

MPO Meeting Minutes

Draft Memorandum for the Record

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

April 16, 2020, Meeting

10:00 AM–12:30 PM, Zoom Conference Call

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 minutes of the March 5, 2020, and March 19, 2020, MPO meetings
- Approve the work program for the MPO's freight program: *Freight Planning Support: Federal Fiscal Year 2020*
- Approve the work program for the *Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Bus Shelter Maps*

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

See the attendance list on page 24.

2. Chair's Report—David Mohler, MassDOT

There was none.

3. Executive Director's Report—Tegin Teich, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff

T. Teich reviewed the MPO voting procedures. T. Teich shared that despite the COVID-19 situation, the MPO staff's outreach is continuing. T. Teich presented at the Somerville Bike Committee's "Bike Talk" on April 15, 2020. At that virtual event, T. Teich discussed the MPO, regional transportation planning goals, and the allocation of capital planning dollars. T. Teich also discussed how the MPO supports bicycle infrastructure and bicycle planning in the region. There were approximately 50 attendees and she thanked the MPO members who attended. T. Teich shared that she had her first experience of "Zoombombing." Staff continue to work on preventing "Zoombombing" for future outreach events.

T. Teich briefly discussed the upcoming work program presentations. Andrew Clark (MPO staff) would present an update on the *Operating a Successful Shuttle* study to keep MPO members engaged in the study. MPO members were invited to provide input early rather than only at the scoping stage and in response to the final report. T. Teich shared that Matt Genova (MPO Staff) would provide a recap on TIP decisions made at the previous MPO board meeting. MPO members voted to release the current FFYs 2020-24 TIP Amendment Three for review, which addressed cost increases and changes in the current approved TIP. This also required an LRTP amendment, which was released for public review. The draft FFYs 2021-25 will be voted out for public comment at the end of April and endorsed in late May.

T. Teich stated that John Bechard (MassDOT Highway Division), Samantha Silverberg, (MBTA) and Joy Glynn (MetroWest Regional Transit Authority) would update members on their organizations' parallel capital planning and project selection processes. When MPO members approve the TIP, they will be approving the allocation of MPO Regional Target funds and all federal dollars allocated to those agencies for capital projects. T. Teich stated that representatives from the Cape Ann Transit Authority (CATA) were not able to attend and present. A memorandum was submitted describing CATA's capital planning process, which was [posted to the MPO Meeting Calendar](#).

4. Public Comments

Tom Michelman (President, Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail) advocated for the inclusion of project #608164 (Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Phase 2D) in the FFYs 2021-25 TIP. T. Michelman thanked the MPO for increasing the amount allocated.

Brad Rawson (Director of Mobility, City of Somerville) was unable to provide his public comment on behalf of Mayor Joe Curtatone due to audio issues. The comment was later provided by Tom Bent (Inner Core Committee) (City of Somerville) after J. Bechard's presentation.

5. Committee Chairs' Reports

There were none.

6. Regional Transportation Advisory Council Report—*Lenard Diggins, Chair, Regional Transportation Advisory Council*

L. Diggins shared that the Advisory Council hosted their first virtual meeting and that most of the committee was happy with the format. There was some concern about security issues when using Zoom. L. Diggins stated that as long as the MPO is comfortable with Zoom, the Advisory Council would continue to use it for monthly meetings. At the meeting, M. Genova discussed the TIP with members. L. Diggins

stated that the Advisory Council members feel more included in the process and have more ability to comment on the program.

7. Action Item: Approval of March 5, 2020, and March 19, 2020, MPO Meeting Minutes—Kate White and Ariel Patterson, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [March 5, 2020, MPO Meeting Minutes](#)
2. [March 19, 2020, MPO Meeting Minutes](#)

Vote

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 5, 2020, was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) (Eric Bourassa) and seconded by the North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) (Tina Cassidy). The motion carried.

Discussion

Tom Kadzis (Boston Transportation Department) made a suggestion to correct his statement on page 11 of the March 19, 2020, MPO meeting minutes and change the text in the third paragraph to read, “Tom Kadzis agrees, with regards to the Ferry Street project cost increase...”

Vote

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 19, 2020, was made by the MAPC (Eric Bourassa) and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (Brian Kane). John Romano (MassDOT Highway Division) and Jennifer Constable (South Shore Coalition) (Town of Rockland) abstained. The motion carried.

8. Action Item: Work Scope for the MPO Freight Program—Bill Kuttner, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [Work Program: FFY 2020 Freight Planning Support](#)

B. Kuttner presented a work program for about \$57,000 for specific work under the MPO’s freight program. The MPO staff receives requests from state and federal partners, for example, to help with the statewide freight plan and to serve on truck safety working groups. The freight program funds this work and also develops freight data configured for use in the Boston Region MPO’s travel demand model. Each year, staff also conducts a freight study.

Work this year will focus on the connection of the South Boston Bypass Road, a Critical Urban Freight Corridor (CUFC), with the Southeast Expressway. B. Kuttner stated that in the previous year, he had done a Freight Action Plan update, and this was one of the ideas that came out of the plan. The product of the study will be a technical memo in which B. Kuttner will address what types of trucks use the bypass road and their destinations. He will also study truck traffic generated by the nearby Widett Circle food distribution center.

B. Kuttner stated that there are several vehicle flows that merge on the bypass road and not all are from the Southeast Expressway. There is also a serious queue in the southbound direction during the PM period. Staff will analyze how the queue affects truck movements as well as how trucks affect the queue. B. Kuttner started collecting data in February 2020 when business activity was gradually declining. B. Kuttner examined the data and made a determination that the data collected is still useful for the purposes of this study. In the memo, he will include a section describing his analysis and how truck traffic has changed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Discussion

Ken Miller (Federal Highway Administration) stressed the importance of this freight work, especially during the pandemic. K. Miller mentioned two new flexibilities that FHWA is allowing for state departments of transportation as regards permitting of trucking: (1) more permitting on overweight trucks and (2) allowing food trucks in rest areas to provide food for truck drivers.

