

MPO Meeting Minutes

Memorandum for the Record

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

June 25, 2020 Meeting

10:00 AM–12:03 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 meetings of May 14, 2020, and May 28, 2020
- Approve the work program for International Review of Vision Zero Policies
- Release federal fiscal year (FFY) 2020 UPWP (Unified Planning Work Program) Amendment Two for a 30-day public review period
- Release FFYs 2020–24 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment Six for a 21-day public review period

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

See attendance beginning on page 19.

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

There was none.

3. Executive Director's Report—*Tegin Teich, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS)*

T. Teich introduced Paul Christner as the new manager of the Transportation Analysis and Planning Group at CTPS. T. Teich stated that MPO staff would provide additional opportunities for MPO board members to provide comments on the TIP Criteria revisions process in July, including focus groups, and encouraged members to contact staff with any feedback. T. Teich stated that the next MPO meeting would be held on July 16, 2020, because of the July 4, 2020, holiday, and the following meeting would be held on August 6, 2020.

4. Public Comments

There were none.

5. Committee Chairs' Reports

There were none.

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

L. Diggins stated that Betsy Harvey, MPO staff, would present regarding the TIP Criteria at the next Advisory Council meeting, and encouraged members of the public to attend.

7. Action Items: Approval of May 14, 2020, and May 28, 2020, MPO Meeting Minutes—*Róisín Foley and Kate White, MPO Staff*

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of May 14, 2020, was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) (Eric Bourassa) and seconded by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Advisory Board (Brian Kane). The motion carried.

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of May 28, 2020, was made by the At-Large Town (Town of Arlington) (Daniel Amstutz) and seconded by the MassDOT Highway Division (John Bechard). The motion carried.

8. Action Item: Work Scope, International Review of Vision Zero Policies—*Bradley Putnam, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [Work Program: Review of Vision Zero Policies](#)

B. Putnam presented the work scope for International Review of Vision Zero Policies. The MPO had previously programmed \$60,000 in the FFY 2020 UPWP for a study titled Transit Mitigation for New Development Sites. This project was found to be duplicating ongoing projects by other agencies and staff initiated to reallocate this money to other projects. At the meeting on June 11, 2020, the board voted to approve the use of \$30,000 on a study titled Innovations in Estimating Trip Generation Rates. The work program presented at this meeting proposes to use the remaining \$30,000.

Vision Zero is a policy goal in which a city or a region aims to reduce its transportation fatality rates to zero. Vision Zero strategies include reducing speed limits or right-sizing roads that have additional lanes, investing in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, or undertaking education campaigns. This project would review the strategies employed by cities that have experienced dramatic reductions in traffic fatalities in order to assemble

a tool kit of effective strategies for municipalities in the Boston region. MPO staff has had initial conversations with municipal staff currently working on Vision Zero in the cities of Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville and hope to use these to guide this work.

Vote

A motion to approve the work program for Review of Vision Zero Policies was made by the MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane). The motion carried.

9. Action Item: FFY 2020 UPWP Amendment Two—Sandy Johnston, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [FFY 2020 UPWP Amendment Two Full Document with Amendment Changes](#)
2. [FFY 2020 UPWP Amendment Two Redlined Changes](#)

S. Johnston presented Amendment Two to the FFY 2020 UPWP. As mentioned in the previous action item, this amendment removes the \$60,000 study titled Transit Mitigation for New Development Sites and replaces it with two \$30,000 studies, Review of Vision Zero Policies and Innovations in Estimating Trip Generation Rates, to avoid redundancy with work being carried out by MassDOT. The UPWP Committee discussed and endorsed this amendment at its meeting prior to the board meeting.

The MPO would vote to endorse this amendment at the meeting on August 6, 2020, after which it will be reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Discussion

Jim Fitzgerald (City of Boston) (Boston Planning & Development Agency) requested an update on the transit mitigation work being undertaken by MassDOT. D. Mohler stated that MassDOT would provide the board with an update.

Vote

A motion to release Amendment Two to the FFY 2020 UPWP for a 30-day public review period was made by the MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (Tom Bent). The motion carried.

10. Action Item: FFYs 2020–24 TIP Amendment Six—Matt Genova, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [FFYs 2020–24 TIP Amendment Six Full Table](#)
2. [FFYs 2020–24 TIP Amendment Six Simplified](#)

M. Genova presented an overview of Amendment Six to the FFYs 2020–24 TIP. Amendment Six adds four new projects to the FFY 2020 element of the TIP: one highway project and three transit projects. To the highway portion, Amendment Six adds project #610843 (Boston- Milton- Bridge Maintenance, B-16-265, B-16-270 & B-16- 252 & Related Resurfacing Work). To the transit portion, Amendment Six adds three new MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) projects, including the purchase of accessible buses and operating funds to increase frequency on several routes.

