

# Draft Memorandum for the Record

## Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

### February 20, 2014 Meeting

10:15 AM – 1:20 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:

- Approve five work programs:
  - *Methodology for Evaluating the Potential for Limited-Stop Service on Transit Routes*
  - *Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy Alternatives: Cost-Effectiveness Analysis*
  - *Environmental Justice and Title VI Analyses Methodology Review*
  - *South Boston Waterfront Transportation Plan: Modeling Support*
  - *Massachusetts Turnpike Allston Interchange Traffic Study*
- Release Draft Amendment Two to the federal fiscal years (FFYs) 2014-17 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for a 30-day public review period
- Approve the minutes of the meeting of January 9 and 23, 2014

## Meeting Agenda

### 1. Public Comments

Rafael Mares, Conservation Law Foundation, expressed his organization's support for the work program for the *Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy Alternatives: Cost-Effectiveness Analysis*, which is an action item on this meeting's agenda.

### 2. Chair's Report—*Clinton Bench, MassDOT*

The public review period for MassDOT's Capital Investment Program (CIP) has closed. Members of the public may still comment at the MassDOT Board of Director's meeting. The public review period for the MBTA's CIP is still open.

### 3. Committee Chairs' Reports—*Sreelatha Allam, MassDOT*

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Committee will meet today, after the MPO meeting. A discussion of the draft FFY 2015 Universe of Projects is on the agenda.

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

The Advisory Council and its Freight Committee met on February 12. The Freight Committee has been concerned with finding ways to provide useful input to the MPO regarding matters that extend beyond the boundaries of the Boston Region MPO area. The Advisory Council is open to suggestions about ways to have further dialog with neighboring MPOs.

Also on February 12, Stephanie Pollack, of the Kitty and Michael Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy at Northeastern University, addressed the Advisory Council regarding the topic of sustainability and equity in transportation. She discussed the challenge of meeting state goals for greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction and suggested using vehicle miles traveled per capita as a performance measure for tracking progress toward meeting those goals. She also discussed the need to focus on improving access to jobs and services, rather than focus solely on highway congestion relief. She also stressed the need to increase the capacity of the transit system.

The Advisory Council is continuing to conduct outreach to increase its membership and is writing letters to encourage municipalities that are not represented on the Council to become involved. MPO members are invited to offer suggestions for new members.

The MPO staff is preparing the Advisory Council for its role in implementing the MPO's Public Participation Plan, which is being revised.

The Advisory Council has received a response to its June 2013 comment letter on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) from MassDOT. The Advisory Council will be forwarding the response letter to the MPO.

The Advisory Council's meeting on March 12 will feature a presentation on MassDOT's *weMove Massachusetts* plan, the Commonwealth's Long-Range Transportation Plan.

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

The materials that the UPWP Committee will be reviewing today are posted on the MPO's website.

The MPO's meeting on March 6 will be held in Melrose. A flyer with directions will be released soon.

The MPO has been notified by its federal partners that it will be undergoing a recertification review this year, in October. The MPO undergoes a recertification review

every four years. The Federal Highway and Transit Administrations (FHWA and FTA) will review the MPO to determine how well it is fulfilling the 3C Planning requirements. A report will be issued following the review.

C. Bench asked K. Quackenbush to give an overview of the recertification review process at a future meeting for the benefit of members who have not experienced a recertification review.

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

Members were presented with five new work programs. K. Quackenbush gave an overview of the work programs and members discussed them. The first three discussed are MPO 3C funded work programs that were included in the UPWP. The last two are funded by MassDOT.

### ***1) Methodology for Evaluating the Potential for Limited-Stop Service on Transit Routes***

The MBTA regularly receives requests from public officials and others asking that particular bus routes be changed to limited-stop routes. By running buses in a limited-stop manner, there can be advantages in time-savings, though some customers may have to walk farther to a bus stop or wait longer for a bus. Through the work program for *Methodology for Evaluating the Potential for Limited-Stop Service on Transit Routes*, the MPO staff will develop a set of criteria that could be used to evaluate high-ridership corridors for their potential as limited-stop routes.

Staff distributed a revised version of the work program at this meeting. While the original draft stated that the criteria would be applied to the MBTA's Key Bus Route corridors, the revised version states that the criteria would be applied to high-ridership corridors.

The members discussed the work program.

