

# Memorandum for the Record

## Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

### December 18, 2014 Meeting

10:10 AM – 1:40 PM, State Transportation Building, Conference Rooms 2&3, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

Clinton Bench and David Mohler, Chairs, representing Frank DePaola, Acting Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

### Decisions

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization agreed to the following:

- approve the following work programs:
  - *Access Advisory Committee Support*
  - *Freight Planning Support: FFY 2015*
  - *MBTA Study of Passenger Noninteraction with Automated Fare Collection Equipment*
- direct the MPO staff to go forward on the next steps on scenario planning for the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

### Meeting Agenda

#### 1. Public Comments

Lee Auspitz, Somerville resident, commented on the discussions at the recent meetings regarding federal certification of the MPO. He remarked that this MPO has its own data and analytic capacity, and suggested that the MPO should consider making data development a goal in the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

Mr. Auspitz also addressed the issue of the geographic terminology used for the *Green Line Extension* project. He contends that the use of the term “Medford Hillside” as the terminus of the line is erroneous and does not comply with federal geographic naming standards set by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). He stated the materials for the Full-Funding Grant Agreement for the project will not be in order as long as the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) remains non-compliant with OMB regulations. He requested that MassDOT correct the references to Medford Hillside in the STIP. He also noted that there should be no obstacles to doing so considering that the MPO has addressed the concern by removing references to Medford Hillside in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is one component of the STIP.

David Knowlton, City of Salem, discussed the city's interest in incorporating a bicycle path project into the *Reconstruction on Canal Street* project. The bicycle path project is advancing through the design process now, and the final plans are expected to be completed in a couple of months. The city is working with MassDOT to accelerate the project review. The city owns approximately one-third of the right-of-way needed for the path. The remaining portion is on MBTA property; the city is working on an agreement with the MBTA for the use of that land. Some minor permitting issues must be addressed. The cost estimate for the path is \$1.2 million.

In response to members' questions, D. Knowlton explained that the path would be an extension of the Marblehead rail trail and that it would extend to Mill Street in downtown Salem. It would not extend as far as the Salem commuter rail station. About a mile of the path would be on MBTA property.

## **2. Chair's Report—*Clinton Bench, MassDOT***

There was none.

## **3. Committee Chairs' Reports**

There were none.

## **4. Regional Transportation Advisory Council Report—*Mike Gowing, Chair, Regional Transportation Advisory Council***

M. Gowing commented on the MPO's federal certification process noting that the representatives from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have been invited to the Advisory Council to see how the Council provides input to the MPO.

He also reported on the last Council meeting, which included a discussion on sustainable freight issues. Abby Swaine of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency presented highlights from the New England Transportation Forum on Freight Issues, which was held at the Volpe Center on November 6. The discussion focused on the reduction of greenhouse gases (GHGs) in freight practices. He also noted that the Volpe Center has a best practices tool available, that the FHWA has increased TIGER funding this year, and that a strategic multimodal plan for freight will be coming before the U.S. Congress this summer. Other topics discussed included concerns about shipping fuel oil by rail and increasing global competition for seaports.

## **5. Executive Director's Report—*Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff***

K. Quackenbush discussed the MPO's federal certification process and the recent follow-up meeting that staff had with representatives from the FHWA and FTA. The federal representatives were pleased with the performance of this MPO and consider it a "high-performing MPO." They were particularly impressed with the MPO's performance-based planning. The federal agencies are not recommending any corrective action, though they will be providing recommendations in a report that will be prepared in February.

During the certification process, for example, the federal agencies had addressed the governance structure of the MPO and the topic of opening the board to the smaller regional transit authorities (RTAs) in the region. The federal agencies will be making recommendations about that issue. In addition, they asked staff to provide data about the geographic distribution of funds provided through the TIP and UPWP, and they may have recommendations about those distributions.

The federal agencies will host a public meeting on January 15 from 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM in the State Transportation Building to gather input from the public. Staff will be distributing a flyer announcing the event. In the meantime, public comments may be sent to the division administrators of the FHWA and FTA.

Members then heard a comment from a member of the public. Arthur Strang, Cambridge resident, noted that the issue of congestion reduction was raised at the certification meetings, and that the cities of San Francisco and New York have pushed back on the federal agencies concerning this topic. He expressed interest in hearing a conversation about that topic in relation to the Boston region. C. Bench noted that this topic will likely come up when the MPO continues its discussions on the goals and objectives of the LRTP. At issue is whether the MPOs should have a congestion reduction goal or whether they should focus on other ways to meet mobility needs; a congestion reduction goal could go against certain mobility strategies being devised by MPOs.

