



## *MEMORANDUM*

**DATE:** September 3, 2014  
**TO:** Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)  
**FROM:** Anne McGahan  
**RE:** Revisions to Updated Central Vision and Goals and Objectives

### 1 BACKGROUND

Staff presented revisions to the MPO's central vision, goals, and objectives based on comments received at the August 21 MPO meeting and sent those changes back to MPO members on August 25 asking for additional comments. This memorandum illustrates our responses to the additional comments. The revisions from the August 21 meeting are shown in Track Changes in blue. (Note: in the event that your colors are different the first tracked change is **healthy** in the Central Vision.) The revisions from the comments received after August 25 are shown in red. (Note: in the event that your colors are different the first tracked change is ~~future~~ in the Central Vision.)

### 2 REVISED CENTRAL VISION AND GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

#### 2.1 Central Vision Statement

MPO members agreed to the shortened central vision option as follows:

##### *Revised MPO Vision Statement*

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization envisions a ~~future~~-transportation system that is safe, provides equitable access, excellent mobility, and varied transportation options—in support of a sustainable, **healthy**, **highly**-livable, and economically **sound** **vibrant** region.

#### 2.2 Goals and Objectives

The following are the additional revisions to the goals and objectives:

##### Safety

- Goal: Transportation by all modes will be safe
- Objectives:

- Reduce the number and severity of crashes, all modes
- Reduce serious injuries and fatalities from transportation

### System Preservation

- Goal: Transportation system will be well maintained
- Objectives:
  - ~~Reduce the number of structurally-deficient bridges that do not meet standards~~
  - Improve condition of on- and off-system bridges
  - Improve pavement condition on MassDOT-monitored roadway system
  - ~~Improve transit reliability for all customers by m~~Maintaining and modernizing capital assets throughout the system
  - Improve the experience of the bicycle and pedestrian transportation system for all users
  - Prioritize projects for all modes that respond to existing or future extreme conditions (sea level rise, flooding, and other hazards)

### Congestion Reduction

- Goal: Congestion and delays will be reduced for all modes consistent with the MPO's commitment to reduce single-occupant vehicle travel and promote transit, biking and walking<sup>1</sup>
- Objectives:
  - Reduce delay for all modes
  - ~~Expand sidewalk network in the region~~
  - ~~Expand bicycle network in the region~~
  - ~~Reduce delay for transit customers~~
  - Achieve substantial mode shift as a means of congestion reduction

### Transportation Options/Healthy Modes

- Goal: Transit, bicycling, and walking options will be expanded
- Objectives:
  - Reduce automobile usage in the Boston Region
  - Increase the share of travel by transit, bicycling, and walking in Massachusetts~~the Boston Region~~
  - Increase transit usage in the Boston Region
  - Expand and close gaps in the bicycle and accessible sidewalk networks in the region

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<sup>1</sup> Some of these measures will be included in the Transportation Options and Healthy Modes Goal.

- Increase automobile and bicycle parking capacity and usage at transit stations
- Increase the percentage of the region's densely developed land area, ~~with more than 5,000 people per square mile that is~~ served by existing and future transit capacity
- Increase the percentage of population and employment within one-quarter mile of transit stations<sup>2</sup>
- Increase the percentage of population and employment within one-half mile of shared-use paths or on-road bicycle facilities
- Improve access and accessibility for all customers and modes

#### Greenhouse Gas (GHG)/Air Pollution/Environment

- Goal: GHG emissions will meet Global Warming Solutions Act requirements
- Objectives:
  - Reduce GHGs generated in the Boston Region by all transportation modes; look for new ways to reduce GHGs
  - Reduce other transportation-related pollutants including volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter
  - Minimize negative environmental impacts of the transportation system, when possible

#### Transportation Equity

- Goal: There will be an equitable level of mobility for ~~traditionally underserved~~ low income and minority populations
- Objectives:
  - Maintain comparable access to jobs, hospitals, affordable housing, schools, and other services for ~~environmental justice (EJ)~~ low income and minority populations compared with non-low income and non-minority -~~EJ~~ populations
  - Target investments to areas that benefit a high percentage of low income and minority populations

#### Economic Vitality and Freight Movement

- Goal: Transportation network will provide a strong foundation for economic vitality
- Objectives for Freight Movement:

<sup>2</sup> Measures associated with increasing population and employment in close proximity to transit also may be considered measures under the Economic Vitality topic.

- Reduce delays on the freight network
- Maintain and modernize the freight network, and improve its the efficiency and intermodal connections of the freight network
- Protect freight network elements that are vulnerable to climate change impacts, such as port facilities
- Objectives for Economic Vitality:
  - Minimize net loss from the 25-34 year old population in the region
  - Minimize burden of housing and transportation costs for residents in the region
  - Prioritize transportation investments that serve targeted development sites
  - Prioritize transportation investments that support development consistent with the compact growth strategies of MetroFuture

There was discussion about whether to identify objectives that would be given a performance target (as part of the performance measurement process) and objectives that simply would be tracked. You may find this information in the overall performance-based planning framework that was presented and discussed at the August 7 MPO meeting.

Three additional comments were received that are presented here for consideration but not yet included above.

There were two comments under Transportation Options and Healthy Modes goal. The first was to include an objective on public health specifically regarding chronic disease. Background information is included in a separate document – “Additional Information on Public Health Objective” (also posted) to support the discussion at the September 4 MPO meeting. An important issue to consider is how tracked data on chronic diseases could be related to transportation in a meaningful way. A suggested objective for this comment could be:

- “The rates of chronic disease will decrease over time”

The second comment is to the currently listed objective to “Increase the percentage of population and employment within one-half mile of shared-use paths or on-road bicycle facilities.” The suggested comment was to change this to:

- “Increase the percentage of population and employment with direct access to bicycle facilities.”

Direct access is understood to mean having a dedicated bicycle facility door-to-door. The majority of the roadways in the MPO region are local roadways (more than 80 percent) and local roadways are not primary candidates for bicycle facilities. In the 2011 MassDOT’s Bicycle Inventory local roadways

made up only five percent of the existing bicycle facility mileage. This would be a more ambitious goal and would likely be infeasible.

The third comment was made regarding Transportation Equity and asked the MPO to consider an objective relative to transportation burdens to low income and minority persons. To track or measure effects in this topic, the MPO would have to rely on information obtained from project proponents. Two possible sources might be the MPO's Project Funding Application form or MassDOT's Project Initiation form. In both forms, the proponents are asked to identify any improvements that involve community planning and equitable sharing of benefits/burdens or are particularly targeted within an Environmental Justice area. For those that provide information for this question, many proponents report the benefits as opposed to the burdens. Staff is currently not certain if there would be budget impacts to project proponents if we were to require an assessment on possible burdens. For large projects, information may also be available from environmental impact reports

A suggested objective could be:

- "Reduce the number of MPO-funded projects with negative impacts to low income and minority populations"

### 3 NEXT STEPS

This information will be reviewed at the September 4 MPO meeting. Staff will then incorporate any revisions from that meeting into a final draft version, which will then be sent back to you before circulating it for public review and comment. Staff will also update the Performance-Based Planning and Programming Framework that was presented at the August 7 meeting to include the revisions to the goals and objectives and ensure that there are appropriate performance measures for each objective.