

**Draft Memorandum for the Record
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meeting**

February 16, 2012 Meeting

10:00 AM – 12:15 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 the amendments to the work programs for the *MassDOT Title VI Program* and the *MBTA 2012 Review of Fare Structure, Tariffs, and Service*
- approve the *Emergency Evacuation and Hazard Mitigation Mapping, Phase 2* report
- approve the *Improving the Southeast Expressway: A Conceptual Plan* study
- approve the minutes of the meeting of February 2
- authorize the MPO staff to analyze the three recommended intersections for the *Safety and Operations Analyses at Selected Intersections, FFY 2012* study

Meeting Agenda

1. Public Comments

There were none.

2. Chair's Report – Clinton Bench, MassDOT

C. Bench reported that the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate have released versions of bills for the reauthorization of the federal surface transportation legislation. The House version is a five-year bill that would provide level funding, but would eliminate certain discretionary programs – such as the Transportation Enhancements and the TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) Program. The Senate version is a two-year bill that preserves those discretionary programs. Pam Wolfe, Manager of Certification Activities, MPO Staff, added that the American Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) has information summarizing the bills and will circulate it to members.

C. Bench reported on the MPO committee assignments. Each of three standing committees, Administration and Finance, Congestion Management Process (CMP), and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), will have eight members.

He then noted that, due to the high attendance at the public meetings regarding the MBTA's fare increase and service cuts proposal, the MBTA has scheduled five additional public meetings. Attendance at the meeting in Hingham was particularly high; attendees voiced opposition to the proposal to eliminate ferry service.

Paul Regan, MBTA Advisory Board, praised MassDOT Secretary Richard Davey's efforts to address questions raised by members of the public at the public meetings. He also announced that the MBTA Advisory Board has made a proposal that would address the MBTA's deficit for fiscal year (FY) 2013 while avoiding service cuts.

3. Committee Chairs' Reports

Lourenço Dantas, Massachusetts Port Authority, reported that the first meeting of the CMP Committee is being scheduled. P. Wolfe stated that there will be a report from the UPWP Committee on March 1.

4. Regional Transportation Advisory Council Report – Steve Olanoff, Chair,

Regional Transportation Advisory Council

At the Advisory Council's February meeting, Chris Caplice, Executive Director of the Center for Transportation and Logistics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, gave a presentation on using scenario planning to determine the future of freight flows. The presentation is available on the MPO's website. The meeting also featured presentations on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and UPWP by Sean Pfalzer, Interim TIP Manager, and Mary Ellen Sullivan, UPWP Manager, respectively.

The next Advisory Council meeting will be held on March 14. Bill Kuttner, MPO Staff, will give a presentation on the study, *The Southeast Expressway: A Conceptual Plan*.

The Advisory Council is developing a letter to the MPO in regards to the MBTA's fare increase/service reduction proposal.

S. Olanoff noted that the Advisory Council has requested membership on all three MPO committees because it is an avenue for public input. He expressed disappointment that the Advisory Council will not be represented on all three MPO Committees.

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

K. Quackenbush reminded members that the March 1 MPO meeting will be held at Beverly Public Library. (A flyer was distributed with the location details and a map of the area will be distributed.) This is the first of four MPO meetings that will be held outside of Boston in this calendar year. Michael Callahan, MPO Staff, has visited the meeting site to ensure that the venue meets accessibility standards.

P. Wolfe reported that the City of Quincy has written to the MPO staff to request that the MPO program the balance of an earmark for the *Quincy – Adams Green* project to enable the city to access design funds in federal fiscal year (FFY) 2012 and construction funds in FFY 2013. To address this request, the MPO could either program the design portion of the earmark in the TIP amendment that is currently out for public review, or program it in May when there will likely be another amendment to the TIP. The construction portion of the earmark could be programmed in the FFYs 2013 – 16 TIP.

In response to members' questions, S. Pfalzer reported that the City of Quincy is not in danger of losing the earmark. This earmark was originally intended for the *Quincy Concourse* project, but the city received American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds for that project. The city now wishes to apply the earmark to the *Adams Green* project. The city executed a design agreement with MassDOT in October of 2011.

Members agreed to consider the city's request as a public comment on the draft Amendment One of the FFYs 2012 – 15 TIP, which is currently released for public review and to take up the matter at the March 1 MPO meeting.

The MPO staff has also received a letter to the MBTA regarding the fare increase/service reduction proposal.

