phase 2A* project in the TIP. He asked the MPO to also support the section of the trail in Acton and Concord.

Kristin Guichard, Town of Acton, reported that the *Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Phase 2A* project is at the 75% design stage and that the *Acton and Maynard – Assabet River Rail Trail* project will have its 25% design hearing in June. She thanked the MPO for their support of these projects. D. Mohler reported the 25% designs for the Assabet project have been submitted to MassDOT Highway Division.

Peter Heckenbleikner, Town of Reading, requested that the MPO expedite the *Reading – Reconstruction of West Street* project. (This project is included in the revised staff recommendation for the FFY 2014 – 17 TIP.) He noted that the project has been in development for 17 years and is now at the 100% design stage. The Town of Reading has already spent \$400,000 of town funds to get the project to this stage. The project will address a roadway that provides access to approximately 1,000 new housing units, several public schools, and a parochial school. The project cost estimate is \$7 million. The town does not foresee any problems in making the project ready for construction. No land takings are required, only temporary rights-of-access. He distributed a fact sheet that describes the project milestones.

In response to a question from D. Anderson, P. Heckenbleikner confirmed that the MWRA will be conducting work at one end of the project area and that the MWRA would be responsible for repaving that section. Joe Onorato, MassDOT Highway Division, stated that District 4 would like to see the *West Street* project completed before construction begins on the *Reading and Woburn – Interchange Improvements to Interstate 93 and 95* project.

Karen Galligan and Bill Boland, both of the Town of Southborough, and Brian Brosnan, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., spoke in support of the *Southborough – Reconstruction of Main Street (Route 30)* project. They expressed appreciation that the project was included in the staff recommendation for the FFY 2014 – 17 TIP and requested that the

MPO move the project forward in the TIP, if possible. They also provided an overview of the project noting that it would address a major thoroughfare through the town, which is challenging to navigate by car, bicycle, and foot. The project was at the 25% design stage in 2008 and the 25% plans were resubmitted to the MassDOT Highway Division in 2011. A design public hearing is expected to take place at the end of the summer or early fall, and the 75% design plans to be prepared by the end of the year. The project will require environmental permits. (Following this discussion the commenters were informed that the staff recommendation has since been revised and that the project is no longer included.)

Wig Zamore, Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership / Mystic View Task Force, spoke about the air quality benefits of the *Green Line Extension* project and suggested that, in the near future, MassDOT prepare a schedule for the implementation of interim air quality improvement projects.

2. Chair's Report—David Mohler, MassDOT

D. Mohler introduced Sherri Warrington, who has joined MassDOT as head of the MPO Activities unit.

3. Committee Chairs' Reports

Callida Cenizal, of MassDOT and chair of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Committee, reported that the committee met this morning to discuss quarterly updates and a proposed budget reallocation for certain projects. The committee is tentatively scheduled to meet on June 20 to discuss public comments on the UPWP and to prepare a recommendation for the MPO.

Lourenço Dantas, of the Massachusetts Port Authority and chair of the Congestion Management Committee, drew members' attention to a memorandum that was distributed regarding the committee's proposal for an Intersection Improvement Program in the TIP. This program would be funded with \$350,000 of Congestion Management and Air Quality Program (CMAQ) funds in the FFY 2014 element of the TIP. A consultant would be hired by MassDOT to investigate up to 80 intersections in the region recommended by CTPS and drawn from past studies and data collection work, including the Congestion Management Process, and prepare reports which MassDOT and CTPS will use to identify low-cost improvements, particularly in regard to signal retiming, that can be implemented by MassDOT as "book jobs", by municipalities, or by others.

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

The Advisory Council met on April 10 and received informative updates from MPO staff on the development of the FFYs 2014-17 TIP and FFY 2014 UPWP.

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

Members who would like to renew their State Transportation Building identification cards were invited to contact Robin Mannion, Deputy Executive Director of CTPS, for the necessary paperwork.

