

# Memorandum for the Record

## Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

### May 19, 2016 Meeting

10:05 AM – 1:35 PM, State Transportation Building, Conference Rooms 2&3, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA

David Mohler, Chair, representing Stephanie Pollack, Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

### Decisions

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) agreed to the following:

- approve the work programs for the *MBTA 2017 Triennial Title VI Report* and the *MBTA SFY 2017 National Transit Database: Data Collection and Analysis*
- approve Amendment Three to the FFYs 2016-20 TIP, as presented today

### Meeting Agenda

#### 1. Public Comments

Members of the public made comments on the following projects and addressed questions from the MPO board members.

##### ***Reconstruction of Main Street (Route 30) (Southborough)***

State Representative Carolyn Dykema spoke in support of the *Reconstruction of Main Street (Route 30) (Southborough)* project. She requested that the MPO keep the project programmed on the TIP, moving the project one year ahead to the FFY 2018 element. This would give the town more time to conduct community outreach and build support for the project. She noted that a local citizens group has been established for outreach to the community and address concerns, and that the project is important for public safety including the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians.

Representative Dykema was joined by Southborough Selectmen John Rooney and Paul Cimino, and Karen Galligan of the Southborough Department of Public Works.

J. Rooney reported that the Town of Southborough is committed to the project and that the town is planning to hold a special town meeting in the fall to vote on easements. He is confident that the town will secure the required two-thirds vote in favor at that time. A prior vote on this matter at a town meeting in April garnered a majority vote in favor, but not two-thirds.

K. Galligan also discussed outreach underway to gain support for the project. She noted that programming of the project in FFY 2018 would allow for the issue regarding easements to be resolved.

***Reconstruction and Widening on Route 18 (Main Street) (Weymouth, Abington)***

A representative for State Senator John Keenan spoke in support of the *Reconstruction and Widening on Route 18 (Main Street) (Weymouth, Abington)* project. He discussed the importance of the project, noting that it is a key component supporting the economic and housing growth occurring in Abington and Weymouth, including the Southfield development at the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station.

Owen MacDonald, Traffic Engineer for the Town of Weymouth, spoke on behalf of Weymouth Mayor Robert Hedlund and noted that the project will improve safety, mobility, and air quality, and support economic development in the region. The Mayor has submitted a letter of support for the project to the MPO.

Tom Bent, Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville), asked whether the communities have discussed the possibility of value capture to address the substantial increase in the project cost. The Senator's representative offered to get back to the MPO members regarding this question.

Peter Forman, President of the South Shore Chamber of Commerce (SSCC), spoke in support of the *Route 18* project. He discussed the need to keep the project on pace to support the housing and commercial development occurring on the South Shore. He noted that Route 18 serves the largest of the transit-oriented development (TOD) projects on the south shore, Southfield, and that supporting TOD enhances state priorities. He also discussed the issue of value capture noting that there will be value capture from the build-out of the area around the roadway. He also remarked on the SSCC's support for a proposed public-private partnership for the widening of Route 3.

Matthew Barry, LStar, spoke about his firm's work to develop Southfield. LStar took over the redevelopment project last year. Over the past year, the firm engaged with the towns of Weymouth, Abington, and Rockland to understand their priorities and worked with them to re-envision zoning plans and to solve problems regarding water and sewer infrastructure. Weymouth and Rockland have since unanimously approved revisions to their zoning. LStar has also engaged with environmental groups to address their concerns. As a result, the environmental aspects of the Southfield design include the preservation of over 1,000 acres of open space with 50 miles of hiking and biking trails. The development will also support access to the commuter rail. M. Barry also noted that

Southfield has gained its first large commercial tenant and the development is expected to be significant economic agent for the South Shore.

Marc Draisen, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), addressed several questions to P. Forman and M. Barry. First, he inquired about the nature of the zoning changes in the land use programs for Weymouth and Rockland. M. Barry noted that a primary goal is to provide economic benefits to the towns. One change from the previous zoning plan was to shift zoning for dense commercial development to where roadways can support that development. Previously, high-traffic roadways were zoned for single-family residences. LStar is planning for dense housing within a half mile, or walking distance, of the commuter rail station. Also, a planned golf course in the previous design would now be open space with wildlife habitat.

M. Draisen asked if there were any changes to the planned amount of affordable housing. M. Barry noted that the percentage of affordable housing would remain at 10%, in accordance with state law. P. Forman added that the cost of housing at Southfield may be more expensive relative to surrounding suburban areas, but likely more affordable compared to the overheated Boston housing market. Southfield will provide some relief to the Boston housing market.

Melissa Santucci Rozzi, South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree), asked for more information about the planned water and sewer improvements and whether those improvements would support the full build-out of the master plan. M. Barry indicated that LStar's plan would be expected to support the build-out. He explained that the previous developer planned for an on-site wastewater treatment plant. LStar, however, has discussed partnering with the Town of Weymouth to invest over time in the municipal sewer system. LStar is also working with the SSCC, the surrounding towns, and the MWRA to advance a water solution. He noted that the capacity of the MWRA far exceeds the capacity of an on-site facility.