Discussion

L. Diggins expressed support for the new MWRTA projects, including expanding service on weekends, particularly in light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on transit.

Thatcher Kezer III (MetroWest Regional Collaborative) (City of Framingham) seconded L. Diggins' remarks.

Vote

A motion to release Amendment Six to the FFYs 2020–24 TIP for a 21-day public review period was made by the MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham) (T. Kezer) and seconded by the MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

11. Major Infrastructure Definition—Anne McGahan, MPO Staff *Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar*

1. [Boston Region MPO Major Infrastructure Definition](#)

A. McGahan spoke about the Major Infrastructure project definition in the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The current definition of a Major Infrastructure project is one project that changes capacity of the transportation network and/or costs more than \$20 million. This item has been discussed on an ongoing basis since November 2019 when the MPO reconsidered whether the definition should continue to include the \$20 million threshold. At that time, the MPO voted to continue the inclusion of the cost threshold. The MPO revisited the issue in the spring of 2020 during discussions of TIP Amendment Three. Cost increases for three Complete Streets projects in the FFY 2020–24 TIP crossed the \$20 million dollar threshold, requiring the MPO to amend the LRTP to include these projects. At that time, the MPO questioned whether Complete Streets projects that cost more than \$20 million should be included in the Major Infrastructure Program or in the Complete Streets Program. Including them in the Major Infrastructure Program would affect the funding goals for investment programs established in the LRTP. The MPO again discussed the definition at the May 14, 2020, MPO meeting, and members expressed support for increasing the threshold amount to \$50 million.

The Chair conducted a straw poll asking members if they would support a \$50 million threshold. Most members expressed agreement, with some preferring no threshold at all. At that time, the Chair asked MPO staff to provide members with the exact federal requirements for a regionally significant project. The goal of the presentation at this meeting was to provide that definition and work towards a vote on a final definition for the Boston Region MPO.

The Federal Highway Administration provides a definition for regionally significant projects in its federal air quality conformity regulations. Regionally significant projects are required to be included in the region's travel-demand modeling efforts. A regionally significant project is one that is on a facility that serves regional transportation needs such as access to and from the area outside of the MPO region, major activity centers in the region, major planned developments, or transportation terminals. At a minimum, all principal arterial highways and all fixed-guideway transit facilities that offer an alternative to regional highway travel must be included in the region's travel-demand model. Any change in capacity to these facilities must be included in an air quality analysis required for federal review.

Analyses for the Boston Region MPO are done using the statewide travel demand model, which represents the highway network (including all roadways classified as collectors or higher) and all MBTA rail and bus lines and commuter boat services. For roadways, this includes interstate highways, arterials (which include express highways that are not designated as part of the interstate system), and collector roads, which are important because they connect with arterials.

FHWA has identified specific projects that are exempt from regional modeling emissions analysis. These include

- intersection channelization projects;
- intersection signalization projects at individual intersections;
- interchange reconfiguration projects;
- changes in vertical and horizontal alignment;
- truck size and weight inspection stations; and
- bus terminals and transfer points.

Staff recommends continuing to use the current definition of a Major Infrastructure project as one that changes the capacity of the transportation network; however, staff recommends adding to the definition, *"if it is on a facility that is included in the statewide travel demand model."* This would include all changes to interstate highways, arterials, and collector roadways, and all changes to the MBTA's fixed-guideway transit facilities.

Staff also recommends that the definition includes a cost threshold of \$50 million, as discussed in May. This will allow members to consider higher cost projects prior to programming in the TIP. A. McGahan presented examples of projects that are currently in the LRTP and TIP to illustrate how the recommended definition would change the status of projects currently classified as Major Infrastructure. Ferry Street and Route 126 are considered Major Infrastructure projects now because they cost more than \$20 million. Under the new definition, they would be considered Complete Streets projects because they do not change the capacity of the transportation network. The New Boston Street Bridge project would remain Major Infrastructure because it adds capacity to the network, although it costs less than \$20 million. Rutherford Avenue reduces capacity and it costs more than \$50 million so it would remain Major Infrastructure.