## **6. Work Programs—*Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff***

K. Quackenbush presented three work programs. Members discussed them and then voted on them.

### ***Access Advisory Committee Support***

The work program for the *Access Advisory Committee Support* represents the work that staff does to support the Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA (AACT). This work includes supporting membership meetings, Board of Director meetings, and the Mobility Assistance Program.

A motion to approve the work program for the *Access Advisory Committee Support* was made by the North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) (Tina Cassidy), and seconded by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) (Eric Bourassa). The motion carried.

### ***Freight Planning Support: FFY 2015***

The work program for *Freight Planning Support: FFY 2015* describes the MPO's freight planning work for this fiscal year.

In the fall of last year, the MPO approved a Freight Action Plan, which is the framework for the MPO's freight planning work. The MPO staff first engaged in work under this framework in FFY 2014 when staff studied truck traffic in the Beacham Street corridor of Chelsea. The results of that study will be presented to the MPO soon.

This new work program will involve studying truck trip patterns of the South Boston Waterfront area based on how traffic is attracted to the various land uses there (industrial, fishing, hotel, etc.) in order to support ongoing planning efforts in that area. One topic of interest is the distribution of freight through Conley Terminal and the implications for truck traffic on the region's highways, as compared to shipping freight by truck from ports in New Jersey. The work program also involves developing freight data and identifying topics for future study.

A motion to approve the work program for *Freight Planning Support: FFY 2015* was made by the At-Large City of Everett (James Errickson), and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa).

Members the discussed the work program.

J. Errickson expressed support for the work program. He reported that the City of Everett found the MPO staff's work under last year's work program very helpful for understanding freight movements in the Beacham Street corridor. The city is incorporating staff's recommendations into a planning effort with the City of Chelsea. J. Errickson also expressed that it would be useful to have recommendations for how to better move freight for the benefit of the entire region and to know what type of freight is being moved.

John Romano, MassDOT Highway Division, suggested that Tom Tinlan of MassDOT could be a good resource for this study.

C. Bench suggested that a future topic of study could focus on the upcoming changes to fuel distribution in the region considering that there will likely be more debate about issues of natural gas distribution.

Dennis Giombetti, MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham), inquired about whether the Commonwealth is considering buying more rail lines. C. Bench noted that these discussions are ongoing, and he offered to return to the MPO with more information about the status of the Commonwealth's rail line acquisitions and a map showing rail line ownership. The Commonwealth did recently purchase the Housatonic rail line.

J. Errickson noted that the MPO's recent work on freight planning focused on truck traffic. He suggested that the work programs could be more expansive to include other forms of freight delivery. C. Bench agreed that MassDOT will support a broader scope in the future that might even include the pipeline "mode."

Members then voted on the motion to approve the work program for *Freight Planning Support: FFY 2015*. The motion carried.

### ***MBTA Study of Passenger Noninteraction with Automated Fare Collection Equipment***

The work program for *MBTA Study of Passenger Noninteraction with Automated Fare Collection Equipment* will address the phenomenon of passenger noninteraction with automated fare collection (AFC) equipment when boarding the transit system or vehicles. There are some legitimate reasons passengers may not interact with the fare equipment, such as when children with adults ride for free or when passengers are waved aboard after showing a pass to the transit vehicle operator. Non-legitimate reasons include fare evasion. The MBTA would like to determine the seriousness of the fare evasion problem. This project will be funded through an MBTA contract.

Through this work program, staff will research several questions to determine the following: how much revenue is lost because of fare evasion; what conditions are associated with fare evasion (weather, particular days of the week, parts of the system, proximity to schools, etc.); what can be done to stop it and at what cost; and how the MBTA's problem compares to that of other transit agencies. Staff proposes to mine existing data that the MBTA reports to the National Transit Database (NTD) to shed light on these questions, as well as to interact with the MBTA Police regarding enforcement, and to review the lessons learned at other transit agencies.

A motion to approve the work program for *MBTA Study of Passenger Noninteraction with Automated Fare Collection Equipment* was made by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (Tom Bent), and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (Paul Regan).

Members then discussed the work program.