T. Bent inquired how much LStar is investing in the community (besides the costs of developing Southfield). M. Barry noted that LStar will be paying tens of millions of dollars in host community fees to the towns, and the firm is proposing over \$20 million in water and sewer upgrades.

Dennis Crowley, South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway), asked about the additional tax revenue that could be generated after the build-out. M. Barry replied that economic analyses were conducted for all three towns. For the Town of Weymouth, property tax revenue is expected to increase by \$50 million with \$18 million in municipal services costs incurred by the town. The property tax in Rockland is

expected to increase by \$18 million with \$8 million in municipal services costs. Both estimates were verified by peer review. The estimates for Rockland are \$8.5 million in property taxes and \$2 million in municipal services costs. The Rockland figures have not yet been peer reviewed. The municipal services costs include the impact on schools.

Dennis Giombetti, MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham), asked if there have been municipal investments in the roadway project. M. Barry offered to find out the answer the question.

The Chair noted that State Representative Ronald Mariano sent in a letter of support for the *Route 18* project.

### ***Intersection Improvement Projects in Norwood***

Mark Ryan, Director of the Norwood Department of Public Works, spoke in support of two projects on the First-Tier List of TIP Highway Projects. He reported that the *Intersection Improvements at Route 1A and Upland Road / Washington Street, and Prospect Street / Fulton Street* project is the town's priority and provided information about the project. The highway is a major regional commuter route with safety issues. Vanasse Hangen Brustlin is the design engineer for the project. The project will be at the 75% design phase in July. The 100% design plans are expected to be submitted to MassDOT by mid-2017. The project could be ready for construction in FFY 2018.

M. Ryan then stated that the *Intersection Improvements at Route 1 and University Avenue / Everett Street* project is also considered an important project by the town. He noted that in 1998 CTPS recognized this heavily travelled intersection as in need of upgrades. MassDOT has approved the preferred design alternative and the 25% design plans are expected to be submitted to MassDOT soon. The 100% design plans are expected to be submitted in FFY 2017. The project could be ready for construction in FFY 2018.

William J. Buckley, Jr., Chief of Staff for State Representative John Rogers, spoke on behalf of Representative Rogers regarding both the *Route 1A* and *Route 1* projects. Representative Rogers has had numerous conversations with constituents who have grave concerns about safety on these roadways. Economic and residential development in the area has led to high levels of congestion and the *Route 1A* rotary is the scene of many crashes. (Representative Rogers also lent support to the *Canton Interchange Project* and the *Reconstruction on Route 1A* in Walpole project. Those comments are noted in sections below.)

Timothy Kochan, MassDOT District 5, expressed support for both of the intersection projects. (His full comments are recorded under the MassDOT District 5 Priorities heading below.)

***Canton Interchange Project***

W. Buckley expressed Representative Rogers strong support to the *Canton Interchange Project at Interstates 95 and 93 and University Avenue (Canton, Dedham, Norwood, Westwood)*. He noted that the project will benefit the region. He remarked on the large amount of traffic in the area generated from the University Station development and the high number of crashes that occur at the location.

***Reconstruction on Route 1A (Main Street), from the Norwood Town Line to Route 27 (Walpole)***

Jim Johnson, Walpole's Town Administrator, requested the MPO's continued support for the *Reconstruction on Route 1A (Walpole)* project. He noted that the project has been vying for TIP funding since 1997. The 75% design plans are under review by MassDOT. In November 2010 the Walpole Board of Selectmen voted for a discontinuance of the roadway. When the project is complete the state would be relieved of maintaining part of this roadway. He also noted that the roadway improvements will benefit an agricultural high school and businesses in the area. He requested that the MPO move the project forward to the FFY 2019 element of the TIP, if possible, but not to move it any later than FFY 2020, the year in which it is currently programmed.

W. Buckley expressed Representative Rogers support for the *Route 1A* project. He joins State Senator James Timilty, and Representatives Paul McMurtry, Louis Kafka, and Shawn Dooley in advocating for this safety project.

Timothy Kochan, MassDOT District 5, expressed support for the project. (His full comments are recorded under the MassDOT District 5 Priorities heading below.)

***Reconstruction of Atlantic Avenue (Hull)***

Philip Lemnios, Hull's Town Manager, spoke in regards to the *Reconstruction of Atlantic Avenue (Hull)* project. He was joined by John Morgan, CHA Consulting, the project engineer. P. Lemnios expressed frustration that, despite continued support for the project from various agencies, the project has not yet been scheduled for construction. He discussed the importance of the project as the roadway connects to Nantasket Beach Reservation, the largest of the Department of Conservation and Recreation's reservations on the South Shore. Also, he noted that the project design will benefit the adjacent Straits Pond, an Area of Critical Environmental Concern, which is currently

fouled by overwash from the ocean. He informed members that the residents of Hull made a significant commitment of \$3.5 million for a seawall there. Considering that the roadway serves a large recreational site, the community commitment to improving the area, and the environmental benefits of the project, he urged the MPO to schedule the project on the TIP.