Discussion

L. Diggins asked for an example of a collector roadway. A. McGahan replied that she would follow up with examples.

Ken Miller (FHWA) questioned why the new definition would include projects on collector roads, stating that by definition they are not regionally significant. K. Miller added that a project like the New Boston Street Bridge might change capacity but is not regionally significant. Under the federal definition, it has to be modeled for air quality, but MPOs are not required to adopt the federal regionally significant definition as a definition for Major Infrastructure. K. Miller stated that the MPO has some Complete Streets projects that reduce capacity, arguing that nobody would say they are Major Infrastructure projects. He also questioned where a project such as an interchange improvement costing less than \$50 million would be categorized.

A. McGahan responded that the New Boston Bridge is a connection to an intermodal facility, the Anderson Intermodal facility in Woburn, so that would be a regionally significant project. The MPO's definition of a Major Infrastructure project has been any project that changes capacity to the transportation network. Regarding interchanges, the MPO would need to discuss that if an interchange project cost more than \$50 million and changed the capacity of the transportation network then it would be included under the recommended definition. If the project were a simple reconfiguration and not a reconstruction, it would be exempt from federal regulations and would not have to be modeled.

D. Mohler clarified that K. Miller seemed to be asking whether this definition leaves a gap where a project might not fit into any program definition. D. Mohler stated that the MPO cannot establish a policy that would allow this. A. McGahan replied that during the development of *Destination 2040*, the MPO decided that it wanted to continue to

prioritize the funding of lower cost Complete Streets, Intersection, and Bicycle and Pedestrian projects. This does not mean that interchange projects will not be submitted to the MPO for consideration.

D. Mohler replied that the MPO is not exclusively funding lower-cost Complete Streets projects. The MPO is funding some expensive projects and theoretically could fund an interchange depending on how the project is designed.

K. Miller stated that the definition as proposed basically defaults to the \$50 million cost threshold as the definition because it includes any project on a collector or any project that changes capacity. K. Miller stated that the MPO should craft a Major Infrastructure definition that is related to the functionality and significance of the project, rather than what facility it is on or cost.

David Koses (At-Large City) (City of Newton) noted that, for example, the Newton Corner Interchange 17 Improvement Project may be a Complete Street project because it would likely cost less than \$50 million, but it is on the interstate network (I-90) and may or may not change the capacity of the network. D. Koses asked where a project like this would fit, stating that it seems like it should not have to be considered a regionally significant or Major Infrastructure project. A. McGahan replied that the MPO had this discussion as part of the development of *Destination 2040*. There is no design for this project yet, but it could be an interchange reconfiguration project depending on the design.

D. Mohler asked if it was correct that if a project cost is more than \$50 million, whether it is a Complete Streets project or some other type of project, it would automatically qualify as a Major Infrastructure project. D. Mohler also asked whether any project less than \$50 million that is regionally significant for the purposes of modeling would also qualify. A. McGahan agreed, stating that the new definition would essentially increase the cost threshold from \$20 million to \$50 million with no other changes.

L. Diggins expressed concern about Complete Streets projects being priced out of the Complete Streets program and moving into Major Infrastructure. L. Diggins asked whether there is a definition for the Complete Streets program and whether this would allow a project to increase in cost without moving it out of its original program. L. Diggins asked whether any project that does not fit into the other programs would be a Major Infrastructure project.

A. McGahan replied that there is a definition for Complete Streets, adding that, as part of developing *Destination 2040*, the MPO discussed possible additional investment

programs. One option was an Interchange Investment Program, which the MPO decided not to adopt.

K Miller clarified that the recommended definition retains some inconsistencies because, for example, a Complete Streets project with a road diet that reduces capacity would have to be modeled and thus would be considered Major Infrastructure.

D. Mohler clarified that this means Major Infrastructure projects may not be equivalent to regionally significant projects for modeling purposes.

E. Bourassa asked whether the MPO could set policy guidance that is flexible and make Major Infrastructure decisions on a case-by-case basis.

D. Mohler replied that the point of the Major Infrastructure program is to reserve a specific pot of funding for these projects so that smaller projects are not competing against money somewhere and the \$50 million projects are not competing against the \$5 million and \$10 million projects. That pot of money is available for the higher cost projects that should not have to compete with the lower cost projects. D. Mohler asked A. McGahan to clarify how the MPO funding programs are divided.

A. McGahan stated that the current goals are no more than 30 percent of the funding for Major Infrastructure, 45 percent for Complete Streets, two percent for Community Connections, five percent for Bicycle and Pedestrian, 13 percent for Intersection Improvements, and five percent for Transit Modernization.

