

- - - **DRAFT** - - -

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Summary of July 13, 2005 Meeting

1. Chair's Report – Jeff Levine, Chair

Jeff Levine called the meeting to order at 3:08 PM. Members, invited guests, visitors, and staff introduced themselves. (See the attached attendance list.)

Since our last meeting, the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has released for public comment the Draft FY 2006-2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Draft FY 2006 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and a Draft Amendment and Air Quality Conformity Re-Determination of the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan (Plan). Comments are due on July 26 for the TIP and UPWP and August 1 for the Plan Amendment. Staff briefings on these three certification documents are part of this meeting. (See Item 4 below.) The Executive Office of Transportation (EOT) consultation with the MPO on the re-evaluation of State Implementation Plan (SIP) Transit Commitments and EOT Recommendation concluded at the last MPO meeting and the EOT is moving forward with these commitments. Discussion on this subject is part of this meeting. (See Item 5 below.)

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes of May 11 and June 15, 2005

MOTIONS: A motion was made by Herb Pence, seconded by Dom D'Eramo, to approve the May minutes as drafted. This motion passed unanimously. A motion was made by Steve Olanoff, seconded by John Gillon, to approve the June minutes as drafted. This motion passed unanimously.

3. Announcements

There were no announcements.

4. Briefing on the Draft Certification Documents by the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS)

Draft FY 2006 – 2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) - Sean Daly,
CTPS TIP Manager

Sean Daly, TIP Manager, CTPS, briefed meeting attendees on the Draft FY 2006 – 2010 TIP that is currently under public review.

Highlights from this year's Draft TIP are:

- Total funds programmed equal \$3 billion
- \$1.5 billion or 51% of total funds are for the CA/T Project
- \$960 million or 31% of total funds are for transit improvements
- \$536 million or 18% of total funds are for roadways

For the FY 2005 portion of the FY 2005-2010 TIP, there have been three amendments and two adjustments so far this year.

The MPO is scheduled to vote on the Draft TIP at the August 11 meeting.

Points and Issues Raised During Discussion:

At what point is the Ozone SIP process going to be integrated with the TIP? I would like to see the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) process pulled into the MPO process and have air quality analysis performed for the present year and not as much as ten years into the future. (Wig Zamore) *The Department of Environmental Protection will develop a new air quality budget in 2007. No new SIP projects will be designed until that time. However, since SIP projects will be state-funded, they will not appear in the TIP. (Anne McGahan)*

The status of all projects, including their funding sources, should be reported to the Advisory Council, regardless of whether or not these funding sources are state or federal funds. (Robert Sturgis and Jeff Levine)

What is the difference between a TIP adjustment and a TIP amendment? (Jeff Levine) *Adjustments consist of minor changes such as a cost change of \$1 million or less, funding category changes, or project additions. Amendments are bigger than adjustments and entail larger changes. (Sean Daly)*

How are they treated differently in the TIP process? (John Stasik) *An adjustment has a 15-day public review period and an amendment has a 35-day public review period. (Sean Daly)*

How does the CMAQ regional target relate to other funding categories? (Steve Olanoff) *For the FY 2006 – 2010 TIP, \$10.7 million has been budgeted as this year's CMAQ target to be spent on CMAQ projects. These are not additional funds; CMAQ funds count against the regional targets developed by EOT. (Sean Daly)*

Can CMAQ funds be applied to railroad grade crossing eliminations? (Frank DeMasi) *The CMAQ funds have been, and continue to be, used for improved intermodal freight facilities where air quality benefits can be shown. Grade crossings may be eligible if traffic flow improvements with air quality benefits are part of the project. (Anne McGahan and Sean Daly)*

How did the Burgin Parkway Project make the Draft FY 2006 TIP and how is it CMAQ eligible? (Steve Olanoff and Jim Gallagher) *Burgin Parkway is one of the highest rated projects that was not already programmed in the TIP. It is also at 75% design. The CMAQ Consultation Committee votes on the eligibility of projects to be funded with CMAQ funds, with final approval coming from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).* (Sean Daly and Anne McGahan)