T. Bent inquired about the total project cost. P. Lemnios explained that the roadway reconstruction and seawall projects cost about \$6 million each. The Town of Hull is contributing about 40% of the \$12 million investment.

Christopher Blackler, East Boston resident and member of the Chinatown Coalition and others groups, expressed support for the *Atlantic Avenue* project. (He also voiced support for a Framingham project as noted below.)

Timothy Kochan, MassDOT District 5, expressed support for the project. (His full comments are recorded under the MassDOT District 5 Priorities heading below.)

***Reconstruction of Union Avenue (Framingham)***

Bob Halpin, Framingham's Town Manager, spoke in support of the *Reconstruction of Union Avenue (Framingham)* project. He discussed the importance of this "complete streets" project to Framingham and the MetroWest region. Last fall the town rezoned downtown Framingham to promote high-density, multi-family development and create a walkable environment around the commuter rail station. This project supports that effort by accommodating the flow of traffic and supporting bicycle and pedestrian vitality.

Erika Oliver Jerram, Framingham's Deputy Director of Community and Economic Development, further discussed the importance of the project for the improvements it will make for safety and because the roadway is a key gateway to the downtown area, where there has been significant investment. She noted that the roadway serves a police station, the MetroWest Medical Center, an environmental justice community, and a large recreational facility. Also three MWRTA bus routes run on the corridor.

Eric Johnson, Framingham's Town Engineer, also noted that the roadway is a gateway to downtown Framingham and an asset to the surrounding areas. He explained that this project, combined with other MassDOT projects in the area and another project planned by the town, will make improvements to this continuous corridor, which provides access to jobs. He reported that the town is preparing for this project by making a \$14 million investment in infrastructure improvements to the water, sewer, and drainage systems, and by removing concrete under the roadway from former trolley line. The project will include safety improvements and "complete streets" components including the installation of dedicated bicycle lanes, and geometric and signalization improvements at

four intersections. There have been a high number of crashes in the project area involving vehicles as well as bicyclists and pedestrians.

D. Crowley asked if the town plans to spend the \$14 million appropriated for infrastructure improvements before the MPO investment would be spent for the roadway improvements. E. Johnson replied that the town plans to spend the infrastructure improvement funds by 2020.

C. Blackler expressed support for the project.

***New Boston Street over MBTA, Bridge Replacement (Woburn)***

Tina Cassidy, North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn), spoke on behalf of Mayor Scott Galvin in support of the *New Boston Street Bridge (Woburn)* project. She discussed the project's importance to the City of Woburn as the bridge will reconnect two areas (about 250- 300 acres of land) that are ripe for development and redevelopment. The sites are currently separated by a railroad. Connecting the roadway and pedestrian network will potentially create a significant economic development engine. She noted that the cost increase to the project is, in part, a result of the cost inflation that would occur if the project were moved from its current year of programming in FFY 2020 to FFY 2021, as proposed. While the city would like to see the project programmed earlier than FFY 2021, the city understands the need to be flexible and accept the proposed year of programming.

Bob Penfield, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., addressed the \$6 million increase in the project's cost. The updated cost estimate follows the resubmittal of the project design plans. The new cost estimate includes approximately \$2 million for utility upgrades, \$1.35 million for "complete streets" upgrades that would add sidewalks to the bridge (these requirements were not in place when the project was originally designed), and other costs such as costs for mobilization and administration. (A fact sheet on the project was distributed to members with details.)

***Reconstruction of Route 27, from North Avenue to the Wayland Town Line (Natick)***

Geoff Lewis, Town of Natick, spoke in support of the *Reconstruction of Route 27 (Natick)* project. He explained that the project cost has been reduced by about \$1.5 million from the preliminary estimate because the town is addressing intersections and drainage issues outside of this project budget. No cost increases are expected (barring the cost of inflation if the project is programmed in a later year by the MPO). The town is expecting to submit 25% design plans to MassDOT in June. He asked that the MPO keep the project programmed in the FFY 2019 element of the TIP.

Lourenço Dantas, Manager of Certification Activities, MPO staff, asked for more information about the relationship between this project and the bridge replacement project on Route 27 over Route 9. G. Lewis explained that the town is working to make sure the two projects work well together by coordinating with property owners, MassDOT, and project engineers. He stated that the projects could be programmed sequentially on the TIP in either order.

***Ferry Boat (Winthrop)***

Joe Domelowicz, Town of Winthrop, requested an amendment to the FFY 2016 element of the TIP to reprogram \$89,000 in ferry boat discretionary funding for capital improvements to a ferry boat the town has purchased. Winthrop's ferry service began in April, and the service is building toward sustainable ridership. The town has made a significant investment of over \$300,000 for the vessel and operating costs. Funding from the MPO will help improve safety and functionality of the vessel.

***Reconstruction on Route 126 (Ashland)***

Yolanda Greaves, Ashland Board of Selectmen, provided an update on the *Reconstruction on Route 126 (Ashland)* project. She reported that the town recently voted for an economic development stabilization fund as a means for the community to put money aside for projects, such as this one. The town is holding a public forum on June 14 to allow residents to view the 25% design plans for the project. She noted that the project would bring economic development benefits to Ashland and benefit people from surrounding communities. She requested that the MPO keep the project programmed in the FFY 2020 element of the TIP and noted that the project cost would remain stable by keeping it programmed in that year.

