

# REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL



## Regional Transportation Advisory Council Meeting

### June 12, 2013 Meeting

3:00 PM, State Transportation Building, Conference Room 4, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

### Meeting Summary

#### Introductions

Steve Olanoff, Chair (Westwood) called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM. Members and guests attending the meeting introduced themselves. (For attendance list, see page 6)

#### Chair's Report—*Steve Olanoff, Chair*

The MPO met in Woburn on June 6 as part of the MPO's outreach to encourage participation from members of the communities of the MPO. At that meeting, the Transportation Improvement Program FFYs 2013 – 2016 Amendment Five and several traffic studies were approved. The MPO announced plans to amend the Long Range Transportation Plan in order to move forward the I-93/I-95 Interchange in Canton. The project will commence with certain work activity being performed in the FFYs 2014-2017 TIP. The interchange will be funded with state funds.

#### Approval of Meeting Minutes of May 8, 2013 - *Steve Olanoff, Chair*

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes to the May 8, 2013, meeting. The May 8, 2013, meeting minutes were approved.

#### MBTA Capital Investment Program FY2014 - FY2018 – *Rob Guptill, Manager of Systems Integration, MBTA*

The Capital Investment Program (CIP) is a rolling 5-year capital program that implements the 25-year Program for Mass Transportation. The CIP is financially constrained and it focuses on the State of Good Repair Projects.

The CIP projects are funded with federal grants, non-federal sources such as revenue bonds, pay-as-you-go funds, and state funds, and alternative financing. The CIP outlines investments in major capital needs in an extensive array of infrastructure including revenue vehicles, stations, tracks, bridges, tunnels and maintenance shops.

This year's CIP includes \$7.2 billion in funding for capital projects over five years. More than half of this funding comes from State sources, a third from the Federal Transit Administration and a tenth from other sources.

Statewide transportation funds include those for the State Implementation Plan (SIP) commitments, other projects for the statewide transportation plan, and federal and state Legislative initiatives. The Administration's plan for funding is called "The Way Forward: A 21<sup>st</sup> – Century Transportation Plan." This plan includes \$13 billion in statewide capital investment over 10 years; and \$6.7 billion in MBTA capital investment, followed by a systematic maintenance program.

The Way Forward Plan breaks the funding down into two categories: State of Good Repair Priorities and Unlocking Economic Growth in the Commonwealth. R. Guptill presented a table identifying the funding commitments to these two categories. The Administration's funding proposal covers some projects that would have otherwise been funded in the FY14-FY18 CIP with MBTA funds. This allowed the MBTA to increase the funding for other projects. These projects include the Bridge Program, T-GAPS (smaller scale infrastructure projects), the Bus Overhaul Program, and the Commuter Rail Vehicle Improvement Program.

The CIP supports all modes of transit provided by the MBTA. Geographically, approximately 75% of the investment funds go to core service areas serviced by bus, subway, and the Silver Line. Twenty-five percent is invested in suburban service areas, serviced primarily by commuter rail.

The MBTA funds projects by the following categories: Revenue Vehicles, Bridges, Stations, Accessibility, Power, Enhancements, Signals, Facilities, and several other smaller categories.

R. Guptill presented two graphs showing the historical trends in investment in different programs over time. These patterns reflect the changing policy influences over funding different programs and projects.

## Questions and Answers

In response to members' comments and questions, R. Guptill had the following comments:

- Funding sources for the MBTA in the CIP include funds from the FTA and state funds. The Way Forward funds are outlined in the administration's revenue proposal, a program of \$13.6 billion in statewide capital investments for all transportation. Of this total, \$6.7 billion total spending would go to the MBTA over

ten years. The five-year CIP plan would use over \$3.9 billion of the proposed The Way Forward funds, in addition to funds from the Statewide Implementation Plan. All of this sets state funding for the CIP at \$4.1 billion out of a total of \$7.2 billion, with the remaining \$3.1 billion funded by MBTA funds from the FTA (\$2.39 billion), MBTA Revenue Bonds (\$671 million), and Homeland Security Funding (\$51 million). In addition to the MBTA, statewide funding based on The Way Forward proposes funding for the other RTAs across the state as well. Funds in the five-year plan are not adjusted for inflation. (D. D'Eramo, J. McQueen, S. Olanoff, F. Osman, M. Wellons)