Bill Conroy (Boston Transportation Department) thanked B. Kuttner for his work and asked if he will analyze any potential lane imbalance. B. Kuttner responded that he will collect data on the lanes but will not provide solutions at this time. B. Conroy asked if the study will include elements from B. Kuttner's 2012 Southeast Expressway plan. B. Kuttner stated that the earlier report will be referenced in the study.

L. Diggins asked how B. Kuttner will conduct the counts and how many days he will sample. B. Kuttner responded that he has done the counts in person to be able to count trucks with hazardous cargo placards, refrigerated trucks, and trucks with special configurations, such as construction vehicles. B. Kuttner shared that he counted in twelve locations. He broke the days into three hour sections and counted for 45 minutes at a time, usually twice in each three-hour period. The sampling of days began in February and ended on March 30, 2020. L. Diggins asked if B. Kuttner could use technology to sample the areas more times over multiple days. B. Kuttner responded that the samples are quite consistent and he does not think it is necessary to count through the whole period on multiple days in the same location.

Jim Fitzgerald (Boston Planning and Development Agency) conveyed his strong support for this work. J. Fitzgerald stated that there are many Boston planning efforts that will benefit from this work. The Plan Newmarket process is launching and, on the other side of the highway, the City of Boston is working on the Plan Dot (Dorchester) Ave transportation efforts. The City of Boston is also involved in the ongoing update to the Ray Flynn Marine Park master plan.

Vote

A motion to approve the work program for *Freight Planning Support: Federal Fiscal Year 2020* was made by the MAPC (Eric Bourassa) and seconded by the North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) (Tina Cassidy). The motion carried.

9. Action Item: Work Scope for the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Bus Shelter Maps—Ken Dumas, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [Work Program: MBTA Bus Shelter Maps](#)

K. Dumas presented the work program for the creation of route specific maps for MBTA bus shelters. Currently, most of the MBTA bus shelters are managed by two vendors; JCDecaux is responsible for all the bus shelters in the City of Boston and Cemusa manages the shelters outside the City of Boston. All of these shelters currently contain MBTA customer service information that is outdated and inconsistent between the two vendors. As part of a program to improve the overall customer experience, the MBTA is updating and replacing all of this information. The MBTA has asked CTPS to create route specific maps for each shelter. These maps will include all the bus routes that can be access at each shelter location.

To begin, the MBTA is focusing on several key bus routes as well as several routes that have very high ridership. Previously, CTPS produced the MBTA System Map and this map will serve as the base map for all the bus shelter maps. CTPS will be windowing out sections of this map with desired routes and each of these routes will be highlighted. CTPS plans to create 150 to 160 possible maps. The total budget for this project is \$24,863 and should take three months to complete.

Discussion

Brian Kane (MBTA Advisory Board) expressed strong support for this project and stated that the customer focus is critical.

D. Amstutz asked about the size of the maps. K. Dumas responded that the space allotted is the same size for all the shelters, 30 inches by 40 inches, but JCDecaux's

holders are landscape style and Cemusa's holders are portrait style. All the maps that K. Dumas will make will be 30 inches by 30 inches and will be able to fit in either vendor's bus shelters. The map will show all routes and a "You are Here" location where the bus shelter is located.

David Koses (City of Newton) asked if the route specific maps could be created and posted on shelters not owned by the MBTA. D. Koses stated that bus shelters located in Newton Corner are privately owned shelters. It is a busy area with many bus routes. K. Dumas responded that it is possible. He is not responsible for the project as a whole but offered to talk offline to see how Newton could collaborate with the MBTA.

L. Diggins asked for clarification about to what extent MPO members can comment on the nature of the project and changes that they would like to see. D. Mohler responded that, as an MPO member, they are approving the use of CTPS's staff, capabilities, and equipment. MPO members have the authority to comment on the scope and suggest changes. If the client does not like the changes, the MPO would be left with the choice of approving the scope without the changes or disapproving the scope, in which case the work would not get done by CTPS.

Vote

A motion to approve the work program for the *MBTA Bus Shelter Maps* was made by the MAPC (Eric Bourassa) and seconded by the North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) (Tina Cassidy). The motion carried.

10. Update on Successful Shuttle Program—Andrew Clark, MPO Staff

A. Clark presented an update on the *Operating a Successful Shuttle Program Study*. This project was approved in December 2019, and the primary goal is to develop a guidebook for planning and operating a successful shuttle program. Staff hope that the guidebook will be useful for staff of existing programs and for municipalities interested in starting new programs. The MPO's Community Connections Program can offer Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funding as seed money for new programs.

The work involves two tasks:

- A review of national literature and best practices
- A series of interviews with shuttle providers from the Boston region

The purpose of the interviews was to understand the background of each program, significant challenges the providers faced, and how those challenges were addressed. Staff also asked each provider for advice they had for other organizations and helpful information that should be included in the guidebook.

In addition to interviewing shuttle providers, MPO staff interviewed staff at MassMobility and MassDOT's Rail and Transit Division to understand collaboration and funding options that are available to shuttle providers, as well as common challenges and opportunities from the perspectives of their agencies.

From these conversations, supplemented with national best practices, staff have identified the major topics that the guidebook will discuss. A. Clark added that staff are open to feedback on these topics because they want to ensure that the focus of the guidebook is as useful and relevant to the board and the region's municipalities as possible. The topics include the following:

- **Goals:** Clear and measurable goals are an important way to frame success, to guide decision-making, and to ensure continued buy-in from stakeholders. The guidebook will discuss how to develop goals, ensure goals are relevant and effective, and incorporate stakeholder feedback.
- **Service design:** Providers consistently requested that the guidebook contain a "Transit Planning 101" set of resources. Some of the specific items people are interested in learning more about include the following: how to define a service area; the tradeoffs between "coverage" and "ridership" systems; how and when to utilize fixed-route, flexible-route, and demand-responsive formats; and how to estimate ridership, design routes, design schedules, and survey riders.
- **Performance measurement:** Providers asked for the guidebook to contain information about tracking performance, selecting measures to track, interpreting data, and using the results to improve service. The guidebook will also discuss how tracking data can help tell the story of a successful system.
- **Funding:** Securing funding was an ongoing challenge for a number of the providers. The guide will contain information about available funding sources, how to make the case for funding, and how to secure long-term funding stability.
- **Branding and marketing:** Providers often cited branding and marketing as a challenge, typically due to a lack of staff and financial resources. The guidebook will make note of the options available to providers and highlight a few best examples.
- **Coordination:** The guidebook will discuss how coordination opens up opportunities to use existing resources more efficiently, and other good benefits heard in interviews.