***MassDOT District 5 Priorities***

Timothy Kochan, MassDOT District 5, spoke in support of several projects in the District 5 region. His comments are summarized below.

The *Intersection Improvements at Route 1 and University Avenue/Everett Street (Norwood)* project will address problems related to safety, congestion, and the lack of multimodal accommodation. The project scored well in both the MPO's project evaluation process and the MassDOT Project Selection Advisory Council's (PSAC) evaluation process. The 25% design plans are due shortly.

The *Improvements at Route 1A and Upland Road/Washington Street/Prospect Street/Fulton Street (Norwood)* project will address problems related to safety, configuration of the roadway at approaches to the intersection, and the lack of multimodal accommodation. The project is at the 25% design phase and the 75%

design plans are forthcoming. District 5 recommends programming the project in the FFY 2018 element of the TIP.

The *Reconstruction of Route 1A (Walpole)* project is at the 75% design stage. District 5 recommends programming the project in the new TIP.

District 5 also supports the programming of the *Reconstruction of Atlantic Avenue (Hull)* project in the new TIP. District 5 has worked closely with the Town of Hull to develop the project. The town has committed significant financial resources for the design of the roadway and seawall projects. The roadway is in dire need of multimodal accommodations. Both recreational and economic development benefits will derive from the project. The project is at the 75% design stage. District 5 would like to see the project programmed in the new TIP.

## **2. Chair's Report—David Mohler, MassDOT**

D. Mohler reported that MassDOT's Draft Capital Investment Plan will be the subject of a joint meeting of the MassDOT Board of Directors and the MBTA Fiscal and Management Control Board on May 25.

He also reported that on May 9 the joint board voted to proceed with negotiations with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) on the risk analysis and budget for the *Green Line Extension* project.

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

Jay Monty, At-Large City of Everett, announced that a meeting of the MPO's Congestion Management Committee is scheduled for June 16.

## **4. Regional Transportation Advisory Council Report—Mark Sanborn, Advisory Council Vice Chair**

There was no report.

## **5. Executive Director's Report—Karl Quackenbush, MPO Executive Director**

K. Quackenbush reported that the MPO's Administration and Finance Committee will meet at 9:00 AM on June 16, prior to the MPO meeting. The Committee will address the approval of the budget for the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS).

## **6. Work Programs—Karl Quackenbush, MPO Executive Director**

K. Quackenbush introduced two work programs: the *MBTA 2017 Triennial Title VI Report* and the *MBTA SFY 2017 National Transit Database: Data Collection and*

*Analysis.* Both work programs represent work that CTPS conducts regularly under contract with the MBTA.

He provided an overview of work program for the *MBTA 2017 Triennial Title VI Report*. Through this work program, CTPS staff will assist the MBTA with its reporting to the FTA in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. As a recipient of federal funds, the MBTA must demonstrate that it provides a comparable level and quality of transportation service to all customers without regard to race, color, or national origin. CTPS staff assists the MBTA each year by collecting and analyzing data. This work program supports the development of a report that must be submitted every three years.

### ***Discussion***

M. Draisen asked if policy recommendations are included in the Triennial Report or if the report is limited to a technical analysis. K. Quackenbush explained that the report is a technical analysis that could lead to conclusions about whether there are disparate impacts associated with MBTA services. He noted that it is within the purview of CTPS staff to notify the MBTA of issues identified from the analyses. Further, he explained that FTA used the report to make recommendations to the MBTA about addressing identified issues. CTPS conducts this work under contract with the MBTA, so the recommendations are not discussed at the MPO table. K. Quackenbush noted that it may be useful for the MPO members to see the most recent Triennial Report.

### ***Motions***

A motion to approve work program for the *MBTA 2017 Triennial Title VI Report* was made by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (T. Bent), and seconded by the MAPC (M. Draisen). The motion carried.

A motion to approve the work program for the *MBTA SFY 2017 National Transit Database: Data Collection and Analysis* was made by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (T. Bent), and seconded by the MAPC (M. Draisen). The motion carried.

## **7. Federal Fiscal Years 2016-20 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment Three—*Lourenço Dantas, Manager of Certification Activities Group, MPO Staff***

L. Dantas summarized the contents of the Draft Amendment Three to the FFYs 2016-20 TIP, which was released for a 30-day public review period in April. The original draft of the amendment included adjustments to the transit program to add funding for several MBTA capital priorities and additional highway program funding for ferry capital and operating projects. Since the release of the amendment, revisions were made to strike

funding for the *Winthrop Commuter Ferry* and the *Lynn Commuter Ferry* projects because the projects are ineligible to receive Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ) funding.

During the public review period, the MPO received one comment letter from State Senator Thomas McGee. Senator McGee acknowledged that the two ferry projects were deemed ineligible for CMAQ funding and requested that the MPO use monies from another funding category to keep the projects programmed in the TIP.

