Addressing Transportation Equity (TE) Through Project Scoring

December 19, 2019

Betsy Harvey
Phases of TIP Project Selection

Policy Factors
- Eligibility for federal funding
- Alignment with LRTP program types
- Approval by MassDOT Project Review Committee
- Support from a public agency (such as a municipality, a transit agency, or MassDOT)

Project Scoring
- Criteria are based on MPO goal areas
- Criteria are tailored to MPO investment programs (future)

Final Factors
- Readiness
- Regional distribution
- Public feedback
- Relationship to regional needs and performance

Framework adapted from the Atlanta Regional Commission. LRTP = Long-Range Transportation Plan. MassDOT = Massachusetts Department of Transportation. PRC = Project Review Committee. TIP = Transportation Improvement Program.
Phases of TIP Project Selection

Policy Factors
- Eligibility for federal funding
- Alignment with LRTP program types
- Approval by MassDOT Project Review Committee
- Support from a public agency (such as a municipality, a transit agency, or MassDOT)

Project Scoring
- Criteria are based on MPO goal areas
- Criteria are tailored to MPO investment programs (future)

Final Factors
- Readiness
- Regional distribution
- Public feedback
- Relationship to regional needs and performance

Topic for 12/19: Transportation Equity

Framework adapted from the Atlanta Regional Commission. LRTP = Long-Range Transportation Plan. MassDOT = Massachusetts Department of Transportation. PRC = Project Review Committee. TIP = Transportation Improvement Program.
Outline

• Framing the conversation
• Current TE TIP project evaluation criteria
• Considerations for possible equity criteria revisions
• Discussion questions
  o Should the MPO integrate equity into other goal areas, rather than have a standalone set of equity criteria?
  o To what extent should the MPO devote a larger percentage of possible points to transportation equity?
Framing the Conversation
Federal Guidance

- Definitions of TE populations must be consistent with federal regulations
- Identification of protected populations should be consistent with federal recommendations
TE Populations Through 2021 TIP

- Minority population
- Low-income households
- People with limited English proficiency (LEP)
- Elderly population (ages 75 and older)
- People with disabilities
- Carless households
TE Populations for 2022 TIP and Beyond

- Minority population
- People with limited English proficiency
- Elderly population
- People with disabilities
- Carless households
- Youth population (ages 17 and younger)
- Low-income population (≤ 200% of the poverty level)
Ensure that all people receive comparable benefits from, and are not disproportionately burdened by, MPO investments, regardless of race, color, national origin, age, income, ability, or sex.
Destination 2040 TE Objectives

• Prioritize MPO investments that benefit equity populations
• Minimize potential harmful environmental, health, and safety effects of MPO-funded projects for all equity populations
• Promote investments that support transportation for all ages
• Promote investments that are accessible to all people regardless of ability
Establish TE goal and objectives through LRTP
Align with federal regulations

Develop TIP project evaluation criteria
Help MPO meet TE goal

Program TIP projects

Complete DI/DB analysis for each TIP
Check for disparate impacts (DI) and disproportionate burdens (DB)
Ensure MPO meets TE goal
Current TE Project Scoring Criteria
Current Equity Scoring Approach

Based on proximity to project

1,000 People with LEP = +1

1,000 People 75 or older = +1

+2
# Current Criteria

Does the percent of the population served (within one-half mile) exceed the regional average?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+1 point</td>
<td>Minority/elderly populations/low-income households ≤ 2,000 people or households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+2 points</td>
<td>Minority/elderly populations/low-income households &gt; 2,000 people or households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-10 points</td>
<td>Project creates a burden for Title VI/nondiscrimination populations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maximum of 12 equity points (9% of possible score)
Current Criteria

Does the percent of the population served (within one-half mile) exceed the regional average?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO</th>
<th>0 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>12 equity points (9% of possible score)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

+1 point  ➔  LEP population/people with disabilities/zero-vehicle households ≤ 1,000 people or households

+2 points  ➔  LEP population/people with disabilities/zero-vehicle households 1,000 people or households

-10 points  ➔  Project creates a burden for Title VI/nondiscrimination populations
Drawbacks of Current Criteria

Projects with percent of equity population just below regional average can’t get points

Distribution of Equity Scores for Projects Programmed in FFYs 2017–20 TIPs
Examples

Intersection Improvements at Route 3A/Summer Street Rotary (Hingham)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Minority Population</th>
<th>Low-income Households</th>
<th>People with LEP</th>
<th>People with Disabilities</th>
<th>Elderly Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Area</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Examples