T. Bent suggested that staff explore data from MBTA security cameras. Elizabeth Moore, Director of Policy and Planning, MPO staff, noted that it is staff's intention to find out where cameras are located, if data is available from the cameras, and how that data could be used. Since this task was not explicitly mentioned in the work program, C. Bench asked staff to ensure that this point is part of the conversation with the MBTA Police and AFC staff, and to ask whether they have identified where fare evasion problems are occurring. E. Moore added that this work program represents a first step in the process, which is to determine whether the NTD data is usable for this purpose. If the data is not usable, staff will explore next steps for additional data collection.

Paul Regan, MBTA Advisory Board, remarked that the primary purpose of the NTD data collection is not to gather information about fare evasion. He suggested that MBTA's Bus Operations would be able to identify routes on which fare evasion is a problem. E. Moore then discussed the reasons for using the NTD data. Staff already has anecdotal information about where fare evasion is occurring, so the NTD data will be explored to determine if it provides sufficient data for all routes across the system.

M. Gowing inquired whether the study will include the commuter rail system; with higher fares than the bus and light rail system, the impacts on revenue could be higher from fare evasion on this mode. K. Quackenbush and E. Moore replied that the commuter rail system is not part of the study. Data does not exist for that mode since commuter rail passengers interact with a conductor rather than AFC equipment.

Dennis Crowley, South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway), suggested that, in addition to fare evasion, the MBTA may be losing revenue from fare equipment or gates that are not working properly. He suggested that an external audit should be done to address this issue. Members then discussed this issue. Among the comments, C. Bench noted that the MBTA has addressed many of the past problems associated with faulty equipment. Janice Ramsay, MBTA, added that technicians regularly maintain the fare equipment.

C. Bench expressed concern that relying only on anecdotal information for this study could result in the targeting of specific communities, which may have Title VI implications. He supported the approach of using data to target fare evasion problems.

He also advised the MPO to approve this first step with the understanding that there is substantial interest in looking at operations going forward.

Members then voted on the motion to approve the work program for *MBTA Study of Passenger Noninteraction with Automated Fare Collection Equipment*. The motion carried.

## **7. FFY 2015 Certification Activities Schedule and Work Plans and Congestion Management Process Work Plan—Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff**

K. Quackenbush presented the FFY 2015 work plans for the MPO's Certification Activities work and the Congestion Management Process (CMP). These represent much of the ongoing core 3C activities of these two work areas. Staff prepares these work plans for management purposes and for the purpose of assigning budgets. Members are not required to take a vote to approve these ongoing activities. These are being provided to members and the public to use as reference material as the activities described in them unfold throughout the year.

### ***Certification Activities***

The Certification Activities work plan contains seven groups of activities:

- *Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)*
- *Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*
- *Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)*
- *3C Planning and MPO Support*
- *Air Quality Conformity and Support Activities*
- *Boston Region MPO Title VI Reporting*
- *Transportation Equity / Environmental Justice Support*

K. Quackenbush pointed out the several areas in the work plans that differ from the plans produced last year. These include an updated budget for the LRTP (which is in its second year of preparation), more references to performance-based planning in the TIP, and activities to support the MPO's federal certification process in the 3C Planning and MPO Support work plan.

### ***Congestion Management Process***

The MPO staff has been engaged in the CMP since it was mandated through prior surface transportation legislation, ISTEA. The objective of the CMP is to monitor congestion on the transportation system. Studies for the UPWP are often derived from CMP information. This year, the MPO staff purchased travel-speed data from INRIX.

The MPO's CMP Committee and staff are anxious to have the staff use the data in creative ways, including creating roadway congestion scans and studying the economic impacts of congestion.

The chair of the CMP Committee, Lourenço Dantas, Massachusetts Port Authority, noted that the work plan will allow staff to continue the process of identifying needs and emerging issues, while also exploring the new electronic travel-speed data.

### ***Discussion***

C. Bench raised an issue that came up at the federal certification meetings with respect to Title VI regulations and the way in which the MPO evaluates TIP projects for the benefits and burdens to environmental justice communities. He asked staff to describe how they analyze the distribution of projects.

K. Quackenbush explained that for several years staff has evaluated individual projects proposed for the TIP to determine the benefits and burdens of those projects to environmental justice communities. This year, staff conducted a new analysis, at the urging of MassDOT's Office of Diversity and Civil Rights, to retrospectively analyze the MPO's collective investments in the transit system and to try to determine what markets are benefitting from them. Staff also explored the possibility of conducting a similar analysis for the MPO's roadway investments, but because of the complexity of the task, a UPWP study might be required. The MPO is not required to have that analysis completed right now. Pam Wolfe, Manager of Certification Activities, added that this MPO is a pioneer in this area of analysis. The analysis staff conducted was based on recommendations from FTA.