There was some discussion of how current Major Infrastructure projects would be categorized without a Major Infrastructure program.

E. Bourassa suggested that one way to prioritize how to define Major Infrastructure would be by looking at the projects competing for funding in the Universe of Projects.

A. McGahan stated that the designs of some projects in the LRTP will not be ready for 10 or 15 years. Projects that change capacity will still need to be included for air quality purposes. If there is a smaller group of Major Infrastructure projects, they can be evaluated via the TIP criteria process and the MPO can decide whether to fund them as part of the TIP.

L. Diggins stated that the Advisory Council is concerned about Complete Streets projects that become Major Infrastructure due to cost increases.

T. Teich and Jonathan Church suggested that staff regroup to consider the points made in this discussion and return to the MPO at a later date with more information. D. Mohler

asked that staff provide information on how current Major Infrastructure projects would change under a new definition to ensure no projects are left out.

Samantha Silverberg (MBTA) suggested that under any new definition, MPO staff could bring a project that might be better suited to another program to the MPO for discussion, rather than automatically putting it into the program that it technically fits under. S. Silverberg noted that while criteria is are important, this should not immediately eliminate discussion.

12. Discussion: TIP Project Selection Criteria Public Outreach Summary—Kate White, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [Memorandum RE: Public Engagement for the Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\) Project Evaluation Criteria Revisions](#)
2. [Presentation: Public Input on the TIP Criteria](#)

K. White reviewed the public outreach process MPO staff conducted in the fall of 2019 to inform the proposed changes to the TIP Criteria. Staff conducted a combination of in-person and online public outreach, including seven focus groups with advocacy and civic engagement organizations and an online survey. Both the online survey and focus groups asked participants to choose their top priorities for transportation project outcomes from a list of 15. This list of 15 priorities consisted of current TIP criteria goals and other priorities identified in the LRTP. Online survey respondents were asked to choose their top five, their number one priority, and to add any additional priorities they felt were missing. Focus group participants were asked to choose three priorities, rank them, and provide additional notes and comments. For the focus groups, staff worked to connect with groups that primarily serve equity populations as well as to broadcast the survey in their social networks and email lists. Three focus groups were hosted with Union Capital Boston at their Mattapan, Jackson Square, and East Boston monthly Network Nights. Focus groups were also hosted with Blue Hills Regional Coordinating Council, Boston Core RCC, Transit Matters, and Livable Streets Alliance. This outreach effort resulted in 93 participants in the focus groups and 462 online survey responses.

Results

K. White stated that respondents primarily selected larger thematic priorities, with “improving pedestrian safety” being the most selected in the online survey and the second most selected in the focus groups. “Promoting more equitable mobility” was the most selected during the focus groups and the second most selected in the online survey. “Maintaining the existing transit system” and “prioritizing buses with dedicated bus lanes” were among the most selected priorities in the focus groups. However, in the

online survey, “maintaining the existing transit system” was the most selected top priority. More respondents in the online survey selected “reducing emissions and pollution,” but in the comments many respondents advocated for investment in transit, pedestrian, and bicycle infrastructure to support reducing emissions, enhancing climate resiliency, and promoting equity. Many reiterated the Boston region’s congestion issues but advocated for expanding bicycle network connectivity, improving access to transit stations, enhancing connectivity to jobs and services, and improving safety for all modes as ways to combat congestion. Many respondents urged the MPO to prioritize investments in areas that have been historically and currently underserved and improve transit in low-income communities and communities of color. They also argued for weighing more heavily the negative impacts and adding more criteria to address air pollution.

K. White shared that the online survey included several demographic questions. Online survey respondents skewed whiter than the region as a whole. Apart from the age bracket of 18–24 years old, which only comprised 3.5 percent of respondents, there was little variance in the number of respondents in the age brackets. No respondents identified as younger than 18 years old. Staff asked respondents to share the zip code of their home residence. The highest number of responses came from zip codes in Arlington, Somerville, Cambridge, Jamaica Plain, and Wellesley. Although staff received responses from every subregion, there were several zip code areas that were not represented including Lynn, parts of Quincy, and some municipalities in the Three Rivers Interlocal Council, Southwest Advisory Planning Committee, and South Shore Coalition subregions. K. White stated that when conducting the second round of TIP criteria outreach, staff plans to focus outreach in the areas that had low or no response rates and areas that are home to a higher proportion of equity populations.

