

JRTC Meeting Summary for August 8, 2001

Chair Report – Bill Deignan

B. Deignan reported that the certification documents, the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), were scheduled for release for public review by the SubSignatory Committee on August 9, 2001. He said that, in addition to the two JRTC meeting discussions of the documents, several public review meetings have been scheduled. Public comments are due on September 13th.

JRTC has set up a UPWP committee, chaired by Robert Sturgis, and a TIP committee, chaired by Malcolm Davis, to review the documents and prepare JRTC comments. JRTC members should review the draft UPWP and TIP and either join a review committee or send comments to R. Sturgis or M. Davis. He suggested using the draft TIP criteria developed at the last JRTC meeting when reviewing the TIP. Comments will be discussed at the September 12th JRTC meeting after which final JRTC comments will be prepared for submission to the MPO.

There will also be a committee to prepare comments on the Transportation Plan and one to assist in planning JRTC programs.

Related to MPO recertification, he said that a facilitator has been selected to assist the MPO in revising its MOU. Interviews of MPO and SSC members will be undertaken during the month of August. An initial meeting with the facilitator and the SSC will take place in August and actual MOU discussions will begin in September. JRTC will participate in the negotiations and the role of JRTC may be an item of discussion in the process.

The MPO has also received approval from the federal agencies concerning recent milestones in its Environmental Justice work. Copies of this correspondence are available at the table at this meeting and will be made available at the September JRTC meeting.

The JBL Bus Line issue has been turned over to the MBTA legal department where it is being examined. The JRTC will be updated on any further developments.

B. Deignan also noted that copies of recent MassHighway correspondence to Senator Cheryl Jacques discussing the Transportation Enhancement Program is available.

JRTC has been asked to participate in the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Program for Mass Transportation (PMT) Working Committee. B. Deignan will represent JRTC.

Approval of Meeting Minutes, July 11th, 2001

Meeting Minutes were approved as submitted.

Organization of Committees

Committees are set up to review the TIP and the UPWP. Additional committees are: Transportation Plan, Program for Mass Transportation, JRTC Programs. JRTC members should plan to participate on at least one of these committees.

Proposed Amendment to the FY 2001 Non-Artery Highway Program, FY 2001-2006 TIP

David Mohler, CTPS, discussed the proposed changes in the FY 2001- 2006 TIP. (Please see materials included in 8/8/01 meeting packet.) He outlined the revisions and the reasons for the revisions. Revisions were required because: some projects costs had increased; some projects were not ready; and other projects that were ready were added. He said that the bottom line for costs must remain the same, reflecting the \$40 million Local TIP target for projects. The comment period ends August 30th, so JRTC members were asked for comments and a recommendation. After discussion, the JRTC approved the TIP amendment, unanimously.

Points raised during discussion:

- Many communities met with the SSC to answer questions about their projects.
- The Arlington to Boston Bicycle Facility will not displace freight service.
- In the future, a TIP budget summary sheet showing changes would be useful.
- There will likely be more discussion by the SSC of MassHighway's decision not to advertise the Natick Route 135 project this year, even if it is funded as a local project. MassHighway is not obligated to do so.

Discussion of FY 2002 - 2007 Transportation Improvement Program

D. Mohler explained that the FY 2002 – 2007 TIP is now in development. He said that currently it programs \$40 million per year for local projects for three fiscal years, '02, '03, and '04, but that there is likely to be more discussion at the SSC

about the continuing levels of funding. The TIP is not ready for discussion yet. However, the transit element will include projects in the recent transit amendment, as well as a 2004 transit element that will include allocations for Automated Fare Collection, the Blue Line Cars and the final payments for the South Boston Piers Transitway. The Central Artery element will be much the same as the current TIP, except that there will be approximately \$70 million in Congestion Management Air Quality funds for the project (mostly for Intelligent Transportation Systems and HOV lanes). This use of CMAQ funds by the Central Artery project frees up funds for other MPO projects. Currently, CMAQ funds are being used for shuttles, TMAs, bicycle and pedestrian projects, alternative fuel ferries and the Natick parking garage. The local projects for the TIP include non-National Highway System projects, enhancements, and shuttles. Local projects have never provided for flexing monies to transit projects.

He explained that the TIP is scheduled for release by the SSC on August 9th for circulation for public review and comment. D. Mohler will be in attendance at the September JRTC meeting to discuss it further.