### ***Discussion***

M. Draisen asked for more detail about the revision to the amendment. L. Dantas explained that funding for the Winthrop and Lynn Commuter Ferries would have drawn from the statewide CMAQ funding source rather than MPO discretionary funds. To be eligible to receive CMAQ funds, a project must demonstrate air quality improvements. The analysis on these two projects occurred after the amendment was released for public review; the analysis determined that the projects did not meet certain criteria for air quality benefits. Thus, the projects are not eligible for this source of funds.

M. Draisen asked whether other funds have been identified for the ferry projects. D. Mohler explained that no other state highway funding sources are available for the ferries' operating costs; however, the state is continuing to look for state funds to pay for the operating costs. He noted that the MPO has the option to put federal transit funds toward those projects. That option, however, would reduce funding to the regional transit authorities (RTAs) in the region.

M. Draisen asked whether the CMAQ funds that would have been programmed for the ferry projects are being applied to other projects. D. Mohler stated that the funds will be removed from the MPO's TIP. It is not clear now where the funds would be spent. As statewide funds they could be programmed in the Boston Region or other regions of the state.

M. Draisen asked if the matter has been discussed with Senator McGee and whether the project proponents are aware of the action being taken by the MPO today.

D. Mohler expressed confidence that the affected communities and their legislative delegations are aware that the projects are ineligible for CMAQ funding and that the MPO would be taking a vote today.

D. Crowley inquired about the removal of a line item for the *MBTA Systems Upgrades* program. D. Mohler explained that the funds are not being removed; rather the MBTA line items are being better defined with more specificity for ease of tracking.

***Motion***

A motion to approve Amendment Three to the FFYs 2016-20 TIP, as presented today, was made by the MassDOT Highway Division (John Romano), and seconded by the Advisory Council (M. Sanborn). The motion carried.

**8. Meeting Minutes—Maureen Kelly, MPO Staff**

This item was deferred.

**9. FFY 2017 Unified Planning Work Program Development:  
Committee Recommendation—Bryan Pounds, MassDOT, and  
Alexandra Kleyman, MPO Staff**

B. Pounds introduced the FFY 2017 Unified Planning Work Program UPWP. The UPWP lists the transportation studies and tasks to be completed in the coming year.

The UPWP fulfills several functions: supporting the MPO's collaborative decision-making processes; collecting data about the transportation system; analyzing the needs of various transportation user groups to improve or complement the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Needs Assessment; conducting studies and making technical recommendations for improving the transportation system; and conducting research to help the MPO anticipate trends and conditions that shape the transportation landscape. The recommendations from completed UPWP studies are used to guide future MPO policies and investment decisions.

This UPWP lists studies that will be completed by the staff of CTPS and MAPC on behalf of the MPO, MassDOT, the MBTA, and the Massachusetts Port Authority. It also contains information about other regionally significant transportation studies performed by agencies, municipalities, and academic institutions in the region. The work funded through the UPWP falls into three main categories: work on the MPO's certification requirements process; ongoing work programs; and new studies.

The MPO's UPWP Committee makes recommendations about new studies and the UPWP budget. For this UPWP cycle, the MPO met five times since February during which time the committee discussed new discrete projects and reviewed the Universe of Projects. The committee prioritized projects using a survey, and staff prepared a recommendation with projects ranked in a first and second tier. On March 31, the committee selected eight new discrete projects for the new UPWP. On April 28, the committee voted on the new projects and entire UPWP budget. Public outreach will be underway from May through July.

A. Kleyman then gave a detailed overview of the proposed FFY 2017 UPWP. She provided two handouts: a budget and a summary of new discrete studies and ongoing programs.

There are two main funding sources for UPWP work: federal 3C planning funds and non-3C planning funds. The 3C funds are provided by FHWA and FTA and require a state match. Each year the MPO receives about \$5 million in 3C funds with about 80% going to CTPS and 20% to MAPC. The non-3C funds come from contracts from other agencies or organizations.

For FFY 2017, CTPS expects to receive nearly \$4.2 million for 3C funded activities and MAPC can expect \$1 million. About \$2.6 million is expected in agency-funded work. The total UPWP budget is \$7.79 million.

The UPWP Committee is recommending that the MPO fund the following new studies and technical analyses, which would be conducted by CTPS:

- *Safety Effectiveness of Safe Routes to Schools Programs*: This study will investigate the safety effectiveness of Safe Routes to Schools Programs in one school in each subregion.
- *Study of Promising GHG-Reduction Strategies*: This study builds on a prior MPO greenhouse gas reduction study to identify specific promising strategies that the MPO could implement.
- *Addressing Safety, Mobility, and Access on Subregional Priority Roadways*: This study will develop recommendation for improving roadways – identified from public outreach – with a “complete streets” approach.
- *Low-Cost Improvements to Express-Highway Bottleneck Locations*: This study selects bottleneck locations and identifies low-cost solutions to increase safety, reduce congestion, and improve traffic operations.
- *Addressing Priority Corridors from the LRTP Needs Assessment*: This study develops recommendations for addressing safety on corridors identified through the LRTP Needs Assessment.
- *Planning for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles*: This research project will help the MPO understand the overarching planning and policy issues related to autonomous vehicles.
- *Using GTFS to Find Shared Segments with Excessively Irregular Headways*: This study would use existing bus schedule data to identify places where buses have irregular headways, why they exist, and whether schedule changes could improve the operation of the bus routes.