What is the definition of readiness? (Frank DeMasi) *Readiness is the status of being ready to proceed; i.e., design is complete and right-of-way issues have been resolved.* (Dom D'Eramo and Sean Daly)

Were the four other listed CMAQ projects approved? (Jeff Levine) *Suburban Mobility, Regional Transportation Demand Management, the MBTA bus emissions monitoring project, and the Boston Traffic Management Center all were approved.* (Steve Olanoff, Pam Wolfe, and Sean Daly)

I believe that CMAQ projects should be better defined in the future. (John Stasik) *There is no "definition" of CMAQ projects. Certain types of projects are eligible for CMAQ funding. Capital improvements operating funds should be used for establishment of new or expanded transportation projects and programs to help reduce emissions in order to be eligible for CMAQ funds.* (Sean Daly)

What is the total amount for the Bicycle Parking Infrastructure Program? Are lockers eligible under this program? Is the purchase of land for bicycle parking eligible? (John Stasik) *\$3.4 million.* (Sean Daly) *Eligibility is to be determined.* (Jim Gallagher)

Is the Statewide Transportation Plan used to establish priorities? Is bridge work listed under major highway? What kind of work is included in the bridge projects? (Dom D'Eramo) *Yes, for bridges, but for other projects, the Regional Transportation Plans are used. Yes, bridge work is listed under major highway. Rehabilitation and replacement work is included. Maintenance work is covered under a separate funding category.* (Sean Daly)

Does the Route 1 project in Saugus include bridge work? (Romin Koebel) *Yes, along with an intersection.* (Sean Daly)

Given the funding history of the Central Artery/Tunnel Project, I am concerned about the MBTA's use of GANs and do not want to see any of the agencies use this funding mechanism routinely. (John Stasik)

John Stasik, Frank DeMasi, Steve Olanoff, John Gillon, and Jim Gallagher, while supporting it as a project, expressed their concern with the process used to select Burgin Parkway under CMAQ.

MOTION: A motion was made by Dom D'Eramo and seconded by Sherri Walker to support the draft TIP, with the comments and concerns listed below; to send a letter to the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee explaining this qualified support; and to direct the Advisory Council Chair to vote in favor of the Draft FY 2006-2010 TIP with due regard to the reservations listed below, at the upcoming voting meeting of the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee.

- MBTA GANs (Grant Anticipation Notes) Program: The Advisory Council is concerned about the dangers of borrowing from the future to pay for the present. They do not want to see the Boston Region MPO get into an extended capitalization period.
- CMAQ: The Advisory Council is concerned about the process used to select this year's projects as it relates to the CMAQ goals and the readiness of CMAQ and non-CMAQ projects. Targets need to be better defined and the CMAQ process needs to be more open. It should possibly be pulled into the MPO process, with meetings easier to attend, eligibility requirements made clearer, and selection criteria more objective. Benefit/cost ratio analysis information or other measures of effectiveness should be provided; air quality analysis should be performed for the present case, not one or ten years into the future. An example of this is the Burgin Parkway Project and its relative cost compared to other eligible projects. While supporting this project, the Advisory Council is concerned about the process used in its selection, and the sense that its CMAQ eligibility and readiness has taken precedence over its evaluation ratings.
- Readiness: The Advisory Council is concerned about the process involved in reaching and determining readiness. It is unclear to some of the local communities how this is presently accomplished. Most importantly, the lack of a sufficient number of ready-to-go projects from which to choose means that the system of objective criteria used to rate projects loses its value.

The Advisory Council voted unanimously to approve this motion, with one member, Emmet Schmarson, abstaining.