K. White shared the survey results by MPO goal area categories.

Clean Air/Sustainable Communities

Respondents advocated for dramatically reducing emissions and pollution and recommended improving pedestrian and bicycle safety and connectivity. Respondents advocated for promoting equitable transportation mobility to achieve this goal. Respondents also advocated for stronger assessments on air pollution and for addressing the disproportionate health effects on low-income communities and communities of color living near high-emission roadways. They also advocated for projects that reduce the number of personal vehicles on the road, and for enhancing tree canopy coverage and green space. For additional priorities, participants advocated for smart growth, transit-oriented development, and supporting active transportation.

Safety

Participants primarily focused on improving pedestrian and bike safety, as opposed to focusing on car and truck safety; advocating expanded pedestrian and bike infrastructure; bringing sidewalks up to Americans with Disability Act accessibility standards; increasing connectivity to transit; and reducing auto speeds to prevent accidents. Participants shared their support for maintaining and expanding the transit system to increase mode shift away from single-occupancy vehicles, thus increasing bike and pedestrian safety. Many argued for separated bike facilities to make it easier and safer for anyone to bike and not just the experienced bicyclist. They advocated for improving dangerous crossings, installing light-up crosswalks, and fixing poorly timed lights and poorly painted crosswalks, and reducing conflicts between pedestrians crossing the street and turning vehicles. They also promoted safe and convenient walkable routes to access schools and prioritizing safety improvements in areas with equity populations.

System Preservation and Modernization

Participants were asked about maintaining and improving existing sidewalks, roads, and bridges. Many focused more on improving overall safety for these roadway aspects rather than on the maintenance and improvement of specific elements of the roadway. However, when asked about maintaining the existing transit system, many picked it as their top priority and added investing in transit expansion. Participants advocated for making the transit system reliable, functional, clean, safe, and dependable to increase ridership and reduce congestion, which includes investing in maintenance and implementing dedicated bus lanes to reduce vehicles on the road. Resiliency was frequently mentioned but argued more for reducing emissions for long-term investment.

Capacity Management and Mobility

Many participants advocated for creating new connections in the bike network and argued for enhanced connections to the transit system. Participants argued for more separated shared-use paths. They saw increased bike infrastructure as a tool to reduce emissions, reduce congestion, and promote public health by enhancing exercise and recreation options. Many respondents highlighted the idea of implementing more dedicated bus lanes as a way to increase reliability, enhance access to jobs, and increase equity in the transit system. Participants argued that dedicated bus lanes have a high impact for less investment, and can be more flexible to meet community needs while bus frequency can increase ridership. To reduce congestion, participants argued for more parking at commuter rail stations and enhancing walking options to commuter rail stations. They advocated for prioritizing person throughput rather than vehicle throughput. Participants also argued for implementing curb allocation policies for trucks and delivery vehicles.

Transportation Equity

As mentioned, transportation equity was one of the most selected priorities. To promote more equitable transportation mobility, participants argued for many of the other priorities with a focus on directing resources to those most overburdened by adverse impacts, such as transportation emissions and a lack of adequate transportation options. They argued for enhancing transportation opportunities to jobs, food, education, services, and civic engagement opportunities. They advocated for safer connections to transit options and increased transit reliability. Expanding and fixing sidewalk infrastructure was also frequently mentioned. Many argued for prioritizing projects near affordable housing, supporting transit-oriented development, and incorporating more public health criteria.

Economic Vitality

To increase economic vitality, participants argued for increased transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure to access jobs, services, and small businesses. Participants also argued for incorporating greater consideration for inclusionary zoning. Participants advocated for supporting projects that serve multiple municipalities and maximize mobility for all using the most efficient means possible. They also argued for climate resiliency and safety to create and maintain access to jobs and services.

Follow-Up

K. White shared that before the COVID-19 pandemic, staff had planned to return to the organizations and advocacy groups to share the new criteria and to hear feedback on the changes as well as host pop ups at community events. The plan now is to host virtual focus groups with these organizations. There will also be another online public survey to gauge feedback on the new draft criteria paired with a criteria cheat sheet that links to supporting documents and videos of presentations to help people learn more and easily navigate information. K. White stated that this second round is crucial since it helps staff understand if the proposed changes align with public priorities and gives staff the opportunity to see changes in priorities since the pandemic. K. White shared that staff understand that in the time of COVID-19, there is even more of a chance that they will not be able to connect with people who do not already know about the MPO. K. White stated that staff hope to combat this gap by investing more in digital outreach and one-on-one follow up with community organizations. K. White also shared that staff understand that the Boston region community is grieving from the loss in the pandemic and that attention is rightly focused on police brutality and systemic racism. Staff recognize that transportation might not be at the forefront of peoples' thoughts; therefore, staff are working with stakeholder groups to see what formats work best for them and what their members and constituents want to focus on.