C. Bench explained that the main reason for revising the work program was so that the product would not be limited to use on Key Bus Route corridors and so that it could be applied to other high-ridership corridors, such as those that have potential as bus rapid transit (BRT) corridors. He noted that the Barr Foundation is spearheading an effort to examine the potential for BRT in high-ridership corridors of the region; recommendations to MassDOT are expected as an outcome to this project. The revision does not change the budget of the work program.

Paul Regan, MBTA Advisory Board, suggested that staff review the findings of a study by the Brookline Transportation Committee, which examined the issue of limited-stop

busing in Brookline. He also noted that the MBTA conducted a public process prior to eliminating stops on the Green Line that involved surveying customers in the corridor. The survey showed that while people were not happy about losing an MBTA stop near their home, they were pleased when travel times improved.

K. Quackenbush noted that the work program is consistent with MPO's vision and policies for improving transit service.

A motion to approve the work program for *Methodology for Evaluating the Potential for Limited-Stop Service on Transit Routes* was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (P. Regan), and seconded by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) (Eric Bourassa). The motion carried.

Prior to the vote, members made the following suggestions:

Laura Wiener, At-Large Town of Arlington, suggested that MBTA bus route 77 would be a good candidate for evaluation.

C. Bench asked staff to present the list of routes selected for evaluation to the MPO.

Lourenço Dantas, Massachusetts Port Authority (MassPort), raised the idea that limited-stop routing could be applied to a portion of a bus route, particularly on portions of roadways that are served by multiple buses. C. Bench asked staff to keep the idea in mind when developing the evaluation criteria.

## **2) Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy Alternatives: Cost-Effectiveness Analysis**

Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is a goal set by the Commonwealth's Global Warming Solutions Act, and is part of MassDOT's GreenDOT policy and the MPO's visions and policies. The MPO staff already tracks GHG emissions at a systems level for analyses in the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and for studies.

The work program for *Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy Alternatives: Cost-Effectiveness Analysis* is designed to help the MPO understand the cost-effectiveness of various strategies for reducing GHG emissions. The product of the work program will be guidance that can inform the MPO's decision-making.

A motion to approve the work program for *Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy Alternatives: Cost-Effectiveness Analysis* was made by the City of Boston (Tom Kadzis), and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

### **3) *Environmental Justice and Title VI Analyses Methodology Review***

Elizabeth Moore, MPO staff, gave a briefing at the MPO meeting of January 23 on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and federal environmental justice policies. The MPO staff expects to do a great deal of work related to Title VI and environmental justice in the future.

The work program for the *Environmental Justice and Title VI Analyses Methodology Review* involves reviewing the MPO staff's current practices in this area, federal requirements, and the practices of peer organizations (including other MPOs, DOTs, and transit agencies). The outcome of the study will be recommendations for standardizing the MPO's practices and improving Title VI and environmental justice analyses.

A motion to approve the *Environmental Justice and Title VI Analyses Methodology Review* was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (P. Regan), and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

C. Bench noted that the product of this work program could also be informative to FHWA and FTA. MassDOT has raised concerns that the two agencies have differing and inconsistent Title VI requirements.

### **4) *South Boston Waterfront Transportation Plan: Modeling Support***

The South Boston Waterfront has seen dramatic changes to transportation infrastructure in recent years and is expected to attract more development. A new comprehensive planning effort is getting underway to ensure that the transportation infrastructure is keeping pace with the changes to the waterfront.

A Better City, in conjunction with MassPort, the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority, the City of Boston, and MassDOT—has engaged a consultant to develop a transportation plan for the district. Through the work program for the *South Boston Waterfront Transportation Plan: Modeling Support*, CTPS will provide technical assistance and travel modeling support to the consultant team.

This work will involve conducting regional modeling and extracting the portion of the model for the waterfront that the consultant team will use to conduct micro-level travel modeling. CTPS will also provide traveler origin and destination data to the team. Another task may include running alternative scenarios on the regional model.

A motion to approve the work program for the *South Boston Waterfront Transportation Plan: Modeling Support* was made by the At-Large Town of Lexington (Richard Canale), and seconded by the MBTA (Ron Morgan).

Members discussed the work program.

R. Canale inquired about the projects that would be included in the no-build scenario for 2035. K. Quackenbush replied that the no-build scenario would be consistent with the transportation and land use assumptions in the MPO's most recent LRTP. The build scenarios would address alternative transportation and land uses. CTPS is ready to reflect the land uses selected by the study team for the build scenarios.