K. Quackenbush drew members' attention to the new meeting calendar for May. The public review period for the TIP and UPWP is expected to begin on May 13. The MPO will also be holding two public workshops focused both on those two documents as well as on the MPO's Public Participation Plan and Transportation Equity outreach. An MPO meeting has also been tentatively scheduled for May 30.

6. Work Program—*Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff*

K. Quackenbush presented the work program for the *Roadway Network Inventory for Emergency Needs: A Pilot Study*. This work program builds upon the MPO's All-Hazards Planning database and web application, which is comprised of information about emergency routes and natural hazard areas such as flood zones, hurricane surge zones, areas that could potentially be affected by sea level rise, and earthquake risk areas. The MPO staff uses this database when evaluating TIP projects and makes it available for use by the all-hazards planning community.

This pilot project would add data to the database on the characteristics of traffic signals on the region's emergency routes, including information about whether the signals have emergency signal pre-emption or are connected to a traffic control center. A new GIS data layer for signals would be added to the All-Hazards Planning web application. In addition, existing GIS layers (including those for bridge condition and flood data) would be updated.

Jim Gillooly, City of Boston, requested that staff maintain an ongoing dialog with public safety officials to discuss whether certain signal data should be made available on the public version of the web application. K. Quackenbush stated that staff will bear this suggestion in mind as the work goes forward.

A motion to approve the work program for the *Roadway Network Inventory for Emergency Needs: A Pilot Study* was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) (Eric Bourassa), and seconded by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (Tom Bent). The motion carried.

7. MPO Meeting Minutes—Maureen Kelly, MPO Staff

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of April 4 – with a correction to page 7 as recommended by S. Olanoff – was made by MassDOT Highway Division (John Romano) and seconded by the MBTA (Joe Cosgrove). The motion carried.

8. TIP Amendment Four—Sean Pfalzer, MPO Staff

S. Pfalzer summarized Amendment Four of the FFYs 2013-16 TIP and the public comments which were received during the public review period. The amendment would program \$53.8 million for the MBTA to procure ten locomotives and \$2.23 million in additional funds for the *Belmont and Watertown – Reconstruction on Trapelo Road and Belmont Street* project.

Five public comments were received:

The Essex National Heritage Commission expressed support for the programming of a grant for the *Essex Coastal Scenic Byway Wayfinding Signage System* project.

A Medford resident supported the locomotive procurement project and suggested that the new locomotives be assigned to the Lowell and Fitchburg commuter rail lines to mitigate for delays to the *Green Line Extension* project.

State Representative William Galvin requested funding for improvements to the Interstate 93 and 95 interchange and Dedham Street corridor in Canton, and explained that the improvements would support a planned development in the area and help address traffic congestion problems. The Town of Canton also requested funding for this project and note that the improvements would enhance connections to rail service.

The City of Cambridge requested an additional \$400,000 for the *Cambridge Common* project to cover full-depth reconstruction of a portion of Massachusetts Avenue.

Members then raised questions:

Will any MPO funds be required as a match to the federal dollars for the locomotive procurement project? (Dennis Crowley, South West Advisory Planning Committee, Town of Medway)

No. (S. Pfalzer)

What is the cost of the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway Wayfinding Signage System project? (Tina Cassidy, North Shore Task Force, City of Beverly)

The project cost is \$275,000. (S. Pfalzer)

What is the timing of the Cambridge Common project? (J. Gillooly)

The current advertising date is June 2013. The 100% designs have not yet been submitted to the MassDOT Highway Division. (S. Pfalzer)

Will the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway Wayfinding Signage System project have an impact on MPO funds and can it be included in this amendment? (Ed Tarallo, North Suburban Planning Council City of Woburn)

The project has no impact on MPO funds and it could be incorporated into Amendment Four. (S. Pfalzer)

A motion was made:

A motion to program the grant for the *Essex Coastal Scenic Byway Wayfinding Signage System* project was made by the North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) (E. Tarallo), and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

Members had additional questions:

What is the source of the funds for the locomotives? (David Koses, At-Large City of Newton)