Discussion

L. Diggins asked why the income distribution of respondents skewed more heavily to higher income brackets and wondered if anything could be done to ensure broader representation.

K. White responded that the income question in the survey asked for the entire household income. K. White stated that for example, if there were three roommates making between \$30,000 to \$50,000 each, the household income could get up to about \$100,000. Low-income status is also measured by the poverty status of a household, through a combination of household income and household size. MPO staff plan to continue to expand outreach. K. White asked MPO board members to reach out to their networks and communities.

13. Discussion: TIP Project Selection Criteria—Initial Proposed System Preservation/Modernization Criteria Revisions—*Matt Genova and Betsy Harvey, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [System Preservation and Modernization Criteria Changes](#)
2. [Presentation: TIP Criteria Revisions: System Preservation and Modernization](#)
3. [Presentation: Addressing Transportation Equity in the System Preservation Goal Area](#)

M. Genova reviewed proposed changes to the System Preservation and Modernization criteria used to evaluate prospective TIP projects, stating the main goal for the meeting is for the MPO to provide feedback on these changes. M. Genova noted that System Preservation is the second largest goal area, in a tie for points with Capacity Management and Mobility, which will be discussed at the next MPO meeting. At 29 points, this goal area represents just under 22 percent of all possible points.

M. Genova summarized feedback on the System Preservation criteria from key stakeholders. Through a survey sent out December 2019, MPO members stated that the climate resilience criteria need to be further clarified and highlighted; that the straightforward nature of the system preservation criteria is helpful in scoring projects because these criteria clearly measure what a project does; and that the criteria need to place more emphasis on projects that contribute to the maintenance of the transit system. Also an in-person criteria focus group was held with several MPO members in December. At that meeting, a similar interest emerged in further rewarding projects that positively impact the transit system, as did a desire for the staff to think through how road conditions relate to the potential rollout of future technologies like autonomous vehicles.

M. Genova also highlighted other feedback received on the current criteria. He noted that the Advisory Council responded to a survey similarly requesting a greater weighting of resilience criteria. The Advisory Council also requested that all criteria reward projects in a scaled manner for the extent to which they improve a given problem. He also stated that, through the technical assistance project with Transportation for America, it was suggested there should be ways to deduct points from projects that negatively impact resiliency and to reconsider the weighting of different system preservation criteria to ensure these point values accurately reflect MPO priorities.

M. Genova stated that, in revising the System Preservation criteria, MPO staff aimed to address both state of good repair and modernization aspects of projects, expand the resilience criteria, reference asset management and resilience plans more directly, penalize projects in hazard zones that do not address resilience, standardize methods for measuring asset condition, expand the definition of critical facilities, and tailor the criteria to specific investment programs.

M. Genova stated that the new system preservation criteria fall into two categories. The first is resiliency, which includes measures of how projects incorporate resiliency elements into their designs, demonstrate regional coordination, and improve emergency response. The second category is asset repair and modernization. This includes criteria that measure the extent to which projects improve existing transit assets, bridges or culverts, pavement, sidewalks and paths, and other roadway and bicycle/pedestrian assets.

M. Genova then detailed the proposed changes to each of the System Preservation criteria, beginning with criterion 1: "Project incorporates resiliency elements into its design." He noted that this is a restructuring of the existing criterion "Improves ability to respond to extreme conditions." The revised version retains points for aspects such as supporting resiliency plans, improving storm water infrastructure, and protecting the freight network. The proposed criterion focuses more on sea-level rise and flooding than the prior version, which included points for other less-relevant elements such as bringing a facility up to current seismic design standards. The new criterion also increases the emphasis on the materials used to promote resiliency and introduces a penalty for projects that do not address resiliency in areas that are prone to flooding or sea-level rise. This criterion is largely similar across investment programs, though the Bicycle Network and Pedestrian Connections and Transit Modernization programs are not scored for their impacts to the freight network.

M. Genova then moved to discussing criterion 2: "Project demonstrates regional coordination." This is a new criterion that proposes to award points to projects that

provide off-site resiliency benefits such as reductions in downstream flooding. This criterion would also award points to proponents that demonstrate coordination with other resiliency projects outside of the project in question. This scoring would be the same across all investment programs.