6. MassDOT Stop-Controlled Intersection Program – Carrie Lavallee, MassDOT Highway Division

C. Lavallee, Project Manager, MassDOT, informed members about MassDOT's program to provide low-cost safety improvements at stop-controlled intersections that have experienced an average of nine or more crashes between 2006 and 2008. In December, MassDOT sent information packages to 69 municipalities in the MPO region informing them of the program and requesting information about the municipalities' plans for improving eligible intersections. MassDOT is offering to provide new stop and advance warning signs, and pavement marking and tree trimming services if needed at those locations. MassDOT will be following-up with calls to the municipalities.

Members asked questions about the program.

Lourenço Dantas, Massachusetts Port Authority, asked if the program would serve intersections that are not currently stop-controlled, but should be. C. Lavallee replied that the program is only serving current stop-controlled intersections at this time.

David Anderson, MassDOT Highway Division, inquired about the deadline for municipalities to respond given that the funding for the program is in the current TIP. C. Lavallee reported that the deadline has passed and only about half of the municipalities have responded. She is following-up with municipalities to ensure that they understand that both the design and construction of these projects will be paid for by the state.

Dennis Crowley, South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway), asked for more information about what the program would provide. C. Lavallee replied that the program offers larger stop signs, advance warning signs, double arrow signs for T-intersections, signs for both sides of an intersection (which is a federal recommendation), and pavement markings 100 feet from an intersection.

The package of materials that was sent to municipalities will be forwarded to members. Members can raise this topic at their subregional meetings.

D. Anderson commended C. Lavallee for her work on this project.

7. Work Program Amendments – Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff

Members were presented with amendments to two work programs. The amendment to the work program for the *MassDOT Title VI Program* was presented at the meeting of February 2. K. Quackenbush introduced the amendment to the work program for the *MBTA 2012 Review of Fare Structure, Tariffs, and Service*, which would enable the MPO staff to analyze a third scenario for the MBTA's fare increase and service cuts proposals. The MPO staff has already analyzed two scenarios, which involved developing forecasts of revenue, ridership, air quality, and environmental justice impacts based on proposed fare increases and service cuts. The MPO staff would do a similar analysis for a third scenario, which is being developed. This analysis would also include Title VI-related considerations.

Regarding the amendment to the *MassDOT Title VI Program*, D. Crowley raised questions about the cost to the state to implement Title VI requirements. K. Quackenbush noted that helping MassDOT to comply with the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) Title VI obligations is a relatively new task, while helping on compliance with the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) Title VI obligations is ongoing work. C. Bench added that while both FHWA and FTA requirements have existed for a while, FTA has been more active in enforcing obligations. He estimated that costs for implementing FHWA requirements at MassDOT's Highway Division could be in the range of \$1 million annually, but that the cost has not been estimated. More effort will likely be spent on making materials available in other languages and analyzing the benefits and burdens of individual transportation projects. On the transit side, the MPO staff has already assisted the MBTA in revamping its Title VI program.

A motion to approve the amendment to the *MassDOT Title VI Program* was made by P. Regan, and seconded by Tom Bent, Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville). The motion carried.

Members further discussed the amendment to the *MBTA 2012 Review of Fare Structure, Tariffs, and Service*.

P. Regan inquired about the timeline for completing the analysis of the third scenario. C. Bench noted that the analysis would be needed within a few weeks in order for the results to inform the MBTA Board of Directors' decisions regarding the MBTA budget.

Richard Canale, At-Large Town (Town of Lexington), asked whether the analysis would inform the NEPA review for the MBTA's proposal and whether a further amendment to the work program would be required. C. Bench replied that the analysis would inform the NEPA review, but that another amendment is not expected.

Richard Reed, Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Bedford), asked whether the third scenario is the one that the MBTA Advisory Board is advancing, and if not, what that scenario would be. C. Bench reported that scenario is not

yet defined. The Advisory Board's proposal will be an important part of the considerations, as will input from the public meetings on the fare proposals, he said. P. Regan noted that CTPS's work informs the discussion, but does not drive it.

In response to a question from Ed Tarallo, North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn), C. Bench noted that by voting for this amendment members are allowing CTPS to continue its technical support to the MBTA. He noted that CTPS is a valuable resource and can provide an objective review of the subject.

Dennis Giombetti, MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham), asked whether the results of the analysis would be first presented to the MPO. C. Bench replied that the results would be sent first to the MBTA, which is funding the study, then to the MPO for public deliberation.

Jim Gillooly, City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department), suggested that there may be a need to consider more than just one more scenario in order to come up with the best solution to the MBTA budget crisis. He asked if the MPO would be asked to support work to examine additional alternatives. C. Bench answered that it is possible that more scenarios could be considered. He noted that it is only practical at this time to study one more scenario, given the time constraints, but that the MBTA Board of Directors could direct further study into other alternatives after its board meeting in March.