These funds became available after the Commonwealth received redistribution funds last year. The redistribution funds were applied to certain projects, which then freed funds in the CMAQ category. The locomotive procurement project qualified to receive funds under the CMAQ category. The MBTA has an option to purchase the locomotives and that option will soon expire. (D. Mohler)

How should the MPO respond to the Medford resident who requested that the new locomotives be assigned to the Lowell and Fitchburg commuter rail lines. (S. Olanoff)

The MBTA does not assign locomotives to particular lines. The locomotives circulate throughout the entire system. (J. Cosgrove, MBTA)

A motion was made:

A motion to approve Amendment Four of the FFYs 2013-16 TIP as presented, with the addition of a grant for the *Essex Coastal Scenic Byway Wayfinding Signage System* project, was made by the North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) (E. Tarallo), and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

9. TIP Amendment Five—Sean Pfalzer, MPO Staff

S. Pfalzer presented a proposed Amendment Five of the FFYs 2013-16 TIP. This amendment would make revisions to the MPO target funded projects, incorporate cost changes to statewide line items, change the transit program to reflect the MBTA's new capital program and new funding levels and programs from the new federal transportation legislation (MAP-21).

Highway Element

The changes to the target funded projects in the highway portion of the TIP include the following:

- a cost increase to the following projects:
 - *Danvers – Reconstruction of Liberty Street*
 - *Needham and Wellesley – Rehabilitation and Replacement of 6 Bridges on Interstate 95/Route 128*
 - *Lynn – Reconstruction of Route 129*
- the reprogramming of the following projects due to readiness concerns:
 - *Weymouth and Abington – Reconstruction and Widening on Route 18* (from the FFY 2013 element to the FFY 2015 element)
 - *Arlington – Bikeway Connection at Intersection of Route 3 and Route 60* (from the FFY 2013 element to the FFY 2014 element)

Other changes include the following:

- removal of the *Bedford – Bridge Preservation, Great Road over the Shawsheen River* project
- the addition of a portion of the *Lexington and Burlington – Interstate Maintenance on Interstate 95* project to the *Lexington – Bridge Replacement, Route 2 over Interstate 95* project
- the reprogramming of an earmark for the *Weymouth and Abington – Reconstruction and Widening on Route 18* to the FFY 2015 element
- the reprogramming of an earmark for the *Boston – Improvements to Gainsborough and St. Botolph Street* project to the FFY 2014 element for use in construction rather than design
- the addition of the *Kendall Square Employer Transportation Benefit Pricing Trial* pilot program in the FFY 2013 element

- cost increases to the following projects:
 - *Franklin – Interstate Maintenance on Interstate 95*
 - *Wilmington and Woburn – Interstate Maintenance on Interstate 93*
 - *Braintree – Safe Routes to School (Ross Elementary School)*
 - *Wakefield – Safe Routes to School (Dolbeare School)*
 - *Hopkinton to Andover – Installation of Cameras, Message Signs and Communication Infrastructure on Interstate 495*
- reprogramming of *the Burlington, Woburn, Reading – Expansion of Fiber, CCTV, VMS, and Traffic Sensor Network on Interstate 95* from FFY 2013 to FFY 2014
- the combination of two projects into the *Braintree, Quincy, Milton, and Boston – HOV Lane Barrier Transfer Vehicle Operator Contract* project
- the combination of two projects into the *Beverly – Construction of a Walkway on Beverly Harborfront* project
- the addition of two GANS-funded bridge projects:
 - *Framingham – Bridge Replacement, Winter Street over MBTA, AmTrak, and CSX Railroad*
 - *Revere – Bridge Replacement, Revere Beach Parkway over MBTA*

Members asked questions.