A. Clark stated that coordination dovetails with the MPO's newly formed Transit Working Group that brings providers, municipal leaders, and other stakeholders together to discuss important transit issues in the region.

Discussion

Sheila Page (Town of Lexington) thanked A. Clark for doing this project, and stated that the Towns of Lexington and Bedford are looking forward to this guidebook and are happy to help in this effort.

D. Amstutz stated that regionality is an important element of coordination. The Town of Arlington is not a very large community, and if the Town was to consider a shuttle, it would probably be on a scale that crosses municipal boundaries. D. Amstutz suggested including the topic of cross-municipality coordination in the guidebook.

D. Koses stated that this guidebook sounds helpful and suggested including points about specific pitfalls to avoid. He asked if A. Clark had interviewed providers that tried to operate a system that was unsuccessful. A. Clark responded that the model for this guidebook is similar to the CTPS Transit Signal Priority guidebook and will include an array of tips that will address pitfalls.

Susan Barrett (Transportation Program Manager, Town of Lexington) asked if staff will include a section on best practices during the COVID-19 situation. S. Barrett stated that many providers are having to rethink their services, which makes it a good time to reconsider that coordination aspect. A. Clark stated that he is not sure if staff have the capacity to adapt the guidebook to the COVID-19 issue. The pandemic is a rapidly evolving situation and the transit providers are responding to it with many different strategies. Because the guidebook content is drawn from the interviews, the staff is going to focus on that content. A. Clark stated that he is not sure that this is the product that staff should use to address that issue, although the transit industry's response to COVID-19 is incredibly important.

A member of the public asked about the timeline for the publication and distribution of the guidebook. A. Clark stated that staff plan to complete the study by September 2020.

11. Summary of the Decisions Made at the March 26, 2020, MPO Meeting—Matt Genova, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [FFYs 2021-25 Transportation Improvement Program: Final Programming Scenario](#)

M. Genova began the presentation by stating that there were a few people who wanted to make comments and he opened the floor to them. Due to technical difficulties, B. Rawson's comment was read into the record later in the meeting. M. Genova read a comment submitted by Anne Anderson (Resident of Acton).

A. Anderson's comment stated that the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail has seen incredibly high use during the COVID-19 restrictions showing how important it is for community, recreation, and transportation. Phase 2D through Sudbury will be a significant extension of the existing trail bringing it within reach of many more people as well as giving people with existing access to the trail a more extended network. A. Anderson stated that she and her husband regularly use the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail in Acton, Chelmsford, and Concord. Having a smooth surface without traffic is so important for older residents, she added. They use the trail for recreation and for access to shopping. The trail also allows families with young children to walk or bicycle safely.

M. Genova stated that, for his presentation, he would recap the key TIP programming decisions that were made at the March 26, 2020, MPO meeting to make sure that all members understood the contents of the draft TIP that will come before the MPO for a vote at the April 30, 2020, MPO meeting.

For the FFY 2020 annual element of the TIP, the draft programming scenario retains all of the cost and schedule changes outlined in the scenario presented at the March 19, 2020, MPO meeting, but also includes the \$8.4 million cost increase for project #607652 (Reconstruction of Ferry Street in Everett). The MPO elected to cover this cost increase by splitting funding for the project over two years in FFYs 2021 and 2022.

The programming for FFY 2021 is also largely the same as what was presented at the March 26, 2020, MPO meeting. Instead of moving project #606453 (Improvements on Boylston Street in Boston) into FFY 2022, which was originally recommended, this project is now moved into FFY 2023 due to the financial constraints that now exist in FFY 2022 resulting from the cost increase to project #607652.

For FFY 2022, the main change is that \$8.4 million in additional funding for project #607652 is now included. No other significant changes were made in this year.

M. Genova stated that in addition to the changes proposed in the scenario at the last meeting, FFY 2023 now includes funding for project #606453, which means that project #608007 (Corridor Improvements and Related Work on Justice Cushing Highway [Route 3A] from Beechwood Street to Henry Turner Bailey Road in Cohasset and Scituate) is now programmed in FFY 2024. Though this project is on schedule, the MPO decided that it is a good candidate to be delayed because of both its low project evaluation score and its comparable price point to project #606453 that is now programmed in FFY 2023.

In FFY 2024, project #608007 is now reprogrammed from FFY 2023. Additionally, the MPO elected to move project #609257 (Rehabilitation of Beacham Street, from Route

99 to Chelsea City Line in Everett) from FFY2024 to FFY 2025 to restore the financial balance in FFY 2024.

The FFY 2025 element is the new year of funding available in this TIP cycle. This element includes funding for the highest-scoring bicycle and pedestrian project, the highest scoring Complete Streets project and the highest scoring intersection improvement project that staff evaluated this year. The FFY 2025 element also includes full funding for the MPO's Community Connections and Transit Modernization investment programs, as well as \$44 million in funding for project #606226 (Reconstruction of Rutherford Avenue in Boston) and the reprogrammed funds for project #609257.

M. Genova stated that due to the financial constraints now faced in the FFY 2025 element, the MPO chose not to fund any new Major Infrastructure projects in this TIP cycle. That decision left several projects, which the MPO committed to fund through the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), to be programmed in the first four annual elements of the TIP: project #607981 (McGrath Boulevard in Somerville), project #609246 (Reconstruction of Western Avenue [Route 107] in Lynn), and project #605313 (Bridge Replacement, Route 27 [North Main Street] over Route 9 [Worcester Street] and Interchange Improvements in Natick). The MPO also decided at the last meeting to leave approximately \$1.1 million in FFY 2025 funding unprogrammed.