P. Regan suggested that the MPO authorize CTPS to conduct analyses on more than one scenario, so that staff would not have to present another amendment in the future.

S. Olanoff expressed concern that the outputs of the study would not take into account the economic impacts of proposed service cuts. Eric Bourassa, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, noted that including an economic analysis would be a much more challenging task, and he expressed support for the current scope of the work program.

Rafael Mares, Conservation Law Foundation, asked if environmental findings would be reported as part of the work program. K. Quackenbush replied yes and noted that the task is described in section four of the work program. R. Mares expressed concern that the expectations for the work program are large, but that the resources and time provided to CTPS are not sufficient.

A motion to approve the amendment to the *MBTA 2012 Review of Fare Structure, Tariffs, and Service* was made by E. Bourassa, and seconded by P. Regan. The motion carried. The North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) and South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree) abstained.

8. Studies – Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff

Members voted to approve two studies that were presented at the meeting of February 2.

A motion to approve the *Emergency Evacuation and Hazard Mitigation Mapping, Phase 2* report was made by C. Stickney, and seconded by E. Tarallo. The motion carried.

A motion to approve the study, *Improving the Southeast Expressway: A Conceptual Plan*, was made by J. Gillooly, and seconded by C. Stickney. The motion carried.

9. Meeting Minutes – Maureen Kelly, MPO Specialist, MPO Staff

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting February 2 of was made by S. Olanoff, and seconded by J. Gillooly. The motion carried.

10. FFY 2012 Safety and Operations Analyses at Selected Intersections – Location Selection – Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff

In November 2011, the MPO approved the work program for *Safety and Operations Analyses at Selected Intersections, FFY 2012*, the fifth in a series of work programs to address safety and congestion problems at intersections. This study differs from the previous ones in that it recommends studying larger intersections on major arterials or adjacent intersections that, in combination, constitute a large intersection.

Staff distributed a memorandum that identified 25 intersections in the region as candidates for potential study. These locations were among the Top 200 Crash Locations in the region. They were selected based also on consideration of the availability of transit, intersection geometry, and congestion conditions (based on data from the MPO's Congestion Management Process). Intersections were excluded if they were part of a larger set of intersections along a corridor that have a high number of crashes or congestion, or if projects are already planned for the locations.

A secondary screening process identified three of the 25 intersections as candidates for further study. The criteria applied in this step included consideration of the number of bicycle and pedestrian crashes, congestion, transit significance, regional significance, and implementation potential. It has been found that there is a high likelihood of study recommendations being implemented if they can be done as part of MassDOT's routine maintenance activities, whereas there has been a low level of implementation of recommendations on roadways owned by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. For that reason, the selection process favored roadways under MassDOT jurisdiction. Staff also considered geographic distribution when selecting locations.

Staff is recommending the following intersections for further study:

- Southern Artery (Route 3A) at McGrath Highway/Field Street and at Sea Street/Coddington Street in Quincy
- Turnpike Road (Route 9) at Oak Hill Road/Central Street in Southborough
- Main Street (Route 38) at Church Street/ Burlington Avenue (Route 62) in Wilmington

Members discussed the recommendation.

J. Gillooly expressed that staff took a rational approach to selecting the locations.

L. Dantas agreed that staff took a logical approach. He noted that problems at some intersections could result from problems along the corridor or the approach to the intersections having to do, for example, with access management or lane assignments. K. Quackenbush noted that staff would pay attention to the context of the intersections, but would be zeroing in on the conditions at the intersections themselves.

Michael Chong, FHWA, noted that the MassDOT Highway Division takes a similar approach when doing safety audits. He also suggested that it would be informative to include municipally-owned roads in the study. K. Quackenbush noted that the Quincy location is under municipal jurisdiction.

A motion to authorize the MPO staff to analyze the three recommended intersections for the *Safety and Operations Analyses at Selected Intersections, FFY 2012* study was made by E. Bourassa, and seconded by D. Giombetti. The motion carried.

11. MBTA 2012 Title VI Program Monitoring – Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff

K. Quackenbush introduced the work program for *MBTA 2012 Title VI Program Monitoring*, one of a series of work programs that the MPO staff has been conducting to assist the MBTA in its compliance with FTA's Title VI requirements. The last of these work programs was approved by the MPO in the spring of 2010; that work helped to prepare for the MBTA's triennial Title VI report in 2011.