How does the reprogramming affect spending under the CMAQ category? (S. Olanoff)

The TIP remains under the CMAQ minimum. It would be possible to move the *Somerville – Reconstruction of Beacon Street* project from the Surface Transportation Program category to the CMAQ category. (S. Pfalzer)

What is the reason for the removal of the Bedford – Bridge Preservation, Great Road over the Shawsheen River project? (Richard Reed, Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination, Town of Bedford)

There is a concern about readiness. The project is at the pre-25% design stage. (S. Pfalzer) Another issue has to do with a database error which caused the bridge to be listed as off-system when it is actually on-system. MassDOT Highway Division had to reshuffle the bridge projects. (D. Anderson)

Transit Element

S. Pfalzer then gave an overview of the transit portion of the TIP. He noted that the new federal transportation reauthorization bill, MAP-21, has provided additional funding to the MBTA. There have also been changes to the funding programs as a result of MAP-21. Projects previously funded under Section 5309 are now funded under Section 5337. Section 5339 is a new program for bus projects.

Changes to the transit section have been made to adapt to the new funding programs as well as to make other adjustments in the transit program. The changes include the following:

- the removal of the following projects:
 - *Power Program* from the FFY 2013 element
 - *Preventative Maintenance* (a project of the Cape Ann Transportation Authority)
 - *Bus Rolling Stock* (a project of the Cape Ann Transportation Authority)
- The addition of the following projects:
 - *Red Line Signal Upgrades*
 - *Red Line Leak Repairs*
 - *Revenue Vehicles – Green Line*
 - *Red Line Floating Slab*
 - *System Upgrades*
- Cost changes to the following line items:
 - *System Upgrades*
 - *Stations (Accessibility) – Government Center*
 - *Facilities – Parking System Improvements*

Vote to Release Amendment

A motion to release Draft Amendment Five of the FFYs 2013-16 TIP for a 30-day public review period was made by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (T. Bent), and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

10. MBTA Capital Investment Program—*Victor Rivas, Director of Capital Budget, MBTA*

V. Rivas gave a PowerPoint presentation on the FYs 2014-18 Capital Investment Program (CIP), which was recently approved by the MassDOT Board of Directors. He also discussed the funding challenges faced by the MBTA, and the positive impact that the passage of the Administration's proposed plan, *A Way Forward: A 21st Century Transportation Plan*, could have on the MBTA.

The CIP is a fiscally-constrained five-year capital program. The CIP focuses on projects designed to keep the MBTA system in a state of good repair. Approximately 97% of the funds programmed in this CIP are for preserving state of good repair.

Federal grants are the main source of funding for projects and programs in the CIP. State funds are another major component. Over recent years, the MBTA has been decreasing its dependence on revenue bonds. Other smaller sources of funding include Grant Anticipation Notes (GANS) and project financing.

The CIP invests in the MBTA's revenue vehicles, stations, rail track, bridges (of which there are 467), tunnels, and maintenance shops. This CIP represents \$7.2 billion of funding. Of this amount 57% is from state funding, 33% from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), 9% from MBTA revenue bonds, and 1% from the Department of Homeland Security.

All MBTA projects are subject to funding availability. Since the reauthorization of the new federal transportation bill, MAP-21, is for a two-year period only, federal funding is certain for only one year of this CIP, FFY 2014.

The Governor has proposed a statewide capital investment plan, *A Way Forward*, which would provide \$13 billion in state funding over the next ten years. Of that amount, \$6.7 billion would be available to the MBTA over the ten year period for state of good repair priorities and projects that unlock economic growth in the Commonwealth.

V. Rivas showed charts that listed the MBTA's priorities for funding under *The Way Forward*. The CIP programs \$2.1 billion for state of good repair projects for FFY 2014-18. The projects include the following: procurement of vehicles for the Red, Orange, and Green Lines; infrastructure improvements on the Red and Orange Lines; procurement of buses; overhaul of the Red Line fleet #3; power, facilities, and operations projects; and modernization power projects. The CIP also programs \$1.8 billion (state funding) for economic growth projects; these projects are the *South Coast Rail*, *Green Line Extension*, and *South Station Expansion*.

By funding vehicle procurement projects, the Governor's plan would free about \$454 million in federal dollars, which could then be applied to other projects. In the CIP, those funds are applied to several critical programs: the Bridge Program, T-GAPS, Bus Overhaul Program, and Commuter Rail Vehicle Improvement Program.