Points raised during discussion

- Lately, CMAQ monies are funding enhancement projects.
- The \$3.2 million needed for the Natick roadway project will be allocated to another project.
- Adopting a policy of increasing fines for fare violations, including a diligent enforcement force, might be as effective as implementing a new fare collection system.
- The funding level for local projects will be part of the MOU discussions this fall, particularly since estimates for future years show that the funds for programming are projected to be diminishing.

Discussion of the FY 2002 Unified Planning Work Program

Mary Ellen Sullivan, CTPS, presented an overview of the UPWP. M.E. Sullivan circulated the draft document that she explained had been extensively reviewed by an SSC subcommittee and that the subcommittee would be recommending for approval for public circulation on August 9th. She said that it is the listing of all regionally significant planning projects that are going to be conducted in the Boston MPO region. It includes all CTPS work efforts, including, feasibility studies, congestion management studies, 3C process work. The UPWP lists the projects, describes them and includes their funding source and a detailed budget when funded by federal planning funds. There is also a listing of other planning projects (non-MPO) conducted by MPO members.

Many projects in the UPWP are ongoing projects or programs. New projects are shown on page 2 of the budget worksheet. One new project is the Environmental Justice Ad Hoc study. CTPS will continue to provide support and provide for an additional study that could measurably address this issue. There are several MBTA projects: the Assembly Square transit improvement project in Somerville (no funding identified, but possibly conducted by the MBTA with staff support provided by CTPS); a North Chelmsford commuter rail feasibility study; the next phase of the Urban Ring EIR. (Please see attached UPWP worksheet.)

Efi Pagitsas, CTPS, provided a description of the new projects, which include: feasibility studies, an interactive GIS-based transit map, Needham and Newton traffic studies, a Route 9 bicycle/pedestrian circulation study, and a comprehensive study of successful shuttle bus services.

M.E. Sullivan suggested that the process and criteria for development of the UPWP should be reviewed and revised. She also suggested that improved outreach is an important initiative to be undertaken in development of the next UPWP.

Points raised during discussion:

- The JRTC UPWP committee will look at a project's importance to the regional system and whether the funding is proportionate to the importance of the project, and will also look at other projects proposed but not included (McGrath Highway, Somerville, project, for example).
- UPWP projects might be initiated by a state or regional agency, a congestion management study, other CTPS work, or communities. A TMA proposal would be considered, but the TMA would not be funded directly. Funds would be routed through CTPS, MAPC, or the MBTA.
- The funding for UPWP projects is fairly stable from year to year. The funding allocation is based on population.

Member Items and Announcements

Marcy Crowley announced a hearing, scheduled in Framingham for August 8th, to discuss the proposed Turnpike toll increase.

Fred Moore raised the question of whether rail trails have transportation merit when viewed as linear parks. He submitted several related articles for distribution to JRTC members.

Other Business/Adjournment

None was raised. The meeting was adjourned.

Meeting Action Items:

- Members will review draft UPWP and TIP materials and will prepare comments for discussion either in the UPWP or TIP committees or at the next JRTC meeting.
- JRTC will prepare comments on the UPWP and TIP for submission to the MPO.
- Members will try to contribute to a JRTC committee.

JRTC Attendance: August 8th , 2001 Meeting

Cities and Towns

Bill Deignan, Cambridge
John Marr, Needham
John Gillon, Quincy
Seth Novoselsky, Revere
Marcy Crowley, Wayland
Christy May Pouley, Westwood

Agencies

MBTA
Denise J. Garcia, Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission
Robert Carrigan, Metropolitan District Commission
Jeff Lewis, South Shore Coalition
Mat MacIver, South Shore Coalition

Citizen Groups

Marvin Miller, American Council of Engineering Companies
Jay Duncan, American Planning Association/Massachusetts Chapter
Joseph Barr, Association for Commuter Transportation
Fred Moore, Association for Public Transportation
Robert S. Sturgis, Boston Society of Architects
Nick Rubino, Boston Society of Civil Engineers
Donna Smallwood, Caravan for Commuters, Inc.
David Ernst, Massachusetts Bicycle Coalition
Thomas Lenthall, New England Bus Transportation Association
Malcolm Davis, Walk Boston

Visitors

Ed Lowney

Herbert Pence, Gulbankian Bus

David Mohler, CTPS

Mary Ellen Sullivan, CTPS

Pam Wolfe, CTPS