M. Genova stated that 13 out of 17 projects that were evaluated for funding this year remain unfunded due to a lack of available resources. Of the four projects that were able to be funded this year, three were funded with Regional Target funds, and one, project #609532 (Targeted Safety Improvements and Related Work on Broadway, from Williams Street to City Hall Avenue in Chelsea), was funded with statewide funding. Because of the changes, the MPO released both a TIP and LRTP amendment for public review. Three projects needed to be added to the LRTP because they now exceed the \$20 million cost threshold for Major Infrastructure projects. Those projects are #607652, #604123 (Reconstruction on Route 126 [Pond Street] in Ashland), and #607777 (Rehabilitation of Mount Auburn Street [Route 16] in Watertown).

M. Genova stated that funding levels for both project #604123 and #606226 were adjusted slightly to balance funding. M. Genova also noted that MPO staff received a comment letter from MassDOT Highway District 5 recommending the reprogramming of two projects. This change is due to readiness concerns recently discovered for project #606130 (Intersection Improvements at Route 1A and Upland Road/Washington Street and Prospect Street/Fulton Street in Norwood). This project, which is currently programmed for approximately \$7.9 million in FFY 2021, would be reprogrammed one

year later, in FFY 2022, on the recommendation of MassDOT Highway District 5. To replace this project in FFY 2021, MassDOT has recommended moving forward project #601607 (Reconstruction of Atlantic Avenue and Related Work in Hull). This project is currently programmed in FFY 2022 for approximately \$8.3 million. Reprogramming this project in FFY 2021 would require moving approximately \$32,000 in funding for project #606476 (Sumner Tunnel Reconstruction) from FFY 2021 into FFY 2022 to balance out these changes.

Discussion

S. Page asked for more information on the impact of having more projects considered Major Infrastructure projects relative to the MPO's 30 percent threshold for the Major Infrastructure investment program, since the MPO has likely programmed over that threshold. S. Page also asked how the MPO should manage the rest of the Major Infrastructure projects going forward. M. Genova responded that the MPO does not require an LRTP amendment for passing the 30 percent threshold. For programming purposes, because the MPO has already made a commitment to programming the three projects in the LRTP's FFYs 2025–29 time band, staff are planning to stay on track to meet those previously made programming commitments.

M. Genova stated the MPO has gone over the 30 percent threshold by now including the projects that exceed \$20 million in cost. Staff invites feedback from the board regarding ways to handle these changes going forward in anticipation that this scenario will likely happen again. The projects that were not LRTP planned projects or classified as Major Infrastructure projects initially, but have gone over the threshold, are still included in their original program, which in this case is the Complete Streets Program. M. Genova explained that it is the board's decision whether to maintain the 30 percent threshold by choosing not to fund another LRTP project or to fund another LRTP project and exceed the threshold.

D. Mohler added that the projects that now exceed \$20 million in cost automatically become Major Infrastructure projects. The MPO defines Major Infrastructure projects by cost only. D. Mohler stated that he would argue that project #609246 in Lynn is a Complete Streets project, but because it costs \$25 million and exceeds the \$20 million threshold it has become a Major Infrastructure project. D. Mohler stated that the staff must tell the board if the 30 percent budget allocation is exceeded so that the board can decide whether to fund over the threshold or to change the policy to restrict funding for Major Infrastructure projects to 30 percent of the MPO's funding. M. Genova confirmed that the 30 percent threshold will be exceeded if the three projects proposed to be amended into the LRTP are included.

D. Mohler stated that this issue should be an agenda item for discussion after the draft TIP is released for public review. D. Mohler called on Anne McGahan (MPO staff) to respond. A. McGahan stated that the 30 percent threshold in the LRTP was a target and not a goal. If the MPO programs over that 30 percent threshold, it does not require an LRTP amendment.

T. Kadzis suggested that municipalities consider the issues with Major Infrastructure projects and determine if projects can be designed in a way that avoids having the projects categorized as Major Infrastructure projects. For example, designers and MassDOT Highway District Staff could consider constructing projects in two or more phases. T. Kadzis stated that the City of Boston advised the Department of Public Works for the Commonwealth Avenue project and, as a result, the project was split into multiple phases.

K. Miller concurred with D. Mohler's suggestion about having a discussion about programming categories and Major Infrastructure projects. K. Miller stated that the MPO discussed this topic while developing the LRTP, and he recalled that the \$20 million threshold was selected as an arbitrary number for the definition of Major Infrastructure projects. K. Miller stated that it might be appropriate to raise the Major Infrastructure cost to a higher figure, change the definition of the Major Infrastructure Program, or have program categories that are not be related to the funding level. K. Miller stated that Major Infrastructure projects could be defined as those that are on a limited access highway rather than defined by project costs. L. Diggins stated that he agreed with K. Miller and he would choose the option of having program categories that are not related to funding level.

Tom Bent (City of Somerville) (Inner Core Committee) provided a public comment on behalf of B. Rawson (City of Somerville). B. Rawson conveyed a letter from Mayor Joe Curtatone (City of Somerville). T. Bent shared that the Mayor wished to thank MassDOT for the statement of intent to restart the project development design and permitting process for project #607981 (McGrath Boulevard). Mayor Curtatone stated that, as the board knows, the City of Somerville has been a tireless partner for MassDOT and the Boston Region MPO. As they work together to implement the MPO's LRTP, McGrath Boulevard has featured prominently in consecutive LRTP documents with exceptionally high project scoring and robust stakeholder enthusiasm. It is also specifically identified as a priority in the MassDOT Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans and as an assumed background condition in the MassDOT-led Lower Mystic Regional Working Group Final Report. Mayor Curtatone is pleased that during the FFYs 2021–25 TIP development process the MPO board and chair reaffirmed the MPO's commitment to programming construction funding for project #607981 in the FFYs 2026–30 LRTP

cycle. The City of Somerville is grateful that MassDOT has committed to a design schedule that will yield 25 percent design and cost estimates to support the MPO's FFYs 2022–26 TIP. The City of Somerville staff and the community-based stakeholders are eager to reconvene the project working group as soon as possible to meet the schedule required by the next TIP cycle. The Mayor looks forward to continuing the excellent partnership to advance this key project.