The CIP supports all modes of transportation. A pie chart was shown that depicted the CIP funding by mode. It was noted that the funding for the Blue Line appears low in this CIP because the MBTA invested heavily in this line in previous years. Approximately 75% of CIP funds are directed to the core service areas, and approximately 25% to suburban commuter rail service.

A chart was shown that depicts funding by infrastructure and equipment category. The largest investment in this CIP is in revenue vehicles. The second largest is in bridges. The investment in the bridge category has increased significantly in recent years and the need for future investment is expected to be significant as well. The investment in power projects has also been increasing.

The CIP is available at www.mbta.com/cip.

Following the presentation, members and members of the public asked questions and made comments:

Is the cost for the Green Line Extension project in the CIP (\$384 million) for the first or second phase of the project? (D. Crowley)

The cost shown is for the first phase of the project (to Union Square and Medford Hillside), which is a requirement under the State Implementation Plan (SIP). It does not reflect the cost of the second phase of the project (from Medford Hillside to Route 16), for which the MPO has programmed funds. (D. Mohler)

What would be the impact to the MPO if the senate passes a bill that provides less funding than proposed in the Governor's plan? (D. Crowley)

The Commonwealth is legally committed to fund the construction of the portion of the *Green Line Extension* project that is a requirement of the SIP. If necessary, the Commonwealth would have to take funds from other MassDOT programs, such as the highway program, to fund the project. The MBTA does not have sufficient funds to pay for the *Green Line Extension*. The MPO has made a decision to flex highway funds to transit in order to finance the second phase of the project. As long as the MPO continues to support that project, it can go forward. (D. Mohler)

Could the MPO be asked to fund costs for the first phase? (D. Crowley)

MassDOT does not envision asking the MPO to fund the first phase of the project, however, the possibility cannot be ruled out. (D. Mohler)

What is the cost of a new commuter rail coach? Given the cost of overhauling coaches, would it be more cost effective to buy new coaches? (S. Olanoff)

A new coach costs \$2.5 million. (J. Cosgrove) The MBTA does not have the funds to purchase new coaches. (D. Mohler) Also, there are federal requirements regarding the useful life of transit vehicles. The FTA needs to approve the sale of used vehicles and it will vet the overhaul of vehicles to ensure cost effectiveness. (J. Cosgrove and V. Rivas)

Is federal New Starts money for the Green Line Extension project included in the pie chart that shows the amount of money in the CIP for each mode? (D. Koses)

No, it only accounts for the state contribution. The New Starts money has not been approved yet, and will only be included in the CIP if approved. (V. Rivas) The total cost of the project is not reflected in the CIP. The additional amount – either from New Starts or the Commonwealth – will have to be included in the CIP at the appropriate time. (D. Mohler)

Would the procurement of Red and Orange Line vehicles and infrastructure improvements on those lines be paid for by issuing bonds or using GANS? How would the vehicles be procured? (Rafael Mares, Conservation Law Foundation)

These programs are included in the Governor's plan, so the Commonwealth would fully fund them if the plan is approved. The MBTA would receive the funds directly from the Commonwealth. A procurement of this size would take a number of years as the vehicles must be designed for their specific purpose. (V. Rivas)

If the Governor's plan does not pass, would the MBTA still be able to procure the Red and Orange Line vehicles? What projects are not going to be done in that event? (R. Mares)

If the plan does not pass, the MBTA would have to reprioritize the entire CIP. (V. Rivas) MassDOT has a plan under development to address those decisions. (D. Mohler)

If this CIP includes funds for replacing one-third of the Red Line fleet, when will the other two-thirds of the fleet to be replaced? (S. Olanoff)

This CIP funds the procurement of 74 Red Line vehicles in fleet #1. Fleet #2 is currently being overhauled with funds from the MPO. The Governor's plan would fund the overhaul of fleet #3.

11. Development of Draft Certification Documents –Sean Pfalzer and Michelle Scott, MPO Staff

Members received briefings on the development of the FFYs 2014–17 TIP and the FFY 2014 UPWP.