- *MPO Staff-Generated Research Topics*: This line item allows for staff members to pursue a research topic related to metropolitan transportation planning that is not covered by a currently funded project or program.

The committee is also recommending one ongoing study, the *UPWP Study Recommendation Tracking Database*, which will track the implementation status of recommendations from completed UPWP studies.

The schedule going forward has the MPO voting to release a draft UPWP for public review on June 2; holding a 30-day public review period; and voting to endorse the final document on July 28.

#### **10. FFY 2017-21 Transportation Improvement Program Development: First-Tier List of Projects and Programming Scenarios—*Lourenço Dantas, Manager of Certification Activities Group, MPO Staff***

The discussion about the FFY 2017-21 TIP began with a presentation about the *Reconstruction and Widening on Route 18 (Main Street) (Weymouth, Abington)* project. After, members discussed the TIP programming scenarios.

##### ***Route 18 Presentation***

David Anderson, MassDOT, began by discussing the challenges concerning estimating project costs in the current bidding environment where construction bids are generally coming in higher than office estimates. MassDOT's Highway Division has been conducting independent estimate reviews on already advertised projects to gain a better understanding of the bidding environment so that more reliable office estimates can be developed going forward.

By national standards, 50% of bids that open should fall within 10% plus or minus of the range of the project cost estimate. D. Anderson discussed the steps MassDOT Highway Division is taking to get their estimates closer to meet that national standard and aspects of project cost estimation that remain challenging. In the case of the *Route 18* project, for example, there are risk factors associated with the portion of the project involving construction of a bridge over a railroad that requires coordination with the railroad operator and utilities.

Lawrence Cash, MassDOT's project manager for the *Route 18* project, and Brian Ackerly, Tetra Tech, then gave a presentation on the project and discussed reasons for the cost increase to the project.

B. Ackerly began by discussing the scope of the project. The project addresses over four miles of Route 18. It will widen the roadway from one lane in each direction to two

lanes in each direction and replace a bridge. There will be five-foot shoulders and sidewalks on each side of the roadway. The project also involves three traffic signal reconstructions, staging construction for utility pole movement, and mitigation for impacts to wetlands.

L. Cash discussed changes to the project design. The 75% design plans for the project reflected a previous design for the bridge replacement portion of the project. The bridge plan was revised based on concerns from the Town of Weymouth regarding the impacts of a temporary bridge on residents. The new plan will involve a “bridge slide,” in which the superstructure of the new bridge will rest on temporary supports while new abutments are constructed at the permanent bridge location. When those abutments are ready, the superstructure will be shifted into place at its permanent location. This solution will add some cost, but also reduce right-of-way impacts and construction time.

He noted that bid prices have increased dramatically in recent months. The 100% design plans are reflective of those increases. Due to the type of bridge construction and time constraints (the railroad will shut down for a weekend while the bridge slide occurs), MassDOT plans to offer incentive-based goals to the contractors which could increase the project cost up to \$3 million. The project also includes a 10% design contingency as a buffer for unexpected costs that may arise between the design submission and the time the project is advertised.

L. Cash showed a comparison of costs estimates between the 75% and 100% design plans that were submitted in 2013 and 2016, respectively. The total cost estimate was \$46.5 million in 2013 and \$61.5 million in 2016. The new estimate (\$81.8 million) reflects a design contingency, contractors’ incentives, police for traffic management, railroad flaggers, force accounts, and non-participating costs for drainage and water main work.

B. Ackerly provided more detail about the costs increases between the 75% and 100% plans. There were additional costs for earthwork, drainage, traffic management, the new bridge design, and other design revisions. These additional costs are due, in part, to double digit inflation and the need to account for risk as the project becomes more defined.

### ***Discussion***

M. Draisen asked for more information about the change to the bridge portion of the project. L. Cash explained that the decision to change the bridge plan was an outcome of a public hearing where the public voiced concern about the original plan, which would have placed a temporary bridge close to residents’ homes for 18 months to two years.

He further described the bridge slide project. The slide will require a temporary closure of the railroad. The new bridge in its permanent location will be a wider structure than the original bridge.

M. Draisen asked why flagger costs have increased between the 75% and 100% design. D. Anderson indicated that these estimates are developed in coordination with the railroad operators. He further discussed that MassDOT is working on ways to develop better cost estimates.

D. Giombetti asked for more information about incentives for contractors. D. Anderson explained that the basic concept involves calculating the inconvenience to the public and administrative costs to MassDOT Highway Division for project activities, and establishing milestones based on that information. Each day contractors complete tasks earlier than the milestone they are compensated, and each day they exceed the milestone their compensation is reduced. Federal guidance states that an incentive program should not exceed 5% of the total project cost.

D. Giombetti suggested that there should be a discussion about reducing the project's cost. He noted that the cost overruns on this project are resulting in delays to other TIP projects, which adds costs to them. He raised the idea of the MPO funding the project at a lesser level.