C. Bench expressed interest in having further discussion about this topic and ensuring that the MPO's efforts are state-of-the-practice.

## **8. Long-Range Transportation Plan Development—Anne McGahan, MPO Staff**

K. Quackenbush introduced the agenda item on the development of the LRTP. He recapped the discussion of the last MPO meeting on November 20, when the MPO discussed the vision, goals, and objectives of the LRTP and changes to them proposed by MassDOT. Members discussed differences of opinion concerning the Capacity Management goal. Since that meeting, staff has made significant progress on the LRTP Needs Assessment and crafted the conceptual framework for two alternative scenarios.



A. McGahan continued with a presentation about the inputs to the development of the scenarios, the priorities identified in the Needs Assessment, and the Universe of Projects. (A memorandum was provided with details.)

### ***Needs Assessment***

She began by providing a summary of the information used to identify needs of the transportation system by each goal of the LRTP. For each goal, she also highlighted investment programs that could address the needs. (See the memorandum for details.)

**Safety:** To address the goal of reducing crash severity, the MPO can use information included in the Needs Assessment such as crash data and the estimated property damage only index (EPDO) to rate crash severity. Crash data from 2006 to 2012 show that there has been a decrease in crashes with fatalities and injuries; however, there has been an increase in injuries to bicyclists and pedestrians in that same time period. Staff examined the top crash locations and locations with multiple safety needs. Both crash clusters at intersections and along corridors will be considered.

**System Preservation:** Bridge condition, pavement condition, transit infrastructure and rolling stock, freight, and climate adaptation are considered for this category.

- *Bridges:* An analysis showed that MassDOT is addressing structurally deficient bridges in the Boston Region at a higher rate than in the rest of the Commonwealth and is doing so through the Statewide Bridge Program.
- *Pavement condition:* An analysis of MassDOT monitored roadways in the Boston region showed that 70% are in good condition, 20% in fair condition, and 5% in poor condition. Interstate and access controlled arterials are in better condition than arterials overall. Complete Streets projects may be the best way to address needs in this category.
- *Transit infrastructure and rolling stock:* The MBTA will provide a list of unfunded state-of-good-repair needs when the MassDOT's Capital Investment Program (CIP) is released for public review. Staff is assuming that the MBTA's Transit Asset Management tool will be used by the MBTA to prioritize state-of-good-repair transit projects.
- *Freight:* Trucks are the major mode of freight movement in the region. Needs in this category include interchange modernizations to address truck rollover crashes.
- *Climate Change Adaptation:* The MPO can continue to evaluate projects that are in areas prone to flooding, inundation from hurricane storm surges, and sea level rise for designs that include flood protection and adaptation measures. In

particular, special attention should be given to major tunnels and freight routes. The MPO's All-Hazards Application is used for the project evaluations.

**Capacity Management and Mobility:** A variety of data tools were used to determine needs in this area. For roadways, the CMP Express Highway and Arterials dashboards were used to examine congestion, which also affects freight and many transit services. Other sources included speed index, travel time index, volume-to-capacity, and crash data.

For transit, population and employment data were used to determine transit coverage; 56% of the region's population and 64% of employment fall within the transit walkshed. Data sources also included the MBTA's scorecards for transit reliability and data from the Program for Mass Transportation (PMT). The MPO may consider bus priority on roadways and bus on shoulder strategies (for reliability), new shuttle services and first/last mile programs (for capacity), and park and ride and bicycle parking, and bicycle and pedestrian connections to commuter rail and transit stations (for connectivity).

For the bicycle and pedestrian modes, bicycle facilities and sidewalk coverage were examined. Data sources included parking utilization, CTPS's bicycle network evaluation, MassDOT's Baystate Greenway projects, and data from outreach efforts.

**Clean Air and Clean Communities:** This goal focuses on reductions in GHG emissions for compliance with the Global Warming Solutions Act and conformance with air quality standards. This goal will be addressed at the individual project level and an air quality analysis will be performed at the regional level. The Needs Assessment includes links to environmental data on the MassGIS website.

**Transportation Equity:** Needs in this category include improvements to transit service, transit and roadway infrastructure, intermodal connections, and coordination of various services in environmental justice areas. These factors will be evaluated at the project level to determine if projects have benefits or burdens for environmental justice communities and whether they address environmental justice needs.