Transportation Improvement Program

S. Pfalzer presented a revision to the staff recommendation for the FFYs 2014–17 TIP, which was first presented to the MPO on April 4.

Since the first recommendation, staff was notified that the *Weymouth and Abington – Reconstruction and Widening on Route 18* will not be ready for advertisement in FFY

2014. In the revised recommendation, the project has been reprogrammed to the FFY 2015-17 elements.

The revision also includes updated project cost estimates resulting from the added cost of utility relocation. The following projects had significant cost increases:

- *Weymouth and Abington – Reconstruction and Widening on Route 18* (cost increase of approximately \$2 million)
- *Bedford, Billerica, Burlington – Middlesex Turnpike Improvements, Phase 3* (cost increase of approximately \$1.6 million)
- *Needham and Wellesley – Rehabilitation /Replacement of 6 Bridges on Interstate 95 (Contract V)* (cost increase of approximately \$3 million)

The following projects had less significant cost increases due to utility relocation costs:

- *Melrose – Intersection and Signal Improvements to Lebanon Street* (cost increase of approximately \$600,000)
- *Salem – Reconstruction of Canal Street* (cost increase of approximately \$275,000)
- *Medway – Reconstruction on Route 109* (cost increase of approximately \$110,000)

These changes made approximately \$6 million available in the FFY 2014 element, however, there were few projects that could be made ready for construction in FFY 2014. The *Reading – Reconstruction of West Street* project is one project that is far enough along in the design process to be advertised in FFY 2014.

Staff has proposed programming the *West Street* project in the FFY 2014 element and making the following changes to maintain fiscal constraint:

- moving the *Hanover – Reconstruction of Washington Street (Route 53)* project from FFY 2014 element to FFY 2015 (MassDOT Highway has some concerns about being able to acquire right-of-way for this project by FFY 2014)
- moving some funding for the *Needham and Wellesley – Rehabilitation/ Replacement of 6 Bridges on Interstate 95 (Contract V)* project out of the FFY 2014 element to the FFY 2017 element
- reducing the Clean Air and Mobility Program by \$1 million in the FFY 2016 element and by \$1.5 million in the FFY 2017 element
- moving the *Southborough – Reconstruction of Main Street (Route 30)* project and the *Acton and Maynard – Assabet River Rail Trail* project out of this TIP

Members and members of the public then discussed the revised staff recommendation.

S. Olanoff expressed concern about reducing funding for the Clean Air and Mobility Program.

Richard Canale, At-Large Town of Lexington, echoed that concern. He also and asked staff to provide information about the impact of the removal of the *Assabet River Rail Trail* project in terms of GreenDOT policies for increasing access to alternative modes of transportation.

D. Crowley advised staff to notify the elected officials of municipalities that could be affected by these changes.

D. Mohler inquired why staff chose to move the *Hanover – Reconstruction of Washington Street (Route 53)* project out of the FFY 2014 element rather than the *Arlington – Bikeway Connection at Intersection of Route 3 and Route 60* project. He noted that the *Arlington Bikeway* project has doubled in cost since it was first programmed. He expressed the need for the MPO to have a discussion about how the MPO deals with project selection when projects increase significantly in cost.

J. Gillooly asked if the *Needham and Wellesley – Rehabilitation/ Replacement of 6 Bridges on Interstate 95 (Contract V)* project would be completed in FFY 2017 as programmed. S. Pfalzer replied yes, that the project would be fully-funded.

D. Koses expressed concern that the MPO seems to be relying less on the project evaluation results and more on project readiness when selecting projects for the TIP. He noted that some projects, including the *Green Line Extension* and *Arlington Bikeway* projects are on the TIP but have not been evaluated. E. Bourassa noted that the *Arlington Bikeway* project expanded in scope because the MassDOT Highway District Office recommended additional improvements to the intersection.

R. Canale added that the *Arlington Bikeway* project is part of the Battle Road Scenic Byway and part of a corridor plan. He suggested that the MPO be mindful of other revenue sources from other agencies that can be leveraged. The MPO, for example, programmed a grant for a wayfinding project on the Essex County Scenic Byway.