The MassDOT Highway Division staff had indicated that there were no major savings identified in a value engineering study conducted for the project. D. Mohler stated that MassDOT would not be able to reduce the scope of the project to find savings. He expressed concern that if the MPO were to fund the project at a reduced level and the municipal proponents were unable to make up the balance, then the project could not be advertised and the MPO would have unobligated federal funds in this TIP.

D. Crowley asked for the original cost of the project when it was first programmed on the TIP. The project was first programmed on the TIP in 2012, when it was at the 25% design stage, with a cost estimate of \$41 million. The cost estimate is now \$81.8 million, as programmed from FFY 2016 to FFY 2019.

D. Crowley pointed out that there is a relatively small municipal contribution to this project (\$400,000); he noted that municipalities can benefit in revenue resulting from roadway improvements. He also expressed concern that other TIP projects will be delayed because of the Route 18 cost overruns. D. Mohler reported that the design, engineering, and right-of-way acquisition was paid for by MassDOT, as Route 18 is a state-owned, regional roadway. He noted that the MPO will have to have a policy

discussion about municipal contributions to projects. Any such policy would have to be applied equally and fairly across projects.

J. Monty raised the possibility of phasing the project. D. Mohler discussed that the project is at the 100% design phase and that it was designed as a single phase project. He noted that MassDOT is working hard to advertise the project this fiscal year and if there are changes at this point, the project may have to be delayed to FFY 2017. In that case, the MPO would have to find other ready projects to program in its place in FFY 2016.

John Romano, MassDOT Highway Division, stated that in developing a policy regarding municipal contributions to projects, the MPO must allow time for public review. He expressed support for programming the full amount of the *Route 18* project in this TIP and credited the project team for their innovative solutions to the public's concerns about the traffic and noise impacts from the project.

D. Crowley stated that the *Route 18* cost overrun issues brings to the forefront the need for the MPO to establish a policy regarding municipal contributions to projects going forward. D. Mohler and J. Romano indicated that MassDOT is considering a state policy on this topic as well.

D. Giombetti noted that the Town of Framingham is investing \$14 million in infrastructure improvements in advance of the *Reconstruction of Union Avenue* project. He suggested that such contributions should be considered as the MPO develops a policy.

T. Bent spoke from the perspective of the City of Somerville, which was asked to contribute to the *Green Line Extension* project after the project was approved. Noting that no other community should go through what Somerville when though, he stated that the policy will have to provide predictability for municipalities and developers so that they know what they are committing to upfront. He suggested that the MPO encourage the discussion of a statewide policy regarding municipal contributions.

M. Draisen also supported the idea of an MPO policy concerning municipal and private contributions to projects. He also suggested that the MPO coordinate with MassDOT concerning a statewide policy. He noted that it is difficult to ask municipalities for contributions for project cost overruns that are beyond their control. Rather, there should be analysis conducted up front to determine what would be appropriate contributions from municipalities and private parties. Regardless, he said, the MPO will still have to determine how to deal with project cost overruns. He remarked on the severe cutbacks to the design of the *Green Line Extension*, and suggested these

actions should not be focused only on transit projects, but that reducing costs on highway projects should be considered as well. He suggested the MPO also consider another policy issue regarding the use of unspent contingency funds that are built into project budgets. He expressed his appreciation to D. Anderson and his staff for their work on the project cost estimate issue.

D. Crowley suggested that the MPO start the dialogue about a policy concerning municipal and private contributions to projects. Members then discussed doing so after the TIP is released for public review.

D. Giombetti inquired about the policy MassDOT is developing regarding municipal and private contributions. D. Mohler explained that the agency's policy would apply to the projects for which MassDOT is responsible. The MPO's policy should be consistent with MassDOT's.

### ***TIP Programming Scenarios***

L. Dantas presented members with TIP tables showing four scenarios for programming highway projects in the FFYs 2017-21 TIP. The scenarios are not staff recommendations, rather they illustrate possible options for addressing cost overruns on projects programmed in the current, FFYs 2016-20 TIP, and delays to the advertisement of projects. In preparing the scenarios, staff maintained the commitment to programming projects currently in the FFYs 2016-20 TIP, and used a 4% inflation factor when advancing projects to future years.

Major differences in the scenarios include the following:

- The *Reconstruction of Route 30 (Southborough)* project was not included in Scenario 1A, but the project was programmed in the FFY 2018 element in Scenarios 1B, 2A, and 2B.
- Scenarios 2A and 2B would maintain initial funding for the \$128 million *Reconstruction of Rutherford Avenue (Boston)* project in the TIP with \$7 million programmed in FFY 2020 and \$20 million in FFY 2021, and the remainder to be programmed in future TIPs.

L. Dantas also discussed the implications decisions on the TIP could have for the LRTP. Removal from the TIP of any project that is programmed on the LRTP would require an amendment to the LRTP and analyses to determine if the change would have impacts to air quality or environmental justice.