M. Genova then discussed criterion 3: “Project improves emergency response.” This criterion awards points to projects that improve evacuation routes and enhance connections to critical facilities. The proposed criterion is largely similar to the existing version of this criterion, though the definition of critical facilities is proposed to be expanded beyond police and fire stations and hospitals to include things such as schools, long-term care facilities, utilities, and other resilience-supporting facilities. This criterion would be the same across investment programs, though would not include scoring for improving an evacuation route in the Bicycle Network and Pedestrian Connections or Transit Modernization programs, as designated evacuation routes are roadways.

M. Genova then presented criterion 4: “Project improves or modernizes existing transit assets.” This criterion is an expanded version of the existing one, which is proposed to include points for both improving the condition of existing transit assets as well as for enhancing these assets through modernization. Also proposed is adding a bonus score for improving operations-critical, safety-critical, or climate-sensitive assets and adding scoring potential for roadway-based transit assets such as bus stops and dedicated bus lanes. This criterion would score Transit Modernization projects more heavily and would not be applicable to Bicycle Network and Pedestrian Connections projects.

M. Genova then discussed criterion 5: “Improves bridges and culverts.” This criterion is also similar to the existing one, though it proposes to now include culverts and adopt the federal good/fair/poor rating system as opposed to the prior scoring, which measured bridge condition using functional obsolescence and structural deficiency.

The new criterion would also award bonus points for reducing weight or height restrictions and improving structures on the national highway system or freight network. Projects could also score additional points for improving more than one bridge or culvert. This criterion would not apply to Bicycle Network and Pedestrian Connections projects, as reconstruction of those bridges is not seen often enough to warrant scoring these elements within that program.

M. Genova presented criterion 6: “Improves pavement condition.” This criterion is proposed to use a similar approach to the bridge condition criterion by moving to the federal good/fair/poor scale and awarding bonus points for improving pavement on

certain key facilities. In addition, this proposal would add points for improving a roadway's substructure, as some projects do this while others only reclaim pavement through a mill and overlay. This criterion would not apply to Bicycle Network and Pedestrian Connections or Transit Modernization projects, and would feature a lower point scale for Intersection Improvement projects, as these tend to reconstruct significantly less pavement than corridor projects.

M. Genova then presented criterion 7: "Improves existing sidewalks and paths." This criterion is proposed to move from a condition-based score to a quantity-based score. Currently, this criterion relies largely on project proponents to describe the existing sidewalk condition in the project area as good, fair, or poor and then awards points based on the degree of improvements. Because hard data on sidewalk condition are not usually readily available, MPO staff propose moving to a scoring scale that rewards projects for the percentage of existing sidewalk within a project area that is reconstructed. This criterion would feature higher point values within the Bicycle Network and Pedestrian Connections program.

M. Genova discussed the final criterion of the day: "Improves other existing roadway or bicycle and pedestrian assets." This is a revised version of the current traffic signals criterion, which is proposed to be expanded to include additional roadway elements such as guard rails, lighting, and pavement markings. M. Genova stated that the main reason for this change is that good data on the existing condition of traffic signals do not really exist, and so a criterion that relies entirely on signal condition is difficult to measure. Expanding this criterion would also more fully recognize the improvements that projects make. This criterion would be scaled based on the number of assets a project improves, and would not apply to Transit Modernization projects.

M. Genova highlighted next steps for the TIP criteria revision process. At the July 16, 2020, MPO meeting, the discussion will be focused on the Capacity Management and Mobility goal area. In August, the discussion will include the Economic Vitality criteria and will also include test scoring of current TIP projects to provide the MPO with a sense of how the criteria revisions will impact the scores of currently programmed projects. M. Genova clarified that there will not be a proposal to reprogram any projects, but that this process is intended to be a test run to see how the proposed criteria are working.

B. Harvey presented MPO staff's proposal for how to evaluate equity in the System Preservation goal area. B. Harvey also provided a summary of previous feedback from MPO members regarding the equity framework, and the decision points the MPO will need to address going forward.

The proposed framework for evaluating equity is to have two parallel processes. One evaluates the criteria in each goal area chosen to be equity criteria, and the other identifies equity populations in the project area that would be affected by the project. The outcome of this process is an equity multiplier, which would be multiplied by the base score to get the final score for that criteria. For each goal area, a subset of the criteria is chosen to evaluate their impacts on equity populations. For System Preservation and Modernization, the proposal is to evaluate whether or not the project

- improves transit asset(s);
- improves ability to respond to extreme conditions;
- improves emergency response; or
- improves substandard sidewalk(s).