- The wider policy discussion of statewide funding for the MBTA includes how statewide benefits are being distributed. Should The Way Forward Plan fail to be approved by the legislature, the replacement projects, including the Bridge Program, T-GAPS, the Bus Overhaul Program and the Commuter Rail Vehicle Improvement Program, would be constrained along with projects currently planned for in the State of Good Repair and Unlocking Economic Growth categories. (S. Olanoff, F. Osman)
- The timeline for this CIP was accepted by the MBTA Board, based on the State funding proposals being advanced in The Way Forward: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Transportation Plan. The operating budget is in addition to the CIP; operating costs are not being addressed here. (J. McQueen, F. Osman)
- Power generation issues will be addressed as part of the State of Good Repair Priorities. Modernization Pilot Projects are not yet conclusively defined, so it is not determined if Positive Train Control will be covered. Any signaling improvements on the Green Line have not been defined.
- Green Line Vehicle Procurement is intended for the purchase of Green Line vehicles. It does not address whether old cars will be used or taken out of service. (S. Larrabee, S. Olanoff)
- Diesel Multiple Unit trains (DMUs) bridge the gap between commuter rail and light rail vehicles. It is not determined if DMUs will be part of the Modernization Pilot Projects category. R. Guptill will relay information on the projects that are being considered in the Modernization Pilot Projects category of the CIP. (J. McQueen, M. Wellons)

### **Discussion of Advisory Council Comment Letter-Steve Olanoff, Chair**

The Draft Comment Letter to the MPO was presented by the TIP/UPWP Committee and circulated to members prior to the meeting. The floor was open for comments and discussion.

C. Porter had sent an email where he asked that the letter be organized to group TIP comments together and UPWP comments together.

J. McQueen recommended that the Assabet River Rail Trail Project be added to the Green Oriented Development section. He commended MassDOT for including the project in the TIP as a Federal-Aid Non-Target funded project.

D. D'Eramo, while supportive of the content and style of the comment letter, expressed concern that the response by the MPO in the past has been tepid and suggested that an explicit reference to the Advisory Council's expectation of receiving a detailed response from the MPO. S. Olanoff indicated he will introduce the letter at the MPO meeting with a request that members of the MPO respond with their views.

M. Wellons expressed an interest in adding a reference to air and light pollution. K. Johnson suggested that we fold in a reference to the region's air quality status.

S. Larrabee and J. McQueen expressed concern over the apparent lack of proactive planning for the potential impacts of Panamax Project to expand capacity of the Panama Canal on the region's highways; particularly I-495, I-95, the Mass Pike and connecting roads. In addition, the relocation of the rail hub to Worcester will likely have short-term impacts. S. Olanoff suggested that the content of the letter on this subject be introduced earlier in the letter with its own paragraph so that the relative importance can be made.

S. Larrabee asked that a reference to safety of car drivers be added to the introductory paragraph on Freight.

With the changes suggested to be made, members approved sending the letter to the MPO. F. Osman pointed out that the issue of accessibility should actually be mentioned in the final paragraph instead of being expressed in a bullet point.

S. Olanoff pointed out that the TIP and UPWP Committee was combined. In the past there were two committees that worked on the individual documents. This year, it seemed to work well to have both documents reviewed for comment to the MPO by just one committee, the TIP/UPWP Committee. The TIP/UPWP Committee Chair is Monica Tibbits-Nutt and members are: Kristina Johnson, Robert McGaw, David Montgomery, Steve Olanoff, and Marilyn Wellons.

### **Committee Reports:**

S. Olanoff encouraged members to consider serving on committees, particularly the Program Committee which lost members due to changes in the bylaws that preclude

MPO members from being voting members of the Advisory Council. He pointed out that MPO members can still attend the meetings even if they are not voting members.

**Member Announcements:**

- The next Advisory Council meeting will be held on July 10. The planned speaker will be Thomas P. Glynn, Executive Director and CEO of Massport.
- There will be no meeting in August.
- Dr. Beverly Scott, CEO and General Director of the MBTA is the planned speaker for the September 11 meeting.

**Adjourn:**

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded at 4:20 PM. The motion carried.

## Attendance

<b>Agencies (* MPO &amp; other non-voting)</b>	<b>Attendee</b>
MassDOT - Aeronautics Division*	Steven Rawding
MAGIC*	Franny Osman
Agencies (Voting)	
Joint Legislative Transportation Committee	Steven Smalley, (Sen. McGee)
MassRIDES	Kristin Slayton
HHST	Theodora Fisher
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<b>Municipalities (Voting) *MPO Member</b>	
Boston*	Tom Kadzis
Millis	Dom D'Eramo
Needham	David Montgomery
Quincy	Kristina Johnson
Westwood	Steve Olanoff
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<b>Citizen Groups</b>	
American Council of Engineering Companies	Tom Daley
Association for Public Transportation	Barry M. Steinberg
Boston Society of Architects	Schuyler Larrabee
Riverside Neighborhood Association	Marilyn Wellons
Route 128 Business Council	Monica Tibbits-Nutt
WalkBoston	John McQueen
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<b>Guests</b>	
Resident	Ed Lowney
MBTA	Rob Guptill
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<b>Staff</b>	
CTPS	Pam Wolfe, Manager,
CTPS	Certification Activities
	David Fargen