Laura Wiener, At-Large Town of Arlington, also addressed the *Arlington Bikeway* project. She explained that the project design changed from a two lane design to a three lane design due to public concern. All of the Arlington Selectmen support the project and are preparing a letter to submit to the MPO, and the town meeting has voted to support it. She noted that the ballot question about the project was worded in a way that

made it difficult to understand and that the question was non-binding. Further, the question did not address the safety benefits of the project. She urged to MPO to keep the project programmed on the TIP as it is at the 100% design stage.

D. Koses asked if staff could evaluate projects in the staff recommendation that have not gone through the project evaluation process. A discussion followed in which staff explained that some projects in the staff recommendation were first programmed at a time that pre-dated the current evaluation criteria, and then those projects were moved forward in the TIP. Staff could make an attempt to evaluate the *Green Line Extension* project, however, the evaluation criteria is designed for highway projects. K. Quackenbush also noted that other broad-based considerations, such as geographic equity, are factored into the evaluations.

James Errickson, At-Large City of Everett, raised the idea that the MPO should evaluate projects like the *Arlington Bikeway*, which began as a Clean Air and Mobility project and then changed into a roadway project, as roadway projects. E. Bourassa added that the *Arlington Bikeway* project is unique in that it did begin as a Clean Air and Mobility project, but due to recommendations from MassDOT Highway, the project scope changed to incorporate intersection improvements. He suggested that the MPO consider a policy that if a project significantly increases in scope then it should be evaluated on par with other projects. D. Koses expressed agreement.

Clinton Bench, now chairing the meeting, summarized the discussion by noting that the MPO is not suggesting that the MPO change its evaluation process, but that staff should evaluate the *Green Line Extension*, *Arlington Bikeway*, and *Assabet River Rail Trail* projects.

R. Canale raised the policy issue of how well the evaluation process addresses trail projects. He also raised the question of whether there could be cost savings from segmenting the *Arlington Bikeway* project to separate the trail from the intersection work.

Regarding the evaluation of the *Green Line Extension* project, J. Cosgrove stated that the project was evaluated during the development of the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and that the TIP implements the LRTP recommendation. The design of the project will not be started until FFY 2017, which raises policy implications in regard to the LRTP evaluation. T. Bent added that the MPO has already voted on the *Green Line Extension* project, and that the MPO should adhere to its commitments rather than having a policy of re-evaluating projects that have already been approved.

Tom O'Rourke, Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC), referenced the MPO's policy of using geographic equity as a consideration in project selection and remarked that there has not been a project in the TRIC region for a number of years.

Mark Kaepplein, East Arlington Concerned Citizens, weighed in on the discussion. He stated that, as a taxpayer, he would like to see the most benefit for the money spent. In regards to the *Arlington Bikeway* project, he stated that while the proposed project would create bike lanes and add traffic lights, he is disappointed that the project would not address congestion on Route 60. He would also like to see in the project evaluations a measure of the expected air quality improvement that would result.

Dick Williamson, Friends of Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, expressed the need for safety improvements at the Arlington intersection. He then asked about the status of Phase 2A and Phase 2C of the *Bruce Freeman Rail Trail* project. S. Pfalzer explained that Phase 2A is programmed in the FFY 2014 element under the Statewide Transportation Enhancements funding category. Phase 2C is programmed in the FFYs 2021-25 timeband of the LRTP; due to its position in the outer timeband of the LRTP, staff did not recommend programming Phase 2C in this TIP. If the MPO were to amend the LRTP to program Phase 2C in an earlier LRTP timeband, the project could be considered for this TIP.

J. Errickson raised the idea of implementing a policy which would require the MPO to re-evaluate projects that change in scope. E. Bourassa noted that the MPO does have a rigorous evaluation process and expressed concern about penalizing the *Arlington Bikeway* project due to a scope change (that was recommended by MassDOT). L. Dantas remarked that an evaluation of the project would give more transparency to the TIP selection process.

D. Anderson advocated for maintaining funding for the *Route 128 Add-a-Lane* project and for programming the *Walpole – Reconstruction of Route 1A (Main Street)* project, which has scored well in the evaluation process, in the FFYs 2016 or 2017 element.

T. Bent stated that the MPO should have a discussion about its policy regarding the handling of project cost increases.

J. Romano asked whether the amount programmed for the *Green Line Extension* project in the outer years of the TIP is a sure figure given that the project is several years from implementation. He raised the possibility of adjusting the programmed amounts in the FFYs 2016 and 2017 elements. C. Bench noted that the question can be considered over the course of the next couple of weeks.

D. Crowley expressed that municipalities need to have some assurance that when their projects are programmed in the TIP, the MPO will see them through to construction, especially considering that many municipalities are spending their own funds to get their projects designed and ready.

Bill Boland, Town of Southborough, expressed discouragement that the *Southborough – Reconstruction of Main Street (Route 30)* project was removed from the TIP after having been programmed, and that the situation is such that a project that has been vying for funding for a long time can be bumped out by a new project. He asked the MPO to reconsider its decision to remove the project from the TIP.

Peter Heckenbleikner, Town of Reading, asked the MPO to recognize that the Town of Reading has spent its own funds to make the *West Street* project ready. He asked when the MPO would be making a decision on the TIP. Pam Wolfe, Manager of Certification Activities, MPO staff, replied that the two main decision points on the TIP are on May 2, when the MPO will vote to release a draft TIP for public review, and at the end of June, when the MPO will vote to endorse the TIP. The TIP will be a topic of discussion at MPO meetings between those two dates.

Unified Planning Work Program

Michelle Scott, MPO staff, gave members an opportunity to ask questions about the materials for the draft FFY 2014 UPWP, which were distributed at the April 4 meeting: the UPWP Committee's recommendation for new projects; the universe of projects; MAPC's projects; and budgets for MAPC's and CTPS's projects. She also reported that the committee's recommendation was presented to the Advisory Council at the April 10 meeting.

12. State Implementation Plan Update –*Callida Cenizal, MassDOT*

The April status report on the projects in the State Implementation Plan (SIP) was distributed. Since the March report there are general construction updates on the *Fairmount Line Improvement* project. There are also updates on the *Green Line Extension* project. Phase 1 of the project is underway and the project design is progressing. Geotechnical and survey work has begun. Community meetings are being held.

13. Members Items

There were none.

14. Adjourn

Attendance

Members

Representatives and Alternates

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)	Jim Gillooly
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	David Mohler
	Clinton Bench
	David Anderson
MassDOT Highway Division	John Romano
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	Joe Cosgrove
Massachusetts Port Authority	Lourenço Dantas
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)	Tina Cassidy
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

Other Attendees	Affiliation
Bill Boland	Town of Southborough
Brian Brosnan	Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
Michael Buckley	Office of State Senator William Brownsberger
Callida Cenizal	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Kristen Guichard	Town of Acton
Raffi Freedman- Gurspan	Office of State Representative Carl Sciortino
Karen Galligan	Town of Southborough
Peter Heckenbleikner	Town of Reading
Mark Kaepplein	East Arlington Concerned Citizens
Rafael Mares	Conservation Law Foundation
Stephanie Mercandetti	Town of Walpole
Joe Onorato	MassDOT Highway Division
Victor Rivas	MBTA
Patrick Shield	Office of State Senator James Timilty
Steven Smalley	Office of State Senator Thomas McGee
Bill Steelman	Essex National Heritage Commission
Sherri Warrington	MassDOT
Dick Williamson	Friends of Bruce Freeman Rail Trail
George Zambouras	Town of Reading
Wig Zamore	Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership / Mystic View Task Force

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director
Maureen Kelly
Robin Mannion
Anne McGahan
Elizabeth Moore
Scott Peterson
Sean Pfalzer
Michelle Scott
Alicia Wilson
Pam Wolfe