This new work program pertains to the MBTA's activities for the current state fiscal year. It includes data collection for compliance measures on an annual and bi-annual basis. The tasks of the work program include gathering data from the MBTA and the collection of field data. Types of data that would be collected include: vehicle loads, headways, on-time performance, service availability, distribution of transit amenities, vehicle assignment, and vehicle age. Those data would first be compared to MBTA's service standards. Comparisons would then be made between areas of low-income and minority residents (environmental justice areas) and non-environmental justice areas.

This work program would also assist the MBTA in developing standards for the siting of transit amenities in instances where such standards do not already exist. Finally, it would also help the MBTA determine what constitutes a "disparate impact" for fare and service change policy. The product of this work program will be a report to the MBTA.

Members discussed the work program.

J. Gillooly raised a question about the timing of the work program given that fare and service changes would go into effect on July 1, potentially affecting bus and other transit routes. K. Quackenbush noted that the work pertains only to the current state fiscal year. Most of the data that needs to be gathered already exists. Field observations will take place by the end of June. C. Bench added that the Title VI Program requires annual

monitoring. This work program is starting later than usual this year and will be done again next year.

In response to a question from D. Crowley, K. Quackenbush noted that the work program will be funded by the MBTA.

12. State Implementation Plan Update – *Matthew Ciborowski, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning*

M. Ciborowski provided an update on the State Implementation Plan (SIP) projects. The SIP status report for February was also distributed.

Construction is proceeding on four stations that are part of the *Fairmount Line Improvement Program* project. The Blue Hill Avenue Station project has been delayed due to design issues associated with mitigation measures.

The *Construction of 1,000 New Parking Spaces* project is expected to be complete by May 11 when construction of the Wonderland Parking Garage is finished.

Regarding the *Green Line Extension* project, the status report includes updates on the status of approvals from FTA and New Starts. It also details design issues related to emergency egress and accessibility at the new stations, and coordination of development in the Lechmere area. Public meetings are underway regarding station design. The schedule of the meetings is posted on MassDOT's website.

Members asked questions.

T. Bent asked for an update and timeline regarding the mitigation items for the *Green Line Extension* project. M. Ciborowski reported that MassDOT solicited ideas for mitigation measures last fall and this winter, and then worked with CTPS to catalogue those ideas. MassDOT expects to release the catalogue in next couple of weeks and invite feedback. MassDOT expects to make a decision on the measures within this calendar year.

Wig Zamore, Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership/Mystic View Task Force, expressed concern that the mitigation projects for SIP project delays are not being implemented in a timely manner, and he remarked on the large scale of the mitigation required for the *Green Line Extension* project delays. He suggested conducting an analysis of past efforts to substitute projects with consideration of scale and timeliness. M. Ciborowski replied that the interim offset projects for the *Fairmount* and *Wonderland Garage* projects are in place and were active by the deadline. He expressed confidence that the offsets for the *Green Line Extension* project will be in place by the deadline, January 2015.

13. Members Items

K. Quackenbush reminded members once again that the March 1 MPO meeting will be held in Beverly. The MPO may be scheduling additional meetings in March. The TIP and UPWP will be areas of activity in March.

14. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by E. Tarallo, and seconded by T. Bent. The motion carried.

**Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting Attendance
Thursday, February 16, 2012, 10:00 AM**

Members

At-Large City (City of Everett)
At-Large City (City of Newton)
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)
At-Large Town (Town of Lexington)
City of Boston (Boston Redevelopment Authority)
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)

Federal Highway Administration
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
MassDOT Highway Division

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)
Massachusetts Port Authority
MBTA Advisory Board
Metropolitan Area Planning Council
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham)
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination
(Town of Bedford)
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)
North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn)
Regional Transportation Advisory Council
South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree)
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC)

Representatives and Alternates

Marzie Galazka
David Koses
Laura Wiener
Richard Canale
Lara Mérida
Jim Gillooly
Tom Kadzis
Michael Chong
Tom Bent
Clinton Bench
David Anderson
Mark Guenard
Ron Morgan
Lourenço Dantas
Paul Regan
Eric Bourassa
Dennis Giombetti
Richard Reed

Denise Deschamps
Ed Tarallo
Steve Olanoff
Christine Stickney
Dennis Crowley
Tom O'Rourke

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director

Daniel Amstutz

Michael Callahan

Maureen Kelly

Bill Kuttner

Robin Mannion

Efi Pagitsas

Sean Pfalzer

Pam Wolfe

Other Attendees

Callida Cenizal

Matthew Ciborowksi

Carrie Lavallee

Rafael Mares

Joe Onorato

Wig Zamore

MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning

MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning

MassDOT

Conservation Law Foundation

MassDOT Highway

Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership / Mystic View Task
Force