

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 15, 2018; **Revised January 10, 2019**
TO: Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
FROM: Certification Activities Staff
RE: Proposed Changes to Existing Vision, Goals, and Objectives

1 BACKGROUND

During each Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) development cycle, the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has the opportunity to review and revise its vision, and associated goals, and objectives. As part of developing the current LRTP, *Charting Progress to 2040*, the MPO used scenario planning to inform potential revisions to the vision, goals, and objectives. Specifically, as part of its Capacity Management and Mobility goal area (Section 4), the MPO used scenario planning to determine if it should give priority to a congestion-reduction program for major arterials and express highways, or if it should prioritize lower-cost multi-modal improvements. Scenario planning led the MPO to emphasize capacity management through low-cost improvements. Once the scenario planning was completed, the revised vision, goals, and objectives were adopted by the MPO as part of *Charting Progress to 2040* (adopted in 2015). This vision, goals, and objectives framework forms the basis of the criteria used in making investment decisions in the LRTP and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

During the past year, staff has been conducting outreach about the transportation needs in the MPO region for the next LRTP, *Destination 2040*. Staff has also been collecting and analyzing data through its studies, travel-demand modeling analyses, and performance-based planning and programming process (PBPP).

Staff found that most of the existing goals and objectives were broad enough to cover the topics and concerns identified via public input and analysis results. However, some changes did seem warranted in order to 1) align the objectives with the roles and responsibilities of the MPO better, 2) incorporate additional feedback heard during outreach, and 3) incorporate new planning requirements. Based on the public's input, the Transportation Equity goal (Section 5) contains the most changes.

This memorandum cites the MPO's current goals and objectives, potential revisions, and the rationale for proposed revisions. The existing vision and goals are shown in *italics*, and the proposed revisions are shown in **bold**. The objectives are listed in their own tables, with the proposed revisions shown in **bold**, along with staff's rationale for the proposed revisions. An additional column was included in Table 3, for the Capacity Management and Mobility Goal, so that staff and the MPO could review the objectives by mode to determine if all areas were being addressed; this could lead to a change in the order of the listed objectives.

Staff requests that the MPO provide feedback on these proposed revisions at its meeting on November 15, 2018. Staff will use this feedback, including ideas collected at subsequent discussions, to develop revised MPO vision, goals, and objectives, and then seek MPO approval to release these for public review and comment.

Existing Vision:

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization envisions a modern transportation system that is safe, uses new technologies, and provides equitable access, excellent mobility, and varied transportation options—in support of a sustainable, healthy, livable, and economically vibrant region.

Proposed Changes:

*The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization envisions a modern, **well-maintained** transportation system that supports a sustainable, healthy, livable, and economically vibrant region. To achieve this vision, the transportation system must be ~~safe~~ **and**, resilient; incorporate emerging technologies; and provide equitable access, excellent mobility, and varied transportation options. ~~in support of a sustainable, healthy, livable, and economically vibrant region.~~*

The existing vision incorporates themes from all of the goal areas. Staff proposes the revisions above to emphasize that the system preservation goal includes a well-maintained and resilient transportation system. It also includes editorial revisions. Staff edited the proposed vision again to achieve greater clarity.

2 SAFETY GOAL AREA

Staff found that the existing Safety goal and objectives were broad enough to cover the topic areas and concerns identified through public input and analysis results. The proposed revisions to the objectives outlined in Table 1 are designed to incorporate additional types of safety events besides crashes, and to align the objectives with the roles and responsibilities of the MPO better, which are focused on capital investment as opposed to operations.

2.1 Existing and Proposed Goal

Existing Goal: Transportation by all modes will be safe

Proposed Changes: No changes

2.2 Existing and Proposed Objectives

**Table 1
Safety Objectives**

| Existing Objective | Proposed Objective | Rationale |
|---|---|---|
| Reduce number and severity of crashes, all modes | Reduce the number and severity of crashes and safety incidents for all modes | Change is more inclusive of transit system safety events that are not crashes |
| Reduce serious injuries and fatalities from transportation | Same | N/A |
| Protect transportation customers and employees from safety and security threats | Make investments and support initiatives that help protect transportation customers, employees, and the public from safety and security threats | Focuses on the MPO’s role, capital investment, rather than operations |

MPO = Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization. N/A = Not applicable or available.

3 SYSTEM PRESERVATION GOAL AREA

Staff found that the existing System Preservation goal and its objectives were broad enough to cover the topics and concerns identified through public input and analysis. However, staff proposes to incorporate modernization into the System Preservation Goal statement. Proposed revisions to the objectives are restructured to include broader objectives in three categories—maintenance, modernization, and resiliency. With that change, staff also requests the MPO’s feedback on potentially changing the goal name from System Preservation to System Preservation **and Modernization**.