R. Canale asked if the build scenarios could include a combination of transportation and land use changes. K. Quackenbush replied yes and added that the consultant team may be able to do sketch planning once they have their sub-area model set up.

Steve Olanoff, Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood), asked if seaport activity (such as shipping and trucking on the Haul Road) and diesel multiple unit service to the area would be included in the modeling. K. Quackenbush replied that the activities of the maritime industries are included in the work program. C. Bench added that the study's steering committee is not assuming that there will be a dramatic change in activities at the seaport. Transportation services that would be included in the modeling are expected to be limited to assumptions that are in the TIP, LRTP, and CIP. L. Dantas also noted that changes included in MassPort's strategic plan for the seaport could also be incorporated into the modeling.

Members then moved to vote on the motion to approve the work program for the *South Boston Waterfront Transportation Plan: Modeling Support*, which was made by the At-Large Town of Lexington (R. Canale), and seconded by the MBTA (R. Morgan). The motion carried.

#### ***5) Massachusetts Turnpike Allston Interchange Traffic Study***

The cessation of freight rail operations at Beacon Park in Allston has presented an opportunity for redevelopment of the site – now owned by Harvard University – and for MassDOT – which maintains transportation easements around the site – to explore concepts for realigning the Massachusetts Turnpike, reconfiguring exit and entrance ramps and some local roads in the Allston-Brighton toll plaza area, and removing a viaduct. The work program for the *Massachusetts Turnpike Allston Interchange Traffic Study* will provide technical assistance to MassDOT, including traffic modeling services, as the agency and its consultants study the options.

CTPS would conduct a license plate survey of vehicles using the Turnpike and ramps in the study area to establish data on the origin and destination of travelers. This data would then be used to calibrate the travel models that would be employed for this study.

CTPS would also help the study team to set up a sub-area model of the study area for micro-simulation modelling.

Modeled scenarios would include a no-build scenario for 2035 and up to six build alternatives using Harvard's development plans as the land use assumption. The preferred network alternatives would be modeled using the land use assumptions and demographics in the LRTP. CTPS will also conduct air quality, environmental justice, and economic impact analyses.

A motion to approve the work program for the *Massachusetts Turnpike Allston Interchange Traffic Study* was made by the MassDOT Highway Division (John Romano), and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa).

Members discussed the work program.

E. Bourassa asked if the economic impact analysis would shed light on the potential market for development at the site or if the outcome of the analysis would be of a more regional nature. K. Quackenbush replied that the latter is the case.

L. Dantas discussed the potential to improve transit to the area, and he asked how transit would be factored into the scenarios modeled. K. Quackenbush replied that proposed improvements to the commuter rail system would be included in the scenarios.

Dennis Giombetti, MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham), noted that the proposed taxpayer-funded reconfiguration of the Turnpike would add value to Harvard's property. He asked why Harvard is not being asked to fund some of the improvements. Matt Ciborowski, MassDOT, explained that the factors driving the project stem from two main issues. The implementation of all-electronic tolling on the Turnpike will require the removal of toll booths, which will change traffic patterns in the area. Also, the viaduct is in critical need of repair.

Christine Stickney, South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree), inquired as to why a license plate survey was needed. She noted that the survey would be the most expensive part of the study (at nearly \$60,000) and that license plate surveys are usually conducted at a point of destination, rather than at an interchange. Regarding the expense, K. Quackenbush noted that conducting the survey is a labor intense activity. He explained that it is critical to have origin-destination data for properly calibrating the models, so that they replicate real traffic patterns. He also noted that the study team may also put the data to other uses.

C. Stickney expressed concern that the data, acquired at taxpayers' expense, would have a secondary benefit as a marketing analysis for other parties. She also expressed concern about the cost of the survey. K. Quackenbush said that some of the cost would go toward renting cameras, extracting data, and for staff time. Scott Peterson, MPO staff, added that, because toll removal and bridge construction will be going forward soon, it will be beneficial to understand the traffic flows in the area to help minimize impacts on local residents.

C. Stickney recommended that instead of conducting a license plate survey for origin-destination data, that staff conduct traffic counts. She then asked whether CTPS or MassDOT proposed the task for the license plate survey. K. Quackenbush replied that the MassDOT project manager requested the survey. He noted that the survey would help to understand how traffic is routing, which cannot be determined by doing traffic counts. Also, for design and mitigation purposes it would be helpful to understand what would happen if changes were made to links in the network. The work enhances the accuracy of planning, he said. C. Bench added that there is a unique opportunity to dramatically reconfigure the Turnpike and its ramps and that it would be useful in the long-run to understand how people are using the Turnpike and the impacts to nearby parkways.