12. FFYs 2021-25 TIP Highway Element: Statewide Projects—*John Bechard, MassDOT, Deputy Chief Engineer of Project Development*

J. Bechard presented MassDOT's process for selecting statewide programs and projects to be programmed in the FFYs 2021–25 TIP. MassDOT classifies projects into various programs: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Retrofits, Bicycle and Pedestrian, Bridge, Intelligent Transportation Systems, Intersection Improvements, Pavement (interstate/non-interstate National Highway System), Roadway Improvements (stormwater), Roadway Reconstruction, and Safety Improvements.

MassDOT's transportation plans impact the types of projects selected. The Bridge and Pavement Programs are part of the Transportation Asset Management Plan. MassDOT Highway has partnered with regional planning agencies and the MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (OTP) to develop many of the plans that set the targets for individual projects.

J. Bechard stated that the MassDOT ADA transition plan was drafted in 2017 and approved in 2018 by FHWA. MassDOT's initial assessment determined that there were 26,000 ramps within the state highway network that must be addressed. Those ramps were prioritized and ranked by each district and then each district ADA Coordinator maintained a district's individual list. MassDOT funds ADA retrofit projects through the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and MassDOT's Capital Investment Plan. In the FFY 2024 STIP, MassDOT allocated more than \$21.8 million for 88 retrofit projects to be completed by FFY 2032.

The MassDOT Pedestrian Plan and the MassDOT Bicycle Plan are both long-range plans that were developed over the last few years and released in May 2019. MassDOT started these plans in 2014 based on the Health Transportation Policy, which dictated and set parameters for bicycle and pedestrian accommodation in project design and system operation. MassDOT has district coordinators for bicycle and pedestrian activities. The Bicycle Program has evolved into the Trails Team whose members focus on the development of projects for TIP programs and trail grants.

Under the Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, MassDOT considers project readiness, network expansion, critical gaps, community connections, and the transportation plans to decide which projects to pursue. Input from residents and business leaders in communities is important, as well as connections to schools and other open and natural spaces. As part of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, MassDOT has projects that are parallel to or connect to state-owned corridors identified in the plans as having potential for everyday biking and walking trips.

For the MassDOT Safety Program, the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) eligibility guidelines were developed through the HSIP Task Force, which consists of representatives from FHWA, MassDOT Safety, regional planning agencies and MassDOT OTP. The HSIP originated in 2009 and the guidelines have been updated regularly. The last update was in September 2019, when the task force was expanded.

The Massachusetts Strategic Highway Safety Plan was published in 2018. An HSIP eligible project/program location must be in a “hot spot.” The hot-spot intersections must be within the top five percent of those in the region or within the top 200 across the state. These locations are identified based on values derived on the Equivalent Property Damage Only (EPDO) Index. MassDOT OTP hosts and maintains an interactive map with those locations and the data on those sites.

Projects that are eligible may address problems associated with stop-controlled intersections, signal timing, lane departure crashes, and signage in need of upgrades. All HSIP projects must be evaluated for safety benefits and that information must be submitted to FHWA in MassDOT’s annual report. The HSIP projects are not standalone projects but rather integrated with other projects such as those addressed by the CMAQ, Resurfacing, and Bike and Pedestrian Programs.

The Transportation Asset Management Plan focuses on MassDOT’s Highway Pavement Program and Bridge Program. MassDOT released an FHWA approved plan in 2019 that sets the parameters for these two programs. The Pavement Program deals with interstate, non-interstate (National Highway System) and the state numbered routes and includes data collection and analysis, pavement management, and project identification and selection.

J. Bechard displayed a photo of the “Pathrunner” vehicle, which MassDOT staff use to drive the roadways and collect data on pavement. The technology in the vehicle collects information, which is distilled by staff and compared with data from prior years. MassDOT collects the data on pavement cracking, ride quality, rutting and raveling, and determines pavement condition based on values in the Pavement Serviceability Index.

The data collected by MassDOT exceeds FHWA requirements. MassDOT conducts network-level modeling and develops a ten-year horizon based on current condition data and material specific-deterioration curves.

MassDOT produces models based on two, four, and ten year targets. The targets are reviewed biennially through a performance management review led by the Office of Performance Management and Innovation (OPMI). The targets are used to determine investment levels in the STIP and Capital Investment Plan (CIP). MassDOT maintains a five year pavement management plan funded through FHWA, and non-federal aid and federal aid sources. Each spring, a new annual element is added, project readiness is confirmed, and projects are selected in line with STIP program targets.

J. Bechard described the Pavement Management System (PMS). The PMS employs an incremental benefit cost (IBC) analysis that helps MassDOT to determine the optimal timing for implementing pavement treatments on roadway segments. MassDOT teams also examine roadway pavements to determine if they have deteriorated more than anticipated due to winter weather treatments, plowing and salting operations, or traffic. MassDOT then makes adjustments to the program schedule. The IBC considers the future condition to be achieved for each roadway section and identifies the optimized expenditure of annual spending. The pavement management model invests in long-term roadway preservation and maintenance, rather than full pavement reconstruction. If a roadway can no longer be considered a preservation project and requires extensive repair or reconstruction, MassDOT looks to other funding programs.

MassDOT shares condition maps with the district offices annually and works collaboratively to identify the factors that may be accelerating the deterioration of roadway segments. MassDOT hosts a Pavement Summit, which involves staff from the six districts offices who review the program of projects for the next five years. Adjustments are made to the overall program, and the staff update data on specific roadway segments.

For the Bridge Program, there were previously no objective statewide selection criteria. To be eligible for funding, bridges only had to be structurally deficient (SD) and eligible for federal bridge funds. To streamline the project selection process, MassDOT prepared criteria that would remove subjectivity and ensure consistency statewide. That program has been in place since 2008 and is based on the risk a bridge's condition presents to the transportation network. It uses AASHTOWare Bridge Management software to identify which bridges are deteriorating faster than others. This system calculates the bridge's value on the Health Index and predicts the change in the value for each bridge over time. This information allows MassDOT to rank the SD and non-SD

bridges separately since funding applies for different repair and treatment options for each.