Draft FY 2006 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) - Mary Ellen Sullivan,
CTPS UPWP Manager

Mary Ellen Sullivan, CTPS UPWP Manager, briefed meeting attendees on the Draft FY 2006 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) that is currently under public review. Since her last briefing, available funding has increased by \$250,000 from \$161,000 to \$411,000. UPWP projects are developed largely from subregional outreach and CMS recommendations. The six new projects proposed for this year's UPWP are:

1. Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements in Town Centers
2. MBTA Transit Signal Priority Project: The MBTA will give priority to the Route 39 bus in an attempt to enhance service.
3. Newton Corner Rotary Study
4. Regionwide Suburban Transit Opportunities Study, Phase III

5. Route 2/Alewife Brook Parkway Traffic Study
6. Routes I-93/24 Interchange Improvements

Points and Issues Raised During Discussion:

Have the selected communities been identified for the bike study? (Sherri Walker) *Not at this time, but the selection will be open, transparent and competitive. (Mary Ellen Sullivan and Efi Pagitsas)*

How will bicycle lanes be treated in the bike study? (John Stasik) *This has yet to be determined, but will also be part of an open, transparent and competitive process. (Efi Pagitsas)*

While it may work well in some situations, I generally do not support signal priority for buses, as it seems to stack them up too much. (John Gillon)

What is the status of Phase II of the Regionwide Suburban Transit Opportunities Study? (John Stasik) *Phase II is nearly complete and should be presented to the MPO by October 1. (Mary Ellen Sullivan)*

How will CTPS manage the additional staffing needs that the extra \$250,000 will require? (Jeff Levine) *This has yet to be determined, but CTPS management is actively working on it and will develop an effective and efficient solution for all staffing issues. (Efi Pagitsas)*

Why is the funding category for certain SIP commitments identified as “to be determined”? (Jeff Levine) *It is not clear at this time where this money will come from, but the MBTA is actively working on determining the categories. (Mary Ellen Sullivan)*

Will there be an opportunity to extend the scope and funding of individual projects such as, for example, the Regional Freight Study? (Frank DeMasi) *No, not at this time. (Mary Ellen Sullivan)*

Will there be an opportunity in this year’s UPWP to propose a project exploring how to advance the state-of-the-art in bus rapid transit (BRT)? (Romin Koebel) *Not for this year’s UPWP, unless one of the presently proposed projects is replaced, but certainly the opportunity exists to propose such a project for next year’s UPWP. (Mary Ellen Sullivan) Perhaps this is something that the Advisory Council would like to explore further. (Pam Wolfe)*

MOTION: A motion was made by Dom D’Eramo, seconded by Sherri Walker, to support the UPWP as drafted, to send a letter to the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee explaining this support, and to direct the Advisory Council Chair to cast a vote in favor of the Draft FY 2006 UPWP at the upcoming voting meeting of the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee. The Advisory Council voted unanimously to approve this motion.

Amendment and Air Quality Conformity Re-Determination of the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan (Plan) - Anne McGahan, CTPS Plan Manager

Anne McGahan, CTPS Regional Transportation Plan (Plan) Manager, briefed meeting attendees on the Amendment and Air Quality Conformity Re-Determination of the 2004 Plan, which is currently under public review. The MPO is considering several changes to the 2004 Plan due to proposed changes in the FY 2006 TIP. This amendment to the Plan must be made by the MPO in order to make the TIP consistent with the air quality-conforming transportation plan. These changes come under two categories; changes to the 2004 and 2010 funding plan for Regionally Significant Projects, and revisions to the air quality conformity analysis for the six projects listed below due to changes in their construction time frames.

1. Middlesex Turnpike in Bedford and Burlington
2. Route 2/Crosby's Corner in Concord
3. Route 18 in Weymouth
4. Telecom City Boulevard in Everett, Malden, and Medford
5. Route 53 in Hanover
6. Burgin Parkway in Quincy

Compact Disk versions of the draft certification documents were sent to members. The documents were also available for viewing or downloading on the Boston Region MPO website at <http://www.ctps.org/bostonmpo/resources/review.htm>.

Points and Issues Raised During Discussion:

MOTION: A motion was made by John Stasik, seconded by Sherri Walker, to support the Plan Amendment as drafted and to direct the Advisory Council Chair to cast a vote in favor of the Draft Plan Amendment at the upcoming voting meeting of the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The Advisory Council voted unanimously to support this motion.

