



Draft Memorandum for the Record Regional Transportation Advisory Council Meeting

October 11, 2023, Meeting Minutes

2:30–4:05 PM, Zoom

Lenard Diggins, Chair, representing the MBTA Ridership Oversight Committee (ROC)

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

L. Diggins called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM. Members and guests attending the meeting introduced themselves. (For attendance list, see page 4.)

2. Public Comment

There were none.

3. Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Needs Assessment—*Betsy Harvey, MPO Staff*

B. Harvey stated that the MPO is transitioning its approach to the Needs Assessment to be an on-going process.

B. Harvey stated that the Needs Assessment serves as a snapshot of transportation conditions in the Boston region now, compared to four years ago, presented in the form of StoryMaps. The StoryMaps are based on the goal areas outlined in the *Destination 2050* LRTP. The Needs Assessment StoryMaps include

- Summary of Transportation Needs and Recommendations
- Transportation in the Boston Region Today
- Projected Future Conditions and Travel Demand
- Safety
- Mobility and Reliability
- Access and Connectivity
- Resiliency
- Clean Air and Healthy Communities
- The Boston Region MPO's Approach to Equity

Discussion

Andy Reker, City of Cambridge, discussed offline access to the StoryMap content.

Dan Jaffe, Charlestown resident, discussed the age of data and its relevance to policy decisions.

L. Diggins asked if there are opportunities to use previous Needs Assessments to assess progress towards achieving regional goals.

Frany Osman, Acton resident, asked how data on people with disabilities were collected. B. Harvey stated that the Census Bureau produces the American Community Survey annually, which collects information on people with disabilities. F. Osman asked how staff considered accessibility for people with low to no vision when producing the StoryMaps. B. Harvey stated that documentation states that StoryMaps are compatible with screen readers.

L. Diggins discussed process improvements for the next LRTP cycle, including having a completed Needs Assessment six to nine months before decisions are made for the LRTP.

A. Reker asked if there is a discussion of what has changed since the last Needs Assessment.

4. Performance-Based Planning Dashboard—*Sam Taylor, MPO Staff*

S. Taylor asked for feedback and guidance on ways to improve the Boston Region MPO's performance-based planning dashboard for the Advisory Council, the MPO Board, and the region as a whole.

S. Taylor stated that the performance-based planning approach assesses how the MPO's investments are supporting progress towards the vision and goals of *Destination 2050*. The federal government requires that the MPO adopts a series of annual, two-year, and four-year targets. Roadway safety, transit safety, and transit asset condition are annual performance targets.

S. Taylor stated that the objective of the dashboard update is to effectively display the mandated performance targets and progress towards them. It will be organized by the six performance target areas, will use interactive charts, will have a simpler interface, and can be regularly updated. S. Taylor reviewed examples of similar dashboards.

Discussion

L. Diggins asked if the current dashboard meets federal requirements. S. Taylor stated that the dashboard was developed before the current performance-based planning mandates were established, so it does not fully satisfy the requirements.

L. Diggins stated that the interactivity on the current dashboard is a good feature. L. Diggins encouraged building upon existing data to expand the reporting of the dashboard.

A. Reker stated that connections between graphs and geographic data are useful.

A. Reker asked who the audience of the dashboard is. S. Taylor stated that potential audiences include internal staff use, academics and industry professionals, and members of the public.

D. Jaffe stated that it would be beneficial to be notified when updates are made to the dashboard and its data.

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Stella Jordan, MPO Staff, stated that there was a request before the meeting for modifications to the July 12, 2023 meeting minutes. Members decided to delay approval of these minutes until the next meeting.

6. Elections—*Stella Jordan, MPO Staff*

S. Jordan stated that eight votes have been received for the Regional Transportation Advisory Council Chair and Vice-Chair. L. Diggins was elected as Chair and Franny Osman as Vice-Chair.

7. Chair's Report—*Lenard Diggins, MBTA ROC*

L. Diggins stated that the recent Transit Working Group featured a presentation from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation on its project to map all transit options in the state. L. Diggins stated that draft project scoring criteria were released for the Transit Transformation investment program.

8. Old Business, New Business, and Member Announcements

There were none.

9. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by WalkMassachusetts (John McQueen) and seconded by Franny Osman, Acton resident. The motion carried.

Attendees

Member Municipalities	Representatives and Alternates
Cambridge	Andy Reker
Weymouth	Owen MacDonald

Citizen Advocacy Groups	Attendees
Boston Society of Civil Engineers (BSCES)	Ana Cristina Fragoso
MBTA Ridership Oversight Committee (ROC)	Lenard Diggins
MoveMassachusetts	Jon Seward
WalkMassachusetts	John McQueen
Resident (Acton)	Franny Osman

Agencies (Non-Voting)	Attendees
MetroWest Regional Transit Authority	Tyler Terrasi

Other Attendees	Affiliation
Morgan Griffiths	Town of Natick
Dan Jaffe	Charlestown resident
Josh Ostroff	City of Newton

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff
Betsy Harvey
Stella Jordan
Ethan Lapointe
Srilekha Murthy
Sarah Philbrick
Judy Taylor
Sam Taylor

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