MassDOT uses three criteria to assign numerical values to bridge projects: Condition Loss, Health Index Change, and Highway Evaluation. The Highway Evaluation Factor (HEF) considers various parts of the bridge, including the surface, railing, substructure, and drainage features. MassDOT also considers the average daily traffic on the bridge, the functional classification, load carrying restrictions, and deck geometry deficiency, as well as the length of the detour when the bridge is closed. STIP lists are prepared from candidate bridges based on Bridge Program goals and available funding. Since the STIP is fiscally constrained, the sum of all project costs in a year must be below targets; as such, reliable bridge project cost estimates are required.

Annual spending targets are provided by MassDOT OTP. That office also provides the amounts of anticipated funding (federal aid and non-federal aid) and the reduced advanced construction obligations from previous years for projects funded over multiple years. The net remainder is the funding available for the given year. To develop the STIP, MassDOT Highway Division prepares a statewide ranked bridge list, which is sorted by MassDOT district. Each district's list is sorted into SD and non-SD bridge lists and then sorted by funding category. Bridge projects are moved between annual funding elements or obligations to achieve cost balance. Bridges are not programmed strictly according to rank. District input is considered as well as geographic distribution. Districts consider maintenance, connectivity, emergency response impacts, and local economic impacts.

Discussion

B. Kane thanked J. Bechard for all the information and asked if there is a standard type of traffic signal used statewide and, if so, if there is a way to ensure that the signals include prioritization for first responders and transit vehicles. J. Bechard responded that MassDOT adheres to the National Electric Manufacturers Association (NEMA) standard for traffic signals, so that while signals are not all from the same manufacturer, all must operate and function using the same algorithm criteria. MassDOT also sets signal timings at individual locations. The parameters for the signals and operation are the same. Some have actuation in the pavement or by video, some have fixed time, but most of the system is compatible. Electricians within the individual district offices maintain the signals. J. Bechard stated that the emergency responder priority is typically a local item that is factored in. If the community has equipment that has emergency preemption, then MassDOT will incorporate it into a project.

S. Page asked for clarification of the terms *on-system* and *off-system*. J. Bechard responded that on-system roadways are functionally classified as on the federal-aid system. Off-system roadways include locally owned roadways or roadways that are owned and maintained by another entity.

L. Diggins asked for more detail on the last photo displayed in the presentation. J. Bechard described the Commonwealth Avenue Bridge over the Massachusetts Turnpike, which MassDOT worked on in the summer of 2018. MassDOT completed the work over two three-week periods, including weekends, to be able to complete the project in an accelerated timeframe.

T. Michelman commented that the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail has received a lot of money from the STIP and he asked about the possible implications of MassDOT's plan. T. Michelman was unclear from the presentation if MassDOT is talking about changing the process of the allocation of funding, or just describing the process. J. Bechard responded that he was not discussing any changes in funding. When the MPO is considering a project, a community will prepare a Project Need Form (PNF) and apply to include a project under the STIP. MassDOT will score that project with the MPO and see how that will address all the pedestrian, health, and mobility criteria. MassDOT has prepared a master plan of all of the programs and identified those assets that must be upgraded and improved based on that master plan. That funding is allocated through the individual STIP. J. Bechard stated that D. Mohler and his staff could speak more about the specifics.

T. Kadzis thanked J. Bechard for his description of the process for project selection and asked if there was going to be any discussion today about the actual projects to be proposed for programming. J. Bechard responded that this presentation was a high level description on how MassDOT selects individual projects on the statewide program and not about specific projects for this TIP.

Rich Benevento (WorldTech Engineering) shared that he was just notified that the American Public Works Association awarded the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Phase 2C in Concord with the Small City Rural Community Transportation National Award.

13.FFYs 2021-25 TIP Transit Element: MBTA Projects in the TIP— *Samantha Silverberg, MBTA*

S. Silverberg presented a recap of FY 2020-24 MBTA projects in the TIP and a review of the upcoming FY 2025 projects. S. Silverberg stated that the MBTA wanted to present to the MPO board to give members an opportunity to ask any specific questions about the 65 projects on the list.

The CIP development process is at the stage where the MBTA staff have finished the draft project list and are now assigning the funding sources. The overall capital program is approximately \$9.3 billion, of which approximately 35 percent is federal funds. These funds are lower from the previous year primarily because the MBTA is making progress on the Green Line Extension.

Out of those federal funds, \$2.3 billion is available for programming in the TIP. The MBTA has approximately \$800 million already in executed grants and \$500 million still to spend from the Green Line Extension full-funding grant agreement.

S. Silverberg then reviewed the status of projects programmed in FY 2019 and in the FY 2020-24 TIP. For the Bridge and Tunnel Program, the MBTA has a variety of bridge projects that are underway, including the following:

- The Longfellow approach, which is on the Boston side of the Longfellow Bridge, includes Charles/MGH Station and the project incorporates potential planning for future connections. The design was awarded in October 2019, and the MBTA anticipates construction to begin in spring 2022.
- The Rail Replacement Program (Bridge Bundling Contract) includes projects addressing six different commuter rail bridges. The design was awarded in May 2019, and construction is scheduled to begin spring 2020.
- The contract for the Robert Street Bridge project in Roslindale was awarded in winter 2019/2020 and construction will begin soon.

The MBTA has a number of ongoing programs to maintain the condition of MBTA bridges and tunnels, including the Inspection and Rating Program and the Design Program, which ensure the MBTA always has bridge projects in the pipeline. The MBTA also has the emergency bridge repair program to enable emergency repairs across the system. S. Silverberg stated that <https://www.mbta.com/projects> features information and status updates on projects that are underway.