Hayes Morrison, Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville), noted that the City of Somerville is using Bluetooth data to gather origin-destination data for the Union Square area. She asked why Bluetooth data would not be used for this study. K. Quackenbush replied that CTPS moving to take advantage of contemporary technology; CTPS is investigating INRIX data now. It is not clear if that data would be suitable for this study. C. Bench added that there are advantages and disadvantages to both methods, but that license plate surveys provide a full count of the traffic in the study area.

Dennis Crowley, South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway), suggested that the long-term fix for the traffic issues in the area would be a multi-million dollar solution, and he expressed concern about whether funding would be available for it. D. Giombetti reiterated his concern that Harvard should contribute to the study, as the university will benefit from improvements to the area.

C. Bench noted that this is only a planning study to explore options. He discussed how the implementation of all-electronic tolling and the relocation of CSX's freight operations are providing an opportunity to reconfigure the Turnpike and correct it to handle the new roadway speeds that will result when toll booths are removed. The opportunity for economic development of the area is a benefit that MassDOT encourages.



D. Crowley asked if the study would make recommendations to improve the traffic flow when then the tolls are removed. K. Quackenbush replied yes. The modeling would assume open road tolling. For each scenario studied there will be an accounting of congestion levels, traffic speeds, and delays.

C. Bench explained the concept of all-electronic tolling. Drivers with EZ-Passes would drive through while drivers without EZ-Passes would be billed through the mail.

C. Stickney expressed concern about the \$220,000 cost of the study, particularly the high-cost of the license plate survey. She expressed concern that approving the survey for this study may set a precedent for other studies in the future. C. Bench replied that this would not be setting a precedent for every modeling effort. The fact that the study area is a major highway interchange is what is driving the need for the survey, he said. He reminded members that the funding for the study is coming from MassDOT Highway Division's budget, not MPO funds.

D. Montgomery asked if there is a new methodology being developed to estimate air quality impacts off-model. K. Quackenbush replied that staff generates the bulk of emission estimates from the model. Staff has sketch level procedures for estimating emissions off-model. He offered to discuss this issue further.

A motion to end the debate and move to a vote was made by the MassDOT Highway Division (J. Romano). The motion carried. MassPort (L. Dantas) voted no.

Members then moved to a vote on the motion to approve the work program for the *Massachusetts Turnpike Allston Interchange Traffic Study*, which was made by the MassDOT Highway Division (J. Romano), and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried. The South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree) (C. Stickney) voted no.

Members then took a question from the public. R. Mares asked if GHG emissions would be included in the study's air quality analyses. K. Quackenbush replied yes.

## **7. Transportation Improvement Program: Amendment Two—Sean Pfalzer, MPO Staff**

Members were presented with a draft of Amendment Two to the FFYs 2014-17 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). S. Pfalzer gave an overview of the proposed amendment.

The proposed amendment would program a discretionary grant for the purchase of a vessel for the Winthrop Inner Harbor ferry service, and an earmark for the construction of the Medford Clippership Linear Park and Bikeway in Medford. It would also revise

funding amounts and sources for the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority's non-fixed route ADA paratransit service and program funds for the rehabilitation of its new Intermodal Transit Center in Framingham.

A motion to release Draft Amendment Two to the FFYs 2014-17 TIP for a 30-day public review period was made by the Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Bedford) (Richard Reed), and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa).

Prior to the members' vote, they heard a presentation about the Medford Clippership Linear Park and Bikeway project from Lauren DiLorenzo, City of Medford, and Pam Shadley, Shadley Associates.

L. DiLorenzo, speaking on behalf of Medford Mayor McGlynn, gave an overview of the project to create a landscaped park and bikeway in Medford Square. The project is a continuation of work that began several years ago to restore access to the Mystic River waterfront. There is a large population of seniors living in Medford Square who would benefit from having access to this park.

P. Shadley further described the proposed park, which would be located near the Medford Senior Center, and plans for creating a memorial for victims of last year's Marathon bombing. The park would be designed as an allegory of the Marathon journey with contemplative spaces dedicated to victims of the Marathon bombing, one of whom was a resident of Medford.

Members then raised questions about the amendment.