**Economic Vitality:** MAPC supports the MPO staff in this category by providing population and employment projections and by reviewing land use and economic development plans. MAPC worked with the Office of Housing and Economic Development and the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to identify Priority Development Areas and Priority Preservation Areas in the region. MPO staff will use this information in project evaluations.

### ***Discussion***

Members discussed a graphic shown in the presentation that provided assumptions for two proposed scenarios – one that emphasizes capacity management using low-cost investments, and another that emphasizes high-cost highway infrastructure for reducing congestion.

One scenario takes an Operations and Management approach to improving capacity. It would emphasize Complete Streets projects (60%) as well as intersection improvement (15%), clean air (15%), and bicycle and pedestrian (10%) projects. The other, a High Capital Congestion Management scenario, would focus more heavily on major infrastructure, interchange modernization, and bottleneck improvement projects (80%) with smaller amounts to the other categories of intersection improvement (8%), Complete Streets (8%), bicycle and pedestrian (2%), and clean air (2%) projects.

The graphic showed the proposed breakdown of funding for each scenario by investment program and indicated goals that could be met through each investment program.

Dennis Giombetti, MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham), suggested that certain investment programs could meet more goals than were indicated in the graphic. For example, a project in the Bicycle Network/Pedestrian Connections program could address goals for economic vitality.

He then asked about the impact on a project's evaluation if it is in an investment program that does not address all the goals. A. McGahan replied that when developing the scenarios, an attempt would be made to select projects that address multiple goals.

Also referencing the graphic, John Romano, MassDOT Highway Division, noted that the goal for transportation equity should pertain to every investment program. A. McGahan stated that every individual project will be evaluated under transportation equity criteria and a regional environmental justice analysis will be conducted.

Some members suggested that more time would be needed to review the material being presented today. Tom Bent, Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville), recommended that the MPO have a meeting focused entirely on the LRTP.

K. Quackenbush noted that the members would have additional opportunities to interact with the material presented today. He clarified for members that staff hopes to get their consent today to engage in the next steps of the scenario planning. P. Wolfe added that the scenario planning exercise would be used to identify possible patterns of spending (across investment programs) rather than to select actual projects.

Returning to the points raised about the graphic, Rafael Mares, Conservation Law Foundation, expressed that breaking down investment programs by goals served may not be effective. He noted, for example, that projects in the Bicycle Network/Pedestrian Connections program could address every goal.

Steve Olanoff, Three Rivers Interlocal Council, expressed concern that the issue of freight is not referenced in the investment programs though it is an important factor in meeting the goals of economic vitality. K. Quackenbush assured members that the scenarios will be evaluated according to performance measures. So, even if there is not an explicit mention of freight in the investment programs, the issue will be addressed.

### ***Universe of Projects***

A. McGahan then discussed the second input to the scenario planning process, the Universe of Projects. Staff distributed the list of projects at the meeting of November 20. Some members subsequently requested that additional projects be added to the list. Staff is currently evaluating those projects based on how well they address each goal. Members were provided with a spreadsheet showing examples of project evaluations.

### ***Scenario Planning Concepts***

K. Quackenbush further discussed the concept of scenario planning noting that it is a process designed to show trade-offs and different ways of achieving goals. Staff has run the model on two scenarios: the No Build (which includes projects already programmed, under design, or in construction) and the Current LRTP (which includes the projects in *Paths to a Sustainable Region*). Staff is proposing to analyze the two new scenarios that staff presented today (the Operations and Management and High Capital Congestion Management scenarios). The four scenarios will allow for a comparison by performance metrics.

The discussion at the MPO meeting of November 20 guided staff in the conceptual development of the two proposed scenarios. The MPO advised staff to craft two scenarios that would shed light on the topic of Capacity Management. Specifically, the MPO asked staff to develop one scenario that emphasizes relatively low-cost operations and management-types of projects and programs, and a second scenario that emphasizes higher-cost congestion reduction-oriented roadway projects. Now staff is proposing two realistic scenarios that are financially constrained to revenue of \$2 billion (current dollars) of MPO target funding. The selection of projects for each scenario would be driven by congestion reduction needs identified in the Needs Assessment.

***Discussion***

D. Giombetti noted that the two new scenarios represent extreme situations and questioned whether they would be helpful, considering that the MPO will likely chose an option that is more in the middle ground. He suggested that it would be helpful to have another option, such as the Current LRTP scenario, which better represents a middle ground, to judge the other scenarios.

A. McGahan pointed out that the current LRTP has been over-programmed with major projects in the earlier time bands, leaving very little room for smaller projects. The MPO has heard from the public that they would like the MPO to take the approach of reserving funds through programs for smaller municipal projects.

K. Quackenbush added that the purpose of the scenarios is to view the outcomes of each scenario, based on performance measures, to see if they produce substantive differences as relates to the goals.

L. Dantas suggested that staff provide a similar breakdown of percentages by investment program for the Current LRTP scenario for comparison.

David Mohler, MassDOT, asked if staff could give members a sense of whether the Operations and Management scenario would remove many of the projects currently programmed in the LRTP. A. McGahan and K. Quackenbush confirmed that most of those projects would fall out in that scenario.

L. Dantas raised a concern about the use of Complete Streets terminology to describe a program that would contain a group of roadway reconstruction projects. A. McGahan clarified that staff would consider projects for this investment category that improve roadway operations, add sidewalks and bike lanes, address intersections, and that include transit.

L. Dantas asked why the assumptions for the two new scenarios do not include transit expansion and transit state-of-good-repair projects. K. Quackenbush reiterated that the intent is to use the two opposing scenarios to examine the policy question that emerged in the last meeting: whether the MPO ought to focus on operations and management activities to manage capacity or whether it ought to focus on high capital-cost congestion reduction projects. Other variables (such as transit) would be held constant so as not to confuse the analysis. Neither scenario is a reflection of the final decision the MPO would make in terms of project selection. L. Dantas suggested that the graphic table be revised to clarify either that the scenarios are roadway investment scenarios with transit held constant or to reference transit in another line item. A. McGahan added

that the scenarios could include lower cost transit projects, but that they would not include major transit expansion projects.

L. Dantas noted that the Needs Assessment points to dire system preservation needs for the transit system. He asked how the projects from the MBTA's PMT and CIP will feed into the LRTP considering the various timelines for finalizing these three plans.

A. McGahan noted that the PMT will not be ready in time to inform this LRTP, but the CIP will be ready. L. Dantas expressed concern that the LRTP would be serving only as a mechanism for programming MPO target funds, rather than serving as a complete representation of the region's transportation plan.

E. Bourassa pointed out that another piece of missing information is the amount of new state transportation dollars. He asked whether staff had federal guidance about the financial estimates used for the LRTP. A. McGahan and K. Quackenbush replied no. Staff is using the figure of \$2 billion, which represents the value programmed in the current LRTP in current dollars.

R. Mares expressed interest in other possible scenarios. K. Quackenbush noted that the two new proposed scenarios are intended to shed light on one particular policy question. Scenario planning, conducted at some later date, could be used to explore other policy questions as well.

J. Ramsay asked how staff developed the percentage breakdown for programs in each scenario. K. Quackenbush replied that staff looked at past programmed investments and used those historic allocations as base-case information and either expanded or reduced the amounts in order to develop a pair of scenarios that accentuated one or the other type of investment that the MPO expressed interest in having more information about.

David Mohler, MassDOT, asked about what is included in the \$2 billion figure and whether it includes the funding that the MPO flexed from highway to transit for the *Green Line Extension (from College Avenue to Route 16)* project. A. McGahan replied that it represents the MPO's target funding and its share of federal major infrastructure funding. The No Build scenario, she noted, includes projects that are advertised, under construction or in the first year of the TIP. Sean Pfalzer, MPO staff, added that staff used an estimate based on the current LRTP, which extends to the year 2035. Because the new plan will extend to 2040, staff did not have complete figures to work with. The estimate does not include the flexed funding for the *Green Line Extension*. Under the new proposed scenarios, then, the currently flexed (to transit) funds would be programmed for highway projects.

David Koses, At-Large City of Newton, pointed out that some major infrastructure projects are so costly that removing them from the scenario would free up a significant amount of money for smaller projects. He asked whether there would be enough smaller projects far enough along in the design process to fill those program investment categories. S. Pfalzer responded that if there were not enough of particular project types for spending now, then the funding in that category could be reserved for future TIP projects (not yet in design) throughout the life of the LRTP.

D. Mohler asked if when selecting projects based on the Needs Assessment, staff would be unconstrained by projects that are in the current LRTP (i.e. could an already programmed project be removed if it does not address an identified need).

K. Quackenbush replied that if a project does not meet an identified need, it would not be included in the scenarios. He emphasized, however, that the scenarios are hypothetical situations.

J. Romano asked what percentage of funds would be allocated to major infrastructure projects in the Current LRTP scenario. A. McGahan replied that between 40% and 60% (depending on the timeband) of funds would go to major infrastructure projects in that scenario. J. Romano suggested that a scenario that examines a different split between major infrastructure and other categories might avoid the concern about having two extreme scenarios. Richard Canale, At-Large Town of Lexington, suggested, however, that the results of the extreme scenarios could be beneficial in helping members come to a decision point about where on the spectrum they would like to be. This was affirmed by K. Quackenbush.

D. Mohler expressed concern that the proposed scenarios do not include transit as an option for reducing congestion. K. Quackenbush replied that the scenarios would contain smaller transit projects.

D. Mohler asked how staff would choose projects to include in the scenarios.

K. Quackenbush replied that staff would use their best judgment based on the needs of the system. He also emphasized the importance of focusing on the policy question at hand and keeping other variables constant.

R. Mares suggested that the scenarios could be organized on an issue basis around the MPO's goals, rather than based on the size of projects.

In response to a question from D. Mohler, K. Quackenbush discussed the idea that not all projects in the scenarios can be run through the regional travel demand model. Some portion of the analyses will be conducted off-model. Collective benefits will be determined based on project types. He confirmed that the Operations and Management

scenario would involve more off-model analysis while the High Capital Congestion Management scenario would include more large, high-cost projects that can be modeled.

T. Bent inquired about the cut-off for cost of projects in the Operations and Management scenario. A. McGahan replied that the cut-off is \$20 million.

If members approve of staff taking the next steps, staff would develop the scenarios further by associating projects in the investment programs with identified needs and preparing sets of projects to analyze. Staff would present the results of the four scenarios in graphical or tabular format with a geographic breakdown. The results could be completed by the MPO's second meeting in February.

J. Romano asked staff to present the results to members early so that they have time to review the information before the meeting.

Considering the upcoming change in administration, E. Bourassa asked whether MassDOT expects to have a sense in the spring of the finances available for the LRTP and the priorities for funding transit projects. D. Mohler explained that given the transition to the incoming administration and because revenues from the gas tax indexing (which was voted down in the November election) will no longer be available, MassDOT will be conducting an analysis to determine spending priorities. He noted that the loss of gas tax revenue will have an impact on the Commonwealth's ability to finance projects in the long term.

Members reached consensus to direct staff to go forward on the next steps for scenario planning.

D. Crowley asked if the MPO would be having a discussion about the weighting of the evaluation criteria for the TIP. K. Quackenbush stated that the MPO will have the opportunity to have that discussion this year when developing the TIP.

## **9. State Implementation Plan Update—*Sreelatha Allam, MassDOT***

Due to time considerations, the update on the projects in the State Implementation Plan (SIP) was waived.

## **10. Members Items**

There were none.



## **11. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (T. Bent), and seconded by the MassDOT Highway Division (J. Romano). The motion carried.

## Attendance

<b>Members</b>	<b>Representatives and Alternates</b>
At-Large City (City of Everett)	James Errickson
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	Laura Wiener
At-Large Town (Town of Lexington)	Richard Canale
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Tom Kadzis
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Clinton Bench
	David Mohler
	David Anderson
MassDOT Highway Division	John Romano
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	Janice Ramsey
Massachusetts Port Authority	Lourenço Dantas
MBTA Advisory Board	Paul Regan
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Bedford)	Roy Sorenson
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)	Aaron Clausen
North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn)	Tina Cassidy
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Mike Gowing
South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree)	Christine Stickney
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	Dennis Crowley
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC)	Tom O'Rourke

<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Sreelatha Allam	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Lee Auspitz	Somerville resident
Sarah Bradbury	MassDOT District 3
Pat FitzGibbon	Mass Realty Group
David Knowlton	City of Salem
Rafael Mares	Conservation Law Foundation

Brian Myers	AECOM
Steve Olanoff	Three Rivers Interlocal Council
Arthur Strang	Cambridge resident
Trey Wadsworth	MassDOT

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**MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff**

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Anne McGahan  
Elizabeth Moore  
Scott Peterson  
Natalie Raffol  
Sean Pfalzer  
Pam Wolfe

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