In the Revenue Vehicles program, the MBTA has significant projects addressing buses, commuter rail, and the Green Line. S. Silverberg stated that getting the Green Line Type 10 vehicles in pre-procurement is a significant commitment for the MBTA and that is a project that will continue to be on the TIP for many iterations because the vehicle procurement takes a while. The Dual Motor Articulated (DMA) replacement project is for the Silver Line. The MBTA is working on replacing the current fleet of Silver Line buses. The MBTA is also in planning, design, and experimentation phases for the deployment of electric buses. S. Silverberg stated that there are Section 5339 funds for the procurement of battery electric buses and the order for 194 New Flyer buses. The 194

hybrid buses are entering service. As of December 2019, 63 buses have completed the commission process.

The MBTA is overhauling locomotives, coaches, and catamarans. The Locomotive Overhaul project is crucially important to improve the reliability of the commuter rail locomotives and ensure that equipment is available. Nine locomotives have been returned to the MBTA as of winter 2020. They were stripped down to their base elements and then rebuilt. The project for the procurement of bi-level commuter rail coaches is at the pre-procurement stage. The federally funded procurement follows a traditional process, which will be open, competitive, and aligned with all federal responsibilities. The MBTA also has an expedited procurement underway that will be delivering 80 coaches in the next three years. The first 16 will serve South Coast Rail, and the remaining 64, will provide additional capacity on the commuter rail.

The MBTA has many projects addressing signals and systems. Both Section 5337 and 5307 funds are being used to implement an Automatic Train Control (ATC) system for commuter rail, which is a complementary system to the Positive Train Control (PTC) system that is being installed on the north side commuter rail lines. In addition, the Red and Orange Line Signal Program is a major initiative that was accelerated after the Columbia Junction derailment in summer 2019. The design-build contract was awarded in November 2019. There was some re-sequencing so that work at Columbia Junction could be reprioritized. The completion of that signal project is anticipated in 2022.

S. Silverberg stated that there is a lot of Green Line track and signal work underway. In particular, the planned major shutdowns for summer 2020 on the D Branch will support central tunnel track upgrades. The C and E Branches will also have significant closures to accelerate improvements. The MBTA plans to upgrade and modernize the North Station terminal signal, which has cascading impacts on all the north side rail lines. The design-build contract was awarded in May 2019. The MBTA is also planning and designing for the triple track on the Worcester commuter rail line.

The MBTA's Stations and Facilities Program is primarily focused on ADA improvements and commitments resulting from the agreement with the Boston Center for Independent Living. There are a number of elevator projects and other accessibility improvements both for the commuter rail stations and at transit stations. S. Silverberg highlighted the Natick Center Station Accessibility project, which is under construction and was fully funded in the last CIP. The Winchester Center commuter rail station project is advertised and the MBTA plans to award the contract in spring/summer 2020. The new Chelsea commuter rail station is under construction and the MBTA anticipates completion in fall 2021. The Commonwealth Avenue Station Access project is the consolidation of the Green Line B Branch stations near Boston University. The Harvard

Square Busway project is under construction and the upper busway reopened in December 2019. The Downtown Crossing Vertical Transportation Improvements Phase 2 contract was awarded in March 2020.

S. Silverberg went into more detail about the Park Street Station project. The MBTA closed Red Line stations throughout fall 2019 to facilitate the acceleration of the Park Street Wayfinding and Station Improvements project from a total duration of 13 months to nine months. The project included lighting and stair upgrades, signage, and painting. Because the MBTA closed the station and a couple of adjoining stations, the MBTA was able to replace the pit tracks, which were over 30 years old. Park Street Station now has brighter lighting and new signage, which makes it easier for customers to navigate while also improving structural elements like stairs and tracks.

The MBTA anticipates that the new funds in the fifth year of the TIP are going to go to existing projects that either have additional costs due to additional scope of work or additional phase. Some projects that the MPO will see are the Gloucester Drawbridge Replacement, Locomotive Overhauls, and the South Attleboro Station Accessibility Improvements. The Power Systems Resiliency Program will provide an opportunity to advance some of the MBTA's critical power work for both duct banks and other assets. FY 2025 will also include additional funding for elevator design to advance the ADA Program, the Newton Highlands Station Green Line Accessibility project, the Worcester triple track project, and the Worcester Union Station project, which is moving into construction.

The MBTA is continuing to engage with the MPO, the MassDOT Board of Directors, and the MBTA's Fiscal and Management Control Board (FMCB). In a joint meeting of the MassDOT board and FMCB, the MBTA/MassDOT CIP will be released for public comment. MassDOT is working to find best forums and opportunities for virtual public engagement and will utilize the online comment tool as in years past.

Discussion

D. Amstutz expressed his appreciation for the upgrades at Park Street Station and asked, with regards to the COVID-19 pandemic, if there is any construction that has been delayed, any issues with procurement of new equipment, or expected delays because of the stay-at-home order and business shutdowns. S. Silverberg referred to the presentation that Jonathan Gulliver (MassDOT Highway Administrator) gave at the joint board meeting on Monday, April 13, 2020, in which he talked about how the Highway Division was handling COVID-19 impacts. Some projects at the MBTA are on pause because many of the projects require the support of the operational workforce. The MBTA is focusing on the continuity of core operations, which is ensuring service for

first responders and other essential employees, and as a result some capital projects are paused. The MBTA does not yet know the full impact of COVID-19. Some projects are slowed down and some projects may be accelerated. The MBTA is also watching how the current situation may impact the bid prices given the different economic risk and uncertainty that is impacting their private sector counterparts.

D. Amstutz followed up stating that the Town of Arlington has been given an exception to begin construction on the new Arlington High School this spring because of different funding timelines that the Town must adhere to in order to get reimbursed. D. Amstutz asked if a similar issue regarding timeframes applies to some of the MBTA's projects and, if they are delayed, if there is risk of losing funding. S. Silverberg responded that she is not aware of that risk for any MBTA projects.

B. Kane thanked S. Silverberg and the MBTA for the approach that they are taking. B. Kane stated that he hopes it will continue despite some slowdowns. B. Kane stated that as construction on the Green Line Extension is continuing, he agrees that any diversions that require operational support should be slowed down at this time because the workers should be protected and the MBTA should make sure that it can deliver core service. B. Kane stressed the importance of focusing on what the authority is suggesting, such as modernization, ADA improvements, reliability improvements, and safety improvements, especially in the core system. B. Kane stated that the reliability that the new vehicles and Type 10 Green Line Projects will bring will pay dividends long into the future.