These needs were identified as critical to equity populations in the *Destination 2040* Needs Assessment through public outreach and data analysis. Through outreach for the TIP criteria, MPO staff heard in particular the need for improved transit infrastructure, especially bus stops, and the need for accessible sidewalks.

B. Harvey noted that during previous presentations to the MPO board, members seemed interested in exploring how criteria could address the fact that different demographic groups may benefit differently from various types of transportation improvements. They were also interested in how criteria could address existing inequities in the transportation system.

B. Harvey said that MPO staff are exploring ways in which the current equity proposal could be adjusted to more fully address these two suggestions. In addition, she said that one way of thinking about the intersection between different population characteristics is to think of equity populations as having one or more indicators of potential transportation disadvantage. For example, a person that falls into one equity demographic might experience some transportation disadvantages, but if they identify with multiple equity demographics, they may experience increasingly significant transportation disadvantages.

B. Harvey looked at the intersection between low income and minority populations in the region and the share of those populations without access to a vehicle. People of color in the region are far more likely to have low incomes, 52 percent of those without access to a personal vehicle are minority, and 58 percent of those without access to a personal vehicle are considered low-income. Overall, 23 percent of the population in the region is considered low income. These overlaps between equity populations are meant to give MPO members a sense of the intersection between various equity populations. As

discussion of the equity criteria continues, MPO members will need to consider how equity populations should be weighted relative to each other. This could address the fact that multiple equity indicators suggest potential increasing transportation disadvantage, as well as account for the likelihood that some populations may benefit from particular types of projects more than others. Members will also need to think about how the equity goal area could be weighted relative to the other goal areas. This could help the MPO target specific criteria or goal areas for which they want to address critical existing transportation inequities.

Discussion

L. Diggins asked if the number of points is a function of the number of criteria being measured within a goal area. M. Genova said that point values for each goal area are a function of both the number of criteria within that goal area and the points ascribed to each criterion. Point values for the criteria will be revisited in July and August, so more conversations will be had at upcoming MPO meetings on that subject.

S. Silverberg commented on the scoring of Transit Modernization projects. There are projects such as station improvements that do include crosswalks, traffic signals, signage, and other parts of the surrounding roadway infrastructure, so these elements should also be measured for this investment program. S. Silverberg also asked how hazard zones are being defined, and whether this just includes flood risks or if there are other climate or environmental criteria as well. M. Genova stated that climate hazards measured in the criteria include flood risks and projected sea-level rise.

S. Silverberg asked if the criteria measure air pollution or recognize communities that are overburdened by pollution or greenhouse gas emissions. M. Genova said this is not measured in this goal area but is captured in the Clean Air and Sustainable Communities goal area.

14. Members' Items

E. Bourassa announced that MAPC would be hosting a webinar with MassDOT, MassDevelopment, and Operational Services about MassDOT's new Shared Streets and Places Grant Program on Tuesday, June 30, 2020, at 2:00 PM.

15. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (T. Bent). 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) | Richard Canale |
| 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 (MassDOT) | David Mohler |
| MassDOT Highway Division | John Bechard |
| | John Romano |
| Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) | Samantha |
| | Silverberg |
| Massachusetts Port Authority | Laura Gilmore |
| 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) | |
| North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) | |
| Regional Transportation Advisory Council | Lenard Diggins |
| South Shore Coalition (Town of Rockland) | |
| 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 |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Ali Kleyman | City of Somerville |
| Andrew Heimowitz | MBTA |
| Ben Muller | MassDOT OTP |
| Angela Servello | MBTA |
| Connie Raphael | MassDOT Highway District |
| Erika Oliver Jerram | City of Framingham |
| Frank Tramontozzi | City of Quincy |
| Jeanette Rebecchi | Town of Bedford |
| Joe Collins | Town of Norwood |
| Joy Glynn | MWRTA |
| Michelle Ho | MassDOT OTP |
| Rich Benevento | WorldTech Engineering |
| Sarah Bradbury | MassDOT Highway District |
| Steve Olanoff | TRIC Alternate |
| Todd Baldwin | Town of Saugus |
| William Conroy | City of Boston |
| Peter Falk | MBTA |

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Tegin Teich, Executive Director
Mark Abbott
Matt Archer
Paul Christner
Jonathan Church
Annette Demchur
Róisín Foley
Matt Genova
Betsy Harvey
Sandy Johnston
Anne McGahan
Ariel Patterson
Scott Peterson
Bradley Putnam
Michelle Scott
Kate White

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