Although resiliency is included in one of the existing objectives, staff also proposes to include resiliency in the System Preservation goal statement. Addressing climate change remains a priority for the MPO and has become a core goal of the Commonwealth. Feedback from public outreach also indicated the importance of creating a resilient transportation network to mitigate climate change and maintain existing sidewalks.

3.1 Existing and Proposed Goal

- **Existing Goal:** *Maintain the transportation system*
- **Proposed Changes:** *Maintain and modernize the transportation system and plan for its resiliency*

3.2 Existing and Proposed Objectives

Table 2
System Preservation and Modernization Objectives

| Existing Objective | Proposed Objective | Rationale |
|---|--|--|
| Improve condition of on- and off-system bridges | Maintain the transportation system, including roadway, transit, and active transportation infrastructure, in a state-of-good repair | Creates a broader goal to include the infrastructure previously identified in existing objective – bridges, pavement, and transit; but also to include sidewalks (identified as a need in public outreach) |
| Improve pavement conditions on MassDOT-monitored roadway system | Delete | This objective would be included in the first objective |
| Maintain and modernize capital assets, including transit assets, throughout the system | Modernize transportation infrastructure across all modes | Focuses on modernization, reducing overlap with objective above, which focuses on maintenance; this modernization objective could address obsolete assets and incorporate new technologies into existing systems |
| Prioritize projects that support planned response capability to existing or future extreme conditions (sea level rise, flooding, and other natural and security-related man-made impacts) | Same | N/A |

MassDOT = Massachusetts Department of Transportation. N/A = Not applicable or available.

4 CAPACITY MANAGEMENT AND MOBILITY GOAL AREA

As a result of outreach and analysis, staff believed that while the Capacity Management and Mobility goal requires little modification, the objectives required some re-arrangement and minor modifications. Staff believes that many of the region’s needs are covered under the existing goals and objectives.

The recommended revision to the existing goal to “increase transportation options” reflects analysis as well as public input that the MPO should promote transit, walking, and biking while attempting to support congestion mitigation. It should also remain flexible in the face of emerging technologies and mobility paradigms such as Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (C/AVs) and Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) such as Uber and Lyft.

In addition, the MPO must respond to a wide variety of federal performance metrics, as well as values and mandates that derive from state-level legislation. The updates to the Capacity Management and Mobility goals and objectives are intended to capture public input and new MPO commitments, as well as to align the objectives better with the MPO’s role in the transportation planning process.

4.1 Existing and Proposed Goal

- **Existing Goal:** *Use existing facility capacity more efficiently and increase healthy transportation capacity*
- **Proposed Changes:** *Use existing facility capacity more efficiently and increase transportation **options***

4.2 Existing and Proposed Objectives

As mentioned earlier, Table 3 contains an additional column to allow the MPO and staff to review the objectives by mode to determine if all areas are being addressed. This could lead to a change in the order of the listed objectives.

**Table 3
Capacity Management and Mobility Objectives**

| Mode | Existing Objective | Proposed Objective | Rationale |
|---------|--|--|--|
| | | | Accessibility of transportation modes, especially new/ emerging modes, is a major concern for many in MPO region (learned from outreach). |
| All | Improve access to/ accessibility of transit and active transportation modes | Improve access to and accessibility of all modes, especially transit and active transportation | Accessibility objectives are also included in the transportation equity and economic vitality goal areas |
| Roadway | Implement roadway management/ operations strategies, constructing improvements to bicycle/ pedestrian network, and supporting community-based transportation | Support implementation of roadway management and operations strategies to improve travel reliability, mitigate congestion, and support non-single-occupant vehicle travel options | Focuses text on MPO’s role (capital investment rather than management/ operations). Also incorporates reliability objectives of federal PBPP |
| Roadway | Emphasize capacity management through low-cost investments; prioritize projects that focus on lower-cost operations/ management-type improvements such as intersection improvements, | Emphasize capacity management through low-cost investments; prioritize projects that focus on lower-cost operations/ management-type improvements such as intersection improvements, | Links roadway objective to transit reliability objective by including transit priority as a low-cost improvement concept |