J. Bechard commented that the MassDOT Highway Administrator did present to the MassDOT/FMCB joint board earlier in the week about the protocols the Highway Division is following. Staff are meeting regularly with Construction Industries of Massachusetts and with design consultants to get input on challenges. The Highway Division is also putting measures in place for electric signatures to keep projects advancing. If any project issues or delays are encountered, staff will evaluate and address them.

T. Bent asked if the Green Line Extension project was still on schedule. S. Silverberg responded that she had not heard about any delays, but she offered to come back at the next meeting with more information about how the MBTA is handling the impacts on construction during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially regarding particular project delays. T. Bent stated that he passes the project work site each day and sees the crews out there, and he appreciates the people working on it in these tough conditions.

B. Conroy asked about the timeframe for the sea wall construction in Charlestown and when it would be completed. S. Silverberg did not have the information on hand but offered to follow up.

14.FFYs 2021-25 TIP Transit Element: Regional Transit Authorities' Capital Planning Process—Joy Glynn, MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA)

J. Glynn and Eva Willens from the MWRTA provided an overview of MWRTA's capital planning process. MWRTA develops a five-year project list for the Administrator's approval. The project list moves on to MassDOT for review. Then the projects go to the Boston Region MPO for review, public release, and endorsement.

In Quarter One, MWRTA assesses capital needs. Historically, the MWRTA programs \$1.6 million for non-fixed route ADA paratransit service each year. Vehicle needs are reviewed in accordance with the MWRTA Transit Asset Management Plan. Previously, those vehicle needs were programmed through the Section 5310 Mobility Assistance Program. MWRTA is working with MassDOT to transition funding for fixed-route vehicles to other grant sources. Other capital enhancement improvement requirements are reviewed and discussed with the MWRTA team. One project included this year is the building and maintenance for the Framingham commuter rail station, which is owned by the MBTA and managed by MWRTA. MWRTA oversees the elevators, lighting, customer services, monitors, on-site security, information technology, and more.

In Quarter Two, MWRTA prepares an internal draft of the capital plan. In Quarter Three, the Federal Transit Administration announces the Section 5307 formula funds for the Boston Urbanized Area and the agreement is distributed amongst the designated recipients. MWRTA reviews, signs, and returns the agreement to the Brockton Area Transit Authority.

In Quarter Four, MWRTA provides supporting project information to MassDOT, and MassDOT reviews the projects through a competitive process. The projects are then submitted to the MPO for approval in the TIP. The approval of the TIP is a requirement for the MWRTA in order to apply for the Section 5307 formula funds.

J. Glynn described and shared a design of the front entrance of the MWRTA's Blandin Hub, a project proposed for this TIP, which includes aesthetic and beneficial enhancement to the existing facility. This project will provide a clearly identifiable customer entrance and create a user-friendly customer experience by adding a safe bus stop shelter, protected from inclement weather with infrared heaters. The MWRTA will also install an interactive monitor to provide real-time bus tracking, lighting, scheduled

service announcements, and other program information. MWRTA wants to enhance ADA accessibility with a slip-resistant concrete sidewalk surface, and encourage multimodal transportation by adding bike racks and bike repair kits. The facility is located in a previously vacated industrial building. MWRTA wants to promote accessibility and connectivity in the City of Framingham, including access to a new shared-use trail.

Discussion

L. Diggins commented that he appreciated the heating element of the station. J. Glynn also noted that the new design will expand the bus waiting area where shelter space is currently very limited.

15. Members Items

There were none.

16. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (Brian Kane) and seconded by the MAPC (Eric Bourassa). The motion carried.

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Jay Monty
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	Daniel Amstutz
At-Large Town (Town of Lexington)	Sheila Page
City of Boston (Boston Planning & Development Agency)	Jim Fitzgerald
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Tom Kadzis
Federal Highway Administration	Ken Miller
Federal Transit Administration	
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	David Mohler
MassDOT Highway Division	John Romano John Bechard
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	Samantha Silverberg
Massachusetts Port Authority	
MBTA Advisory Board	Brian Kane
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham)	Thatcher Kezer III
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Acton)	
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)	Darlene Wynne
North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn)	Tina Cassidy
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Lenard Diggins
South Shore Coalition (Town of Rockland)	Jennifer Constable
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce)	Tom O'Rourke

Other Attendees	Affiliation
Benjamin Muller	MassDOT
Eric Johnson	City of Framingham
Ali Kleyman	City of Somerville
Erika Oliver Jerram	City of Framingham
Brad Rawson	City of Somerville
Bill Conroy	City of Boston
Steve Olanoff	Three Rivers Interlocal Council
Robert Wheeler	
Piseth Teng	
Robert Wheeler	
Will Paulitz	
Joy Glynn	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
Tom Pechillo	BL Companies
Elizabeth Gianni	
Tom Michelman	Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail
Joseph Blankenship	Boston Planning & Development Agency
Frank Tramontozzi	City of Quincy
Cheryll-Ann Senior	
Darlene Wynne	
Dave Daltorio	Town of Hopkinton
Joe Collins	Town of Norwood
Josh Ostroff	Transportation for Massachusetts
M. Myers	
Peter Falk	MBTA
Matt Chase	Vanesse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
Nick Lapointe	Fuss & O'Neill, Inc.
Tracie Lenhardt	
Brendan Callahan	Town of Peabody
Ann Anderson	
Alicia Hunt	City of Medford
Kristina Johnson	
Owen MacDonald	Town of Weymouth
Rich Benevento	WorldTech Engineering
Eva Willens	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
Susan Barrett	Town of Lexington

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Tegin Teich, Executive Director

Mark Abbott

Matt Archer

Jonathan Church

Andrew Clark

Annette Demchur

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Jane Gillis

Betsy Harvey

Bill Kuttner

Anne McGahan

Ariel Patterson

Scott Peterson

Kate White

DRAFT

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