### Intersection Improvements at Route 3A/Summer Street Rotary (Hingham)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Minority Population</th>
<th>Low-income Households</th>
<th>People with LEP</th>
<th>People with Disabilities</th>
<th>Elderly Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Area</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region-wide</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Examples

## Rehabilitation of Essex Street (Lynn)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Minority Population</th>
<th>Low-income Households</th>
<th>People with LEP</th>
<th>People with Disabilities</th>
<th>Elderly Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Area</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
<td>56.7%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Examples

#### Rehabilitation of Essex Street (Lynn)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Minority Population</th>
<th>Low-income Households</th>
<th>People with LEP</th>
<th>People with Disabilities</th>
<th>Elderly Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Area</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
<td>56.7%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region-wide</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Drawbacks of Current Criteria

- Projects with percent of equity population just below regional average can’t get points
- Proximity to a project does not mean people will benefit from it or be able to use it
Drawbacks of Current Criteria

• Projects with percent of equity population just below regional average can’t get points
• Proximity to a project does not mean people will benefit from it or be able to use it
• Criteria do not directly support the MPO’s TE goal and objectives
Drawbacks of Current Criteria

• Projects with percent of equity population just below regional average can’t get points
• Proximity to a project does not mean people will benefit from it or be able to use it
• Criteria do not directly support the MPO’s TE goal and objectives
• Vague criteria for identifying burdens
Considerations for Possible Criteria Revisions
Focus Groups

How can the MPO best improve transportation in the region?

1. Promote more equitable transportation mobility
2. Improve pedestrian safety
3. Maintain the existing transit system
4. Prioritize buses with dedicated bus lanes
5. Promote economic development by increasing access to jobs and services
6. Maintain and improve existing sidewalks
7. Create new connections in the bicycle network
8. Enhance climate resiliency and the ability to respond to emergencies
9. Improve bicycle safety
10. Maintain and improve existing roads and bridges
11. Reduce emissions and pollution
12. Limit the environmental impacts of projects
13. Reduce congestion
14. Improve auto safety
15. Improve mobility and safety for trucks
16. Improve auto safety
17. Reduce congestion
18. Limit the environmental impacts of projects
19. Reduce emissions and pollution
20. Maintain and improve existing roads and bridges
21. Improve bicycle safety
22. Enhance climate resiliency and the ability to respond to emergencies
23. Create new connections in the bicycle network
24. Maintain and improve existing sidewalks
25. Promote economic development by increasing access to jobs and services
26. Prioritize buses with dedicated bus lanes
27. Maintain the existing transit system
28. Improve pedestrian safety
29. Promote more equitable transportation mobility

First Priority | Second Priority | Third Priority
How can the MPO best improve transportation in the region?

- Improve mobility and safety for trucks
- Improve auto safety
- Limit the environmental impacts of projects
- Maintain and improve existing sidewalks
- Enhance climate resiliency and the ability to respond to emergencies
- Maintain and improve existing roads and bridges
- Promote economic development by increasing access to jobs and services
- Maintain the existing transit system
- Prioritize buses with dedicated bus lanes
- Create new connections in the bicycle network
- Reduce congestion
- Improve bicycle safety
- Reduce emissions and pollution

Promote more equitable transportation mobility

Improve pedestrian safety
Goals for the New Criteria

• Meet federal guidance
• Help the MPO meet the TE goal and objectives
• Award progressively more points to projects based on the share of the equity population that would benefit
• Assess impacts to TE populations rather than proximity
Planned Changes

• Change MPO low-income definition to be based on poverty status
• Add youth population
• Remove carless households
• Clarify criteria that identify burdens on equity populations
Discussion
Discussion

Staff Proposals

Integrate equity into other goal areas, rather than a standalone set of criteria

Questions for MPO

Are you comfortable with this approach?
Proposed Equity Scoring Approach

Based on project impacts

- Reduces Transit Vehicle Delay = +1
- Improves bicycle network = +1
- Improves ADA accessibility = +2

1,000 People with LEP
1,000 People 75 or older

Criteria identified through
- TIP public outreach
- MPO members
- LRTP Needs Assessment
Discussion

Staff Proposals

Integrate equity into other goal areas, rather than a standalone set of criteria

Questions for MPO

Are you comfortable with this approach?
Discussion

Staff Proposals

Integrate equity into other goal areas, rather than a standalone set of criteria

Questions for MPO

Devote larger percentage of possible points to transportation equity

Are you comfortable with this approach?

To what extent should the MPO do this?
Next Steps

• Incorporate MPO feedback into developing preliminary project scoring proposals (late spring)

• Rescore past projects with new scoring proposals (summer)
Questions?