| Mode | Existing Objective | Proposed Objective | Rationale |
|---------------------------|--|--|---|
| | Complete Streets solutions | transit priority , and Complete Streets solutions | |
| Transit | Improve reliability of transit | Same | N/A |
| Transit | Increase percentage of population and employment within one-quarter mile of transit stations and stops | Same | N/A |
| Transit/ Accessibility | Support community-based and private-initiative services and programs to meet last-mile, reverse commute, and other non-traditional transit/ transportation needs, including those of people 75 years old or older and people with a disability | Support community-based and private-initiative services and programs to meet first/last-mile , reverse commute, and other non-traditional transit/ transportation needs, including those of people 75 years old or older and people with a disability | Corrects term to include first- as part of the first/last-mile service |
| Transit/ Parking | Increase automobile and bicycle parking capacity and usage at transit stations | Support strategies to better manage automobile and bicycle parking capacity and usage at transit stations | Qualifies language to suggest MPO wants to support concepts like remote parking shuttles/ empty lot leases rather than constructing new spots |
| Bicycle /Pedestrian | Create connected network of bicycle and accessible sidewalk facilities (both regionally and in neighborhoods) by expanding existing facilities and closing gaps | Fund improvements to bicycle/ pedestrian networks aimed at creating a connected network of bicycle and accessible sidewalk facilities (both regionally and in neighborhoods) by expanding existing facilities and closing gaps | Focuses text on MPO's role of funding capital investments |
| Bicycle | Increase percentage of population and places of employment with access to bicycle facilities | Increase percentage of population and places of employment with access to facilities on the bicycle network | Links to the previous objective and clarifies that bicycle facilities are most valuable when connected in a network |
| Freight | Eliminate bottlenecks on freight network | Eliminate bottlenecks on freight network/ improve freight reliability | Incorporates freight reliability objectives of federal PBPP |
| Freight/ Intermodal | Enhance intermodal connections | Enhance freight intermodal connections | Specifies freight intermodal connection |

N/A = Not applicable or available. MPO = Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization. PBPP = Performance-based planning and programming process.

5 TRANSPORTATION EQUITY GOAL AREA

The proposed changes to the goals and objectives for Transportation Equity reflect

- Public input and analyses documented in the Needs Assessment
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Title VI, environmental justice (EJ), and other nondiscrimination guidance
- Consideration of all equity populations¹ in all aspects of the MPO's planning and decision-making process beyond people who identify as minority or are members of low-income households

The changes would tie the equity goal more closely with the other MPO goals, recognizing that equity is integral to all MPO activities. To that end, the MPO also considers the impacts of its investments on equity populations in the context of the other goal areas, even if they are not stated as objectives—for example, this could include analyzing the safety impacts on equity populations.

Because of themes that have emerged as part of the Needs Assessment, staff is proposing to add two new objectives—improved accessibility for people with a disability and investments to support transportation needs of the elderly (people 75 years old or older) and youth (people 17 years old or younger) populations in the region. While transportation needs of the elderly and youth populations, and people with a disability, are encompassed in other objectives, their prominence in the Needs Assessment suggests that they deserve particular attention. For the elderly population, specifically, the proportion of the region's population that is 75 years or older is projected to increase.

The existing goal and objectives have been refined to focus on the potential impacts—whether benefits or burdens—of MPO investments on equity populations. This change reflects the MPO's recent and planned work that examines the potential benefits and burdens associated with MPO investments. In addition, the objective related to public outreach has been removed because the goals and objectives are concerned with transportation system outcomes, rather than the MPO's planning processes. This change in no way reflects the MPO's commitment to ensuring that all people have meaningful opportunities to be engaged in MPO activities. Instead, this commitment will be described in detail in a revised MPO Public Participation Plan, and documented in the public outreach process for the LRTP, *Destination 2040*.

¹ "Equity populations" are populations that are protected by Title VI, EJ, or other nondiscrimination mandates: people who identify as minority, have limited English proficiency, are 75 years old or older or 17 years old or younger, or have a disability; or are members of low-income households.

The changes to the existing goal and objectives will also bring them into alignment with guidance from FHWA and FTA by clarifying which equity populations are covered and by expanding the populations that are covered to include all equity populations, per federal guidance. The current goal and objectives refer only to minority and low-income populations, whereas FTA and FHWA recommend including all populations protected by federal mandates throughout the entire MPO planning process.

5.1 Existing and Proposed Goal

- **Existing Goal:** *Provide comparable transportation access and service quality among communities, regardless of income level or minority population*
- **Proposed Changes:** *Ensure that all people receive comparable benefits from, and are not disproportionately burdened by, MPO investments, regardless of race, color, national origin, age, income, ability, or sex*

5.2 Existing and Proposed Objectives

**Table 4
Transportation Equity Objectives**

| Existing Objective | Proposed Objective | Rationale |
|---|--|--|
| Target investments to areas that benefit high percentage of low-income and minority populations | Prioritize MPO investments that benefit Ensure that all equity populations* receive benefits comparable to those received by non-equity populations from MPO investments | Focuses on effects of transportation on people, rather than on where people live; people who live near a project may not necessarily benefit from it. Also, the populations covered by this objective are expanded to include all equity populations, as recommended by federal guidance |
| Minimize any burdens associated with MPO-funded projects in low-income/ minority areas | Minimize potential harmful environmental, health, and safety effects of MPO-funded projects for all equity populations* | States types of impacts that will be addressed, which relate directly to other MPO goal areas. Also, the populations covered by this objective are expanded to include all equity populations, as recommended by federal guidance |
| Break down barriers to participating in MPO-decision making | Delete | Because goals/ objectives relate to transportation system outcomes, this and other process-oriented objectives will be described in future revisions to MPO's Public Participation Plan and included in public-outreach chapter of <i>Destination 2040</i> |

| Existing Objective | Proposed Objective | Rationale |
|--------------------|--|---|
| N/A | Promote investments that support transportation for all ages (age-friendly communities) | A new objective based on results of the needs assessment; transportation needs of youth and elderly populations emerged as a major theme |
| N/A | Promote investments that are accessible to all people regardless of ability | A new objective based on results of the needs assessment; ensuring that all people have access to transportation regardless of ability emerged as a major theme |

*Equity populations include people who identify as minority, have limited English proficiency, are 75 years old or older or 17 years old or younger, or have a disability; or are members of low-income households. N/A = Not applicable or available. MPO = Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization.

6 CLEAN AIR/CLEAN COMMUNITIES GOAL AREA

Staff proposes to change the name of the goal area from Clean Air/Clean Communities to Clean Air/~~Green or Sustainable~~ Communities, as "~~Green or Sustainable~~ Communities" could include more types of environmental initiatives. Staff proposes changes to the objectives so as to include other regional and state plans and policies that are being implemented in the region regarding climate change.

6.1 Existing and Proposed Goals

- *Existing Goal: Create an environmentally friendly transportation system*
- *Proposed Changes: No changes*

6.2 Existing and Proposed Objectives

**Table 5
Clean Air/~~Green or Sustainable~~ Communities Objectives**

| Existing Objective | Proposed Objective | Rationale |
|---|---|---|
| Reduce GHG emissions generated in Boston region by all transportation modes as outlined in the GWSA | Reduce greenhouse gases generated in Boston region by all transportation modes | Change makes reduction of GHG emissions broader than those addressed in the GWSA; this would cover all work undertaken in the region and Commonwealth |
| Reduce other transportation-related pollutants | Same | N/A |
| Minimize negative environmental impacts of the transportation system | Same | N/A |
| Support land use policies consistent with smart and healthy growth | Support land use policies consistent with smart, healthy, and resilient growth | Change includes "resilient" to refer to clean energy policies |

GHG = Greenhouse gas. GWSA = Global Warming Solutions Act. N/A = Not applicable or available.

7 ECONOMIC VITALITY GOAL AREA

After conducting analysis and outreach concerning the region’s needs, staff found that the majority of concerns were addressed in the existing Economic Vitality goal and objectives. However, staff proposes a change to one objective based on public input regarding the workforce population. This should be inclusive of all populations. A second change incorporates freight as an important part of targeted development.

7.1 Existing and Proposed Goals

- **Existing Goal:** *Ensure our transportation network provides a strong foundation for economic vitality*
- **Proposed Changes:** *No changes*

7.2 Existing and Proposed Objectives

**Table 6
Economic Vitality Objectives**

| Existing Objective | Proposed Objective | Rationale |
|--|---|---|
| Respond to mobility needs of 25–34-year-old workforce | Respond to mobility needs of the workforce population | Objective should address mobility needs of all populations in the workforce including older adults, youth, persons with disabilities, and equity populations; not just the 25–34-year-old age group. |
| Minimize burden of housing/transportation costs for residents in the region | Same | N/A |
| Prioritize transportation investments that serve targeted development sites | Prioritize transportation investments that serve residential, commercial, and logistics targeted development sites and “Priority Places” identified in MBTA’s Focus 40 plan | This identifies types of targeted development to include freight as an important part of economic activity. <u>Included “Priority Places” based on a comment received during the public comment period.</u> |
| Prioritize transportation investments consistent with compact-growth strategies of MetroFuture | Prioritize transportation investments consistent with compact-growth strategies of the regional land-use plan MetroFuture | <u>Changed MetroFuture to “the regional land-use plan” since this plan is currently being updated as MetroCommon 2050.</u> |

N/A = Not applicable or available.