### ***Discussion***

T. Bent suggested that the standard 4% inflation factor applied to projects may not be high enough. L. Dantas noted that members could elect to use a different inflation factor if allowable by FHWA.

Regarding Scenarios 2A and 2B, D. Mohler noted that the MPO would, if taking this option, need to commit larger amounts of funding to *Rutherford Avenue* in future annual TIP elements beyond FFY 2021. The construction timeline would require the MPO would have to commit \$40 million or more in TIP annual elements in subsequent years for the \$128 million project. L. Dantas added that, in the years requiring those larger financial commitments to the project, there would be few funds available for other projects, as shown in Scenarios 2A and 2B.

D. Giombetti expressed a preference for Scenario 1B for the several reasons. The option maintains projects programmed in the current TIP; provides flexibility regarding the *Reconstruction of Route 30* to allow the Town of Southborough time to make the project ready; allows new projects to be programmed in FFY 2021; and preserves the *Rutherford Avenue* project. T. O'Rourke also expressed a preference for Scenario 1B, noting that the scenario captures the comments heard about the projects.

D. Mohler pointed out that Scenario 1B proposes to move the *Rutherford Avenue* project forward one year to begin in FFY 2021 in order to program two other new projects in its place in FFY 2020. He expressed concern about treating this project differently than others and not providing a second year funding commitment. He suggested that the MPO should decide whether it will support the *Rutherford Avenue* project or not. L. Dantas noted that, of the projects being considered for programming, the *Rutherford Avenue* project has the least amount of design information available. As such, staff thought it logical to move the project forward one year to provide more time for the design to advance.

Lara Mérida, Boston Redevelopment Authority, spoke about the City of Boston's commitment to the *Rutherford Avenue* project and reported that the city is working with the state and community to advance the project design. She noted that the project will have a large economic impact for Boston and surrounding areas, and that it addresses a regional issue.

Jim Fitzgerald, Boston Redevelopment Authority, suggested exploring another programming option to use the \$15.3 million earmark funds for the project at an earlier time to reduce the amount of MPO target funds required in this TIP. He noted that the project is near the 25% design phase.

Members further discussed the programming options for the *Rutherford Avenue* project. D. Giombetti suggested the possibility of using some earmark funds in FFY 2021 to reduce the amount of target funds applied to the project in that element; this could free target funds for another project to be programmed in that annual element.

D. Mohler announced that MassDOT is exploring options to help MPOs pay for some project cost overruns with statewide funding sources. More information will be forthcoming.

### **11. State Implementation Plan Update—*Bryan Pounds, MassDOT***

This item was postponed.

### **12. Members Items**

There were none.

### **13. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (P. Regan) and seconded by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (T. Bent). The motion carried.

## Attendance

<b>Members</b>	<b>Representatives and Alternates</b>
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Jay Monty
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Lexington)	Richard Canale
City of Boston (Boston Redevelopment Authority)	Lara Mérida
	Jim Fitzgerald
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	David Mohler
	David Anderson
	Marie Rose
MassDOT Highway Division	John Romano
Massachusetts Port Authority	Laura Gilmore
	O'Connor
MBTA Advisory Board	Micha Gensler
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Marc Draisen
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Bedford)	Adrienne St. John
North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn)	Tina Cassidy
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Mark Sanborn
South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree)	Melissa Santucci
	Rozzi
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	Dennis Crowley
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce)	Tom O'Rourke

<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Jess Aptowitz	Office of State Senator James Timilty
Matthew Barry	LStar
Christopher Blackler	East Boston resident
Sarah Bradbury	MassDOT District 3
William J. Buckley, Jr.	Office of State Representative John Rogers
Lawrence Cash	MassDOT Highway Division

Paul Cimino	Southborough Board of Selectmen
Joe Domelowicz	Town of Winthrop
Carolyn Dykema	State Representative
Peter Forman	South Shore Chamber of Commerce
Karen Galligan	Town of Southborough
Yolanda Greaves	Ashland Board of Selectmen
Bob Halpin	Tow of Framingham
Erika Oliver Jerram	Town of Framingham
Eric Johnson	Town of Framingham
Jim Johnson	Town of Walpole
Representative for John Kennan	State Senator
Timothy Kochan	MassDOT District 5
Stephen Krall	LStar
Phil Lemnios	Town of Hull
Geoff Lewis	Town of Natick
Rafael Mares	Conservation Law Foundation
Owen MacDonald	Town of Weymouth
David Manugian	Town of Ashland
Tom McShane	Dewey Square Group
Richard Merson	Needham Department of Public Works
John Morgan	CHA Companies
Steve Olanoff	Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood)
Bob Penfield	Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
Bryan Pounds	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Rajithe Pruietta	Ashland Department of Public Works
John Rooney	Southborough Board of Selectmen
Mark Ryan	Town of Norwood
Ellie Spring	Office of State Representative Denise Garlick
Mike Stanley	TransitX
Steve Woelfel	MassDOT

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**MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff**

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Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director

Robin Mannion, Deputy Executive Director

Scott Peterson, Director of Technical Services

Lourenço Dantas

David Fargen

Maureen Kelly

Alexandra Kleyman

Jennifer Rowe

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