



BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Stephanie Pollack, MassDOT Secretary and CEO and MPO Chairman
Karl H. Quackenbush, Executive Director, MPO Staff

MEMORANDUM

DATE April 30, 2015
TO Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
FROM Karl H. Quackenbush
CTPS Executive Director
RE Work Program for: Fairmount Line Station Access Analysis

Action Required

Review and approval

Proposed Motion

That the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization vote to approve the work program for the Fairmount Line Station Access Analysis presented in this memorandum

Project Identification

Unified Planning Work Program Classification

Planning Studies

CTPS Project Number

11249

Client

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

CTPS Project Supervisors

Principal: Mark Abbott

Manager: Casey-Marie Claude

Funding

MPO Planning Contract #84053

MPO §5303 Contract #84080

Impact on MPO Work

This is MPO work and will be carried out in conformance with the priorities established by the MPO.

Background

The MBTA offers commuter rail service from Boston's central business district (CBD) to Readville along its 9.2-mile Fairmount Line. The line begins at South Station and passes through the Downtown, South Boston, Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, and Hyde Park neighborhoods of Boston. Since 2012, the MBTA has opened three new stations as part of the Fairmount Line Improvements program: Talbot Avenue, Newmarket, and Four Corners/Geneva. These additions, along with the Blue Hill Avenue Station, which is currently under construction, are located outside of Boston's CBD, as are the preexisting stations: Readville, Fairmount, Morton Street, and Uphams Corner. Planning activities that are presently underway for the Fairmount Line Corridor include a corridorwide study and plans to improve connections between stations—such as Uphams Corner, Four Corners/Geneva, and Blue Hill Avenue—and their surrounding neighborhoods.

The planning work mentioned above has been carried out by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) and other entities. Staff from the Boston Region MPO will build on this work by analyzing safety problems and other impediments to bicycle and pedestrian access to Fairmount Line stations. While there are many MBTA transit stations located within walking and bicycling distance of neighborhoods near the Fairmount Line, a lack of safe and well-maintained facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists creates inconvenient, uncomfortable, and unsafe environments for healthy transportation modes.

The purpose of this study is to examine what might be done to improve nonmotorized access to Fairmount Line stations that have not been or are not currently being assessed. Staff will identify low-cost measures that can be implemented quickly, and long-term, higher-cost improvements, that can significantly improve bicyclist and pedestrian access to up to four stations along the Fairmount Line. These recommendations will be similar to those outlined by MPO staff in four memoranda for the Safe Access to Transit for Pedestrians and Bicyclists study of four MBTA stations.¹ The measures would reduce congestion, help promote the use of public transit, and enhance the character of the neighborhoods near each station by creating and maintaining easy, safe, and pleasant nonmotorized access to the stations along the Fairmount Line that are selected for analysis.

¹ One memorandum for each of the four MBTA rapid transit stations that were evaluated as part of the study, from the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization staff to the Boston Region MPO, December 6, 2012, http://www.ctps.org/Drupal/safe_access_transit, last accessed April 22, 2015.

Objectives

The objectives of this work program are:

- Identify as many as four Fairmount Line stations to include in the study
- Identify low-cost and high-cost improvements to pedestrian and bicycle access for the selected stations
- Recommend measures to accomplish the identified improvements
- Provide information to the City of Boston that the City can use to improve pedestrian and bicyclist access to the Fairmount Line corridor
- Enhance transportation access for neighborhoods in the Fairmount Line corridor

Work Description

Task 1 Select Transit Stations

Eight of the Fairmount Line's nine stations (including Blue Hill Avenue Station, which is currently under construction) are possible locations for low-cost improvements—which typically cost approximately \$20,000 each—that would enhance pedestrian and bicycle access to stations along the line. The ninth station, which is the only one that will be excluded from consideration in this study, is South Station. From this initial list of eight sites, up to four stations will be selected. Some of the Fairmount Line stations that have previously been assessed by the BRA will be revisited during this study. If it is found that there is considerable work that MPO staff could do to build on the BRA's existing recommendations for improved bicycle and pedestrian access, previously assessed stations may be chosen to be included in this study of up to four Fairmount Line stations. The selection of the station locations will include the following criteria:

- Identified through consultation with the BRA, the Boston Transportation Department (BTD), local community organizations, civic groups, and other stakeholders
- Identified by a qualitative assessment of MBTA station access based on the Boston Region MPO's "Needs Assessment" (Volume 2 of the MPO's current Long-Range Transportation Plan, *Paths to a Sustainable Region*)
- Located in an area that has a high density of employment, retail activity, and/or population
- Located in an area that has high vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle crash rates

- Located in an area with development potential or pending land use changes
- Located in an area with jurisdictional issues that could potentially impact the implementation of recommended improvements

Product of Task 1

A list of transit stations to be analyzed for this study

Task 2 Analyze Transit Station Accessibility and Recommend Improvements

Staff will analyze station access to determine the location, nature, and severity of impediments to walking and bicycling. As part of the analysis, staff will select desirable routes for bicyclists and pedestrians to use to access the station. For some stations, there may be multiple routes, including on- and off-street pathways.

Staff will identify improvements to station property and to the surrounding areas that would eliminate impediments to accessibility to the station for pedestrians and bicyclists. These measures will include both low-cost improvements (approximately \$20,000 each) that can be implemented quickly, and long-term, higher-cost improvements. The improvement recommendations will be developed using current principles and standards of planning and engineering for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This will be done in the context of contemporary urban design considerations that emphasize the Complete Streets concept and quality of life by providing accommodations for all modes of transportation. The measures would reduce congestion, help promote the use of public transit, and enhance the character of the neighborhoods near each station by creating and maintaining easy, safe, and pleasant nonmotorized access to the stations along the Fairmount Line that are selected for analysis.

Improvements to the access routes and the station property itself may include bike lanes; sidewalks; crosswalks; traffic signal modifications; traffic calming measures; improvements in wayfinding (including directional signs), sight-distance, lighting, and bicycle parking; and other modifications deemed appropriate for each situation. The routes and improvements will be identified through consultation with the BRA, the BTD, local community organizations, civic groups, and other stakeholders.

Products of Task 2

- Assessment of bicycle and pedestrian access to stations
- Detailed list of recommended short-term and long-term improvements

Task 3 Document and Review the Findings

The findings from this study, including the information that was gathered and a list and description of recommended improvements, will be compiled in a technical memorandum or multiple memoranda.

Product of Task 3

Technical memorandum or memoranda documenting Tasks 1 and 2, including analyses and study recommendations

Estimated Schedule

It is estimated that this project will be completed six months after work commences. The proposed schedule, by task, is shown in Exhibit 1.

Estimated Cost

The total cost of this project is estimated to be \$40,000. This includes the cost of 16.8 person-weeks of staff time, overhead at the rate of 91.82 percent, and travel. A detailed breakdown of estimated costs is presented in Exhibit 2.

KQ/CMC/cmc

Exhibit 1
ESTIMATED SCHEDULE
Fairmount Line Station Access Analysis

Task	Month					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Select Transit Stations	█					
2. Analyze Transit Station Accessibility and Recommend Improvements		█				
3. Document and Review the Findings	█					

Exhibit 2
ESTIMATED COST
Fairmount Line Station Access Analysis

Direct Salary and Overhead	\$39,555
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Task	Person-Weeks					Direct Salary	Overhead (91.82%)	Total Cost
	M-1	P-5	P-4	P-2	Total			
1. Select Transit Stations	0.3	0.0	0.0	2.5	2.8	\$2,941	\$2,700	\$5,641
2. Analyze Transit Station Accessibility and Recommend Improvements	0.5	0.0	0.0	4.0	4.5	\$4,707	\$4,322	\$9,029
3. Document and Review the Findings	4.1	0.4	1.2	3.8	9.4	\$12,973	\$11,912	\$24,885
Total	4.9	0.4	1.2	10.2	16.8	\$20,621	\$18,934	\$39,555

Other Direct Costs	\$445
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Travel	\$445
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TOTAL COST	\$40,000
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Funding

MPO Planning Contract #84053
MPO §5303 Contract #84080