5. Advisory Council Discussion of the Re-evaluation of State Implementation Plan (SIP) Transit Commitments and Executive Office of Transportation (EOT) Recommendation

Time was scheduled at this July meeting to allow Advisory Council members an opportunity to discuss the issues raised during the June meeting's briefing on this subject by Mr. Dennis DiZoglio, Chair of the Transportation Planning and Programming Committee. A summary of this briefing may be viewed or downloaded on the MPO website at <http://www.ctps.org/bostonmpo/index.htm>, under Regional Transportation Advisory Council, Meeting Minutes, June 2005.

Steve Olanoff noted that at the last MPO meeting, the MBTA Advisory Board representative to the Boston Region MPO expressed support of the Red Line/Blue Line Connector and the Blue Line Extension to Lynn, but did not support the Arborway Restoration. They also spoke in favor of combining the Blue Line Extension to Lynn with the Red Line/Blue Line Connector at Charles Station. The MBTA did not support combining the two projects due to schedule considerations and the need to select SIP commitment projects that can be accomplished within the required time frame.

Points and Issues Raised During Discussion:

Was there any further discussion on MoveMass' idea on enhancing commuter rail service from North Station? (Romin Koebel) *No, discussions on service enhancements to the north of Boston were centered on the proposed Blue Line Extension. (Steve Olanoff)*

Fred Salvucci supports the original commitments. (Steve Olanoff)

There is tremendous opposition to the Red Line/Blue Line Connector by the City of Boston. I suggest we hear from the City on this before we move forward. (Dom D'Eramo)

While we may not be able to affect the outcome of this process, we would like our comments to be on record, and, since there is no time remaining at this meeting to do so, this topic should be placed on the August meeting agenda for further discussion and formulation of an action plan. (John Stasik and Steve Olanoff)

6. Advisory Council Committees

Time did not allow for any committee reports at this meeting, but the following information has been carried over from the June meeting minutes.

Freight - *Domenic D'Eramo & Frank DeMasi - Co-Chairs*

The Freight Committee will not meet during July and August. Their next meeting will be at 1 PM on Wednesday, September 14, 2005 in the MPO Conference Room, Suite 2150, 10 Park Plaza, Boston.

7. Member Items for Discussion

Romin Koebel stated that there is a group forming in Saugus that is interested in re-activating the Saugus Branch that would accommodate transportation to and from historic sites in Lynn and Ipswich.

Have there been any further developments in the historical trolley proposal along the Rose Kennedy Greenway? (Romin Koebel) *No. (Steve Olanoff)*

Astrid Glynn has joined the Office of Economic Development. (Frank DeMasi)

8. Other Business

There was no other business.

9. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 PM.

Attachments:

1. Attendance, July 13, 2005

CTPS/WAM/wam

ATTACHMENT 1

Attendance – July 13, 2005

Cities and Towns

Boston: Tom Kadzis

Millis: Domenic D'Eramo, *Freight Committee Co-Chair*

Revere: John Squibb

Wayland: Marcy Crowley

Wellesley: Frank DeMasi

Westwood: Steven Olanoff, *Advisory Council Vice Chair, UPWP & Membership Committees Chair*

Agencies

Department of Elder Affairs: Emmet Schmarson

Inner Core (ICC): Jeff Levine

Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC): Jim Gallagher

MetroWest Growth Management Committee: John Stasik

Three Rivers Interlocal Council (TRIC): Sherri Walker, *Regional Transportation Plan Committee Co-Chair*

Citizen Groups

Association for Public Transportation (APT): Romin Koebel

Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE): John T. Gillon

MassBike: Jonathan T. Niehof

New England Bus Transportation Association (NEBTA): Herb Pence

Visitors

Ed Lowney

Robert Sturgis

Wig Zamore

Staff (CTPS)

Sean Daly

Jared Fijalkowski

Anne McGahan

Bill Moore

Efi Pagitsas

Mary Ellen Sullivan

Pam Wolfe