

MPO Meeting Minutes

Memorandum for the Record

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

April 30, 2020 Meeting

10:00 AM–12:45 PM, Zoom conferencing

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 meeting of March 26, 2020
- Release the federal fiscal years (FFY) 2021–25 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for a 21-day public review period
- Endorse Highway Amendment Three to the FFYs 2020–24 TIP
- Delete MassDOT Project #608611 (Randolph—Quincy—Replacement and Rehabilitation of the Highway Lighting System at Interstate 93 (I-93)/Route 24) from FFYs 2020–24 TIP
- Release FFYs 2020–24 TIP Transit Amendment Four for a 21-day public review period
- Endorse Amendment One to *Destination 2040* Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- Endorse Amendment One to the FFY 2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

See attendance on pages 23–24.

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 stated there are no upcoming quarterly away meetings. She proposed moving the May 7 MPO meeting to May 14, and the May 21 MPO meeting to May 28. D. Mohler

asked if any board members had an objection to the schedule change and none replied. Schedule change accepted.

T. Teich stated that MPO staff are moving forward with the strategic planning process. Staff members conducted one interview and are still in the contracting process. T. Teich stated there is an approximate six-month schedule with possibility of an extension due to the remote working conditions.

T. Teich summarized today's agenda and its action items. T. Teich announced that at the May 28, 2020, MPO meeting, board members will vote to approve the documents discussed at today's meeting.

4. Public Comments

Heather Clish (Senior Director of Conservation and Recreation Policy, Appalachian Mountain Club) commented in opposition to the current design of MassDOT project #608611 (Randolph—Quincy—Replacement and Rehabilitation of the Highway Lighting System at I-93/Route 24). The project is currently programmed in the FFY 2020 Statewide Highway element of the FFYs 2020–24 TIP. Additional information can be found in “FFYs 2020–24 TIP Amendment Three,” which is posted to the [MPO meeting calendar](#). H. Clish submitted a written comment letter that is also posted to the [MPO meeting calendar](#). H. Clish shared the difficulty in finding information on the environmental review process. She expressed concern over the impact of 4000 Kelvin (K) lighting on the Blue Hills Reservation area's priority habitat and nocturnal ecosystem. H. Clish requested replacing lighting on the existing poles with 3000K or lower.

Maile Panerio-Langer (Associate Director, Friends of the Blue Hills) also commented in opposition to the current design of MassDOT project #608611 (Randolph—Quincy—Replacement and Rehabilitation of the Highway Lighting System at I-93/Route 24). M. Panerio-Langer stated that she met with individuals from the State's Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program and the Department of Conservation and Recreation, who were unaware of the project. She shared the following concerns: the illuminance level is 20 times greater than recommended for these priority habitats, key stakeholders were not consulted, it is not energy efficient, harmful to the environment, and costly.

Steve Olanoff (Three Rivers Interlocal Council [TRIC] Alternate) also commented on MassDOT project #608611 (Randolph—Quincy—Replacement and Rehabilitation of the Highway Lighting System at I-93/Route 24). S. Olanoff makes these comments as a private citizen, not on behalf of TRIC regarding this project. He stated that the current

lighting is sufficient and more energy efficient lighting like light emitting diode (LED) bulbs should be used. He stated the project is not in line with the State's greenhouse gas emissions reductions goals. S. Olanoff asked to remove the project from the current TIP, and revisit the project in future amendments.

Kelly Beatty (Resident of the Town of Chelmsford and Member of the International Dark-Sky Association) commented in opposition to the current design of MassDOT project #608611 (Randolph—Quincy—Replacement and Rehabilitation of the Highway Lighting System at I-93/Route 24). K. Beatty expressed concern over the project's high-mast lighting, which will impact the Blue Hills Reservation habitat, citing the Illuminating Engineering Society's lighting standards. He stated no formal environmental review was conducted, no environmental stakeholders were consulted, and there are discrepancies in the planning documents. K. Beatty asked to remove project from the FFYs 2020–24 TIP. K. Beatty submitted a written comment letter, which is posted to the [MPO meeting calendar](#).

Paul Dale (Chair of the Energy Committee, Sierra Club Massachusetts) commented in opposition to the current design of MassDOT project #608611 (Randolph—Quincy—Replacement and Rehabilitation of the Highway Lighting System at I-93/Route 24). P. Dale expressed concern over the project's harmful impact on the Blue Hills Reservation area's sensitive habitat and its nocturnal ecosystem due to the high-mast lighting. P. Dale asked to retrofit the existing poles with lower temperature light bulbs, and enhance wayfinding measures with reflective signage and roadway striping to improve safety and cost efficiency.

Leonard Simon (Formerly Board of Selectmen, Town of Sudbury) advocated for TIP project #608164 (Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Phase 2D). The project is currently programmed in the FFY 2022 annual element of the TIP with MPO Regional Target funds. L. Simon reported that an adjacent segment of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail recently received an award from the American Public Works Association. L. Simon reported that he has asked Sudbury Town officials to expedite work on its design plans.

Barbara Pike (Member of the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail) also advocated for TIP project #608164 (Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Phase 2D). B. Pike asked for support for full funding of the project.

Anne Anderson (Member of the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail) advocated for TIP project #608164 (Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Phase 2D). A. Anderson stated high demand for the trail and requested full funding.

Emily Teller (Secretary of the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail) advocated for TIP project #608164 (Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Phase 2D). E. Teller reported that an adjacent segment of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail recently received an award from the American Public Works Association. E. Teller thanked the MPO board for Amendment Three and asked to keep the project funded.

Franny Osmond (Resident of the Town of Acton) advocated for TIP project #608164 (Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Phase 2D). F. Osmond commented on the importance of planning and encouraged members to think radically to make major change. F. Osmond also advocated for TIP project #608229 (Intersection & Signal Improvements at Kelley's Corner, Route 111 [Massachusetts Avenue] and Route 27 [Main Street]).

Sharon Galpin (Member of the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail) advocated for TIP project #608164 (Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Phase 2D). S. Galpin commented on the history of the project's design plans.

Jared Hansen (Member of the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and resident Framingham) advocated for TIP project #608164 (Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Phase 2D).

Janie Dretler (Sudbury Board of Selectman) advocated for TIP project #608164 (Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Phase 2D). J. Dretler submitted a written comment on her own behalf (and not the Board), which is posted to the [MPO meeting calendar](#). Town Manager Henry Hayes also submitted a letter of support. J. Dretler commented on the continued high usage of the trail during the COVID-19 pandemic, and thanked Matt Genova for his thoughtful response.

All written public comments received on FFYs 2020–24 TIP Amendment Three are posted to the [MPO meeting calendar](#).

5. Committee Chairs' Reports

There were none.

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

L. Diggins announced the Advisory Council would meet next on May 13, 2020, via Zoom to discuss the TIP process. He encouraged all parties to participate virtually.

**7. Action Item: Approval of March 26, 2020, MPO Meeting Minutes—
*Róisín Foley, MPO Staff***

Vote

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 26, 2020, was made by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Advisory Board (Brian Kane) and seconded by the North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) (Tina Cassidy). The motion carried.

8. Action Item: DRAFT FFYs 2021-25 TIP—*Matt Genova, MPO staff TIP Manager*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [Draft FFYs 2021–25 TIP Document](#)
2. [Draft FFYs 2021–25 TIP: Final Programming Scenario](#)
3. [Draft FFYs 2021–25 TIP—MBTA Capital Program](#)

M. Genova began his presentation. He stated that the goals today are to recap key takeaways from FFYs 2021–25 TIP programming discussions, and vote to release the draft FFYs 2021–25 TIP for a 21-day public review period. The next step is to endorse the final FFYs 2021–25 TIP in May.

M. Genova stated that the TIP document was updated with a new color scheme for consistency with the LRTP, *Destination 2040*, and the forthcoming FFY 2021 UPWP. There is an expanded Executive Summary and a new chapter on Transportation Equity that aggregates some of the equity-specific content that was previously in Chapter 4. M. Genova thanked specific members of MPO staff for their support in this year's TIP process, from the Certification, Graphics, and Editorial departments.

He provided an overview of FFYs 2021–25 TIP funding by investment program, and displayed a pie chart of MPO Regional Target funding across its six investment programs. The total funding is approximately \$538 million over the five years of the TIP. The plurality of MPO funding is allocated to Complete Streets (45.5 percent) with the remainder of funding allocated to Major Infrastructure (34 percent), Intersection Improvements (11.9 percent), Bicycle and Pedestrian (5.7 percent), Community Connections (1.6 percent) and Transit Modernization (1 percent).

M. Genova displayed a graph depicting Investment Program funding levels relative to LRTP goals. He stated that this year's TIP funding closely aligns with the LRTP goals, although the MPO slightly overprogrammed on Bicycle and Pedestrian, slightly underprogrammed on Intersection Improvements, and was short of the funding goal for Transit Modernization, with only one year of funding allocated to it thus far.

He then displayed a graph of TIP funding across the MPO's subregions, noting the boost in relative funding level for North Suburban Planning Council (NSPC) and the reduction in funding for MetroWest Regional Collaborative (MWRC), due to