S. Olanoff inquired about the Ferry Boat Discretionary Program, which is the funding source for the *Winthrop Inner Harbor Passenger Water Transportation Vessel Procurement* project. C. Bench explained that this funding program has been discontinued, but there is still unspent money available. The FTA has started a similar program to fund ferry projects.

P. Regan asked about the locations the ferry would serve. Joe Domelowicz, Town of Winthrop, replied that Winthrop has had three years of subsidized vendor provided ferry service between the town's ferry terminal on Shirley Street and Rows Wharf in Boston. The town plans to continue that route. The TIP amendment includes \$950,000 in federal funds matched by \$237,500 of town funds. The town would own the ferry boat and would have a vendor operate the ferry. A draft procurement document is being prepared for FHWA. The MPO's approval is required in order to access the federal funds.

R. Reed inquired as to why a local match is shown for the Winthrop project, but not for the Medford project. He also asked about the purpose of Section 125 funds, which are a source of funding for the Medford project. S. Pfalzer explained that projects funded with Section 125 are entirely federal funded and do not require a local match. Section 125 earmarks fund various types of projects. C. Bench added that the Section funding relates more to the source of the earmark rather than the purpose of the earmark.

Members then moved to a vote on the motion to release Draft Amendment Two to the FFYs 2014-17 TIP for a 30-day public review period, which was made by the Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Bedford) (R. Reed), and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

### **8. MPO Meeting Minutes—Maureen Kelly, MPO Staff**

A motion to approve the minutes of the meetings of January 9 and January 23, 2014 was made by the MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham) (D. Giombetti), and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried. The Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (H. Morrison) and the MBTA Advisory Board (P. Regan) abstained.

### **9. Transportation Improvement Program: Update on Project Evaluations—Sean Pfalzer, MPO Staff**

Members were presented with a list of projects that have been advanced by municipalities seeking funding in the FFYs 2015-18 TIP and that staff intends to evaluate. To be evaluated, projects must have a functional design report (FDR). There are eight new projects to be evaluated this year; six are for arterial roadways, one is for an intersection, and one is for a multi-use path. The new projects represent \$40 million worth of transportation investments.

The projects are as follows:

- *Lexington – Reconstruction on Massachusetts Avenue, from Marrett Road to Pleasant Street*
- *Hingham – Reconstruction and Related Work on Derby Street from Pond Park Road to Cushing Street*
- *Everett – Reconstruction of Ferry Street*
- *Hopkinton – Signal and Intersection Improvements on Route 135*
- *Holbrook – Reconstruction of Union Street (Route 139), from Linfield Street to Centre Street/Water Street*
- *Boston – Improvements on Boylston Street, from the Intersection of Brookline Avenue and Park Drive to Ipswich Street*

- *Boston – Fenway-Yawkey Multi-use Path*

Three of the projects areas have been the subject of a CTPS study. Most of the projects have been approved by MassDOT's Project Review Committee (PRC). Two projects have not yet been approved by the PRC: *Everett – Reconstruction of Ferry Street* and *Boston – Fenway-Yawkey Multi-use Path*. PRC approval for the Everett project is expected in March.

Staff expects to provide the evaluation results, for these and the other projects being considered for the TIP, to the MPO in March.

### **Discussion**

On behalf of the City of Somerville, H. Morrison requested that staff evaluate the Grounding McGrath project. She noted that this project has been studied by MassDOT, MAPC, and CTPS and that it was the subject of the first health impact assessment (HIA) in the state. The HIA report recommended that the project be brought before the MPO for funding. She also discussed the strong support for the project from the community, Somerville's legislative delegation, and the mayor. She also discussed the economic development benefits of the project. The McGrath Highway is in close proximity to Union Square, where redevelopment is being planned and where the city is investing \$2 million in the design of infrastructure improvements. She also noted that the project is in an environmental justice area.

E. Bourassa asked if the project has been designed. H. Morrison replied that there is enough information about the proposed project in the Grounding McGrath study for staff to evaluate and score the project. They then discussed that MassDOT has invested about \$11 million to repair the structure, which was structurally deficient.

L. Wiener expressed support for having the project evaluated, but asked staff for their recommendation. K. Quackenbush stated that it is the policy of the MPO to require a FDR for a project to be evaluated; however, staff could evaluate the project at the MPO's direction. He expressed concern that making an exception for this project could invite other requests to evaluate undesigned projects.

D. Giombetti asked if there are other projects that might present a similar case. S. Pfalzer replied that there are no other projects with as much study documentation.

E. Bourassa stated that he did not object to having staff evaluate the project, noting that it may score well by the MPO's criteria given that the project addresses a densely settled area, addresses safety concerns, and is in an area that has redevelopment plans and transit.

E. Bourassa asked about the project cost estimate. H. Morrison stated that the project cost estimate is \$65 million.

Given that the project is not currently programmed in the LRTP, L. Dantas suggested that this project be addressed during discussions about the LRTP along with other projects that may be in a similar situation, rather than addressing them piecemeal.

C. Bench suggested that staff review the information available about the project and identify any barriers to conducting a full evaluation. If there are no barriers to comparing the project fairly to the others, then staff may proceed with the evaluation.

E. Bourassa inquired about how long the recent repairs to the structure are supposed to last; this information would be relevant when developing the LRTP. C. Bench replied that the repairs are intended to last for ten years. He explained that there are differences of opinion about how to proceed. MassDOT believes the best approach would be to ground the overpass over a longer time period than the city may be recommending. MassDOT sees the need for repairs to the existing structure regardless since there is currently no design for the Grounding McGrath project. There are opinions within the community, however, that it would be best to ground the highway now rather than spend \$11 million for temporary repairs.

H. Morrison noted that as part of the interim improvements to keep the bridge open, an underpass and the ramp to it has been closed. The city believes a longer term approach should be taken, particularly given the amount of redevelopment occurring in Somerville and the amount of private investment attracted to the area.

#### **10. Memorandum: Performance Measures—Anne McGahan, MPO Staff**

Members were presented with a memorandum titled, *Performance Measures – Goals and Objectives and Additional Framework*. This is the third of a series of memoranda regarding the development of performance measures for the MPO. A. McGahan presented information on the staff's continuing work to develop performance measures since the last report at the meeting of December 5.

In December staff made the recommendations to revise the existing visions and policies of the current LRTP into measurable goals and objectives for the MPO's performance-based planning work and the new LRTP. With the MPO's approval, staff developed goals and objectives for the various themes addressed in the LRTP. Performance measures and targets will be developed for each goal.

The themes are:

- Safety and Security
- System Preservation
- Congestion Reduction
- Transportation Options and Mode Share
- GHG and Air Pollutant Reduction
- Economic Impact

Examples were provided for the Safety and Security and System Preservation themes. A summary was given of the goal, objective, performance measure, and target for each theme. Also, information was provided about how the performance measures are coordinated with national and state performance measures, how they relate to criteria that the MPO currently uses to evaluate projects, and what data sources would be used to monitor progress toward the targets. (Specific examples are provided in the memorandum.)

For the development of the Congestion Reduction performance measures, staff will take recommendations from the MPO's Congestion Management Committee. When the measures are developed, they will be tracked through the Congestion Management Process. These measures can also be used in LRTP scenario planning.

The performance measures for the Transportation Options and Mode Share goal will focus on the MPO's livability, bicycle and pedestrian, regional equity, and freight programs. MPO and agency studies will be used to identify opportunities for mode shift. The MPO's goal will be coordinated with MassDOT's mode shift goal and the state's Healthy Transportation Compact.

The performance measures for the GHG and Air Pollutant Reduction theme will focus on the MPO's climate change, GHG reduction, and air quality work. They will be coordinated with MassDOT's GreenDOT Implementation Plan. GHG and air pollutants will be calculated using the MPO's travel demand model or off-model calculations. They will be reported in the TIP and LRTP. The measures can be used for LRTP scenario planning.

The performance measures for the Economic Impact goal will focus on the MPO's freight program and MassDOT's freight planning initiatives. The software, TREDIS, will be used.

As it moves forward in the development of performance measures, the MPO staff will continue to coordinate the process with its state and federal partners. The U.S.

Department of Transportation is expected to issue further guidance on this topic. MassDOT has released its *weMove Massachusetts Plan*, which includes performance measures. Also, the Project Selection Advisory Council, established by the legislature, will be meeting monthly; staff will provide updates on the Council's discussion of this topic.

In the meantime, staff is seeking input from members on the goals and objectives. Staff expects that the goals and objectives will be released for public review during the public review periods of the TIP and UPWP.

### ***Discussion***

C. Bench recapped by noting that this process is intended to shift the MPO's old vision and policies to be more consistent with the performance-based management requirements of the federal transportation legislation, MAP-21, and to ensure that all investments can be properly measured for their effectiveness. More work will be conducted in the coming months and more details provided. Staff is seeking the members' input regarding the approach to developing performance measures. A. McGahan added that staff would like comments on the proposed goals and objectives that will be released for public review.

C. Bench expressed interest in seeing each goal and objective with information about how each performance measure is coordinated with national and state performance measures, and the data sources that would be used to monitor progress toward the targets. He asked when staff would finalize that material. A. McGahan and P. Wolfe reported that staff will continue to flesh out details and present complete materials to members prior to releasing the performance measures for public review in May and June.

C. Bench advised staff that as they define goals, they should maintain consistence with the state-of-the-practice in performance management. He suggested considering the SMART model for setting goals that are specific, measurable, action-oriented, reasonable, and time-bound. He expressed concern that some of the proposed goals lack specificity and are too much like vision statements. A. McGahan noted that the development of the performance measures is an ongoing process that can be modified going forward.

R. Mares, CLF, asked if the visions and policies of the current LRTP will be preserved. A. McGahan replied that the central vision from the current LRTP will be maintained in the new LRTP. Particular vision statements can be adapted into performance measures. R. Mares expressed that good work was done in previous years to develop

the current vision and policies and that it would not be good to lose those individual components.

A. McGahan added that staff is repackaging what was developed previously to align with performance-based planning. She expressed assurance that the MPO would continue to monitor the measures that it currently monitors and track progress in the LRTP Needs Assessment. The MPO is already doing much of what the federal guidelines are requiring.

R. Mares suggested that, in referencing the GHG emission reduction goals set in the Global Warming Solutions Act, staff refer to the GHG reduction target for the transportation sector rather than the overall target for all sectors of the economy.

S. Olanoff asked why the maintenance of tracks, signals, and power systems were not referenced under the System Preservation theme. A. McGahan explained that those performance measures are dependent on MassDOT, which would be providing the data used to monitor those assets. She also noted that it is early in the process for developing performance measures and that federal guidance is still forthcoming.

## **11. State Implementation Plan—*Sreelatha Allam, MassDOT***

S. Allam provided an update on projects that are in the State Implementation Plan (SIP).

Regarding the *Fairmount Line Improvement* project, the Newmarket Station is operational and will be fully completed this month, and the Four Corners Station will be completed later this year.

Regarding the *Green Line Extension (GLEX)* project, MassDOT is expecting FTA to release information in March that is required for filing the full funding grant agreement application in April.

The risk workshop held in January was well attended by stakeholders. The GLEX team is now working on adjustments to the base cost, which will be used to update the project's finance plan, which will be due in late March or early April.

Negotiations with the property owners of the Vehicle Storage and Maintenance Facility site are ongoing, but relocation activities can commence now. The team gained access to the facility in order to plan a scope of work to clean up hazardous materials there. The team is now working to obtain approval to begin geotechnical work.

Lastly, a meeting was held with the board of the Glass Factory condominiums to discuss design elements of retaining walls. Another meeting will be held with the



residents of the condominiums in the near future. A meeting on the same topic will be held with residents of the Broadway and College Avenue neighborhood later this month.

## **12. Members Items**

T. O'Rourke reported that TRIC will be holding its annual legislative breakfast on February 28 at the Endicott Estate in Dedham.

## **13. Adjourn**

## Attendance

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### Members

### Representatives and Alternates

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At-Large City (City of Newton)	James Freas
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
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Hayes Morrison
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Clinton Bench Marie Rose
MassDOT Highway Division	John Romano
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	Ron Morgan
Massachusetts Port Authority	Lourenço Dantas
MBTA Advisory Board	Paul Regan
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Bedford)	Richard Reed
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)	Denise Deschamps
North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn)	Jay Corey
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

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**Other Attendees Affiliation**

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Lynn Ahlgren	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
Sreelatha Allam	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Katie Bradbury	Acton resident
Sarah Bradbury	MassDOT Highway District 3
Matt Ciborowski	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Lauren DiLorenzo	City of Medford
Joe Domelowicz	Town of Winthrop
Mike Gowing	Town of Acton
Eric Halvorsen	MAPC
Rafael Mares	Conservation Law Foundation
Steve Olanoff	Three Rivers Interlocal Council / Town of Norwood
Joe Onorato	MassDOT Highway District 4
Pam Shadley	Shadley Associates
Wig Zamore	Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership / Mystic View Task Force

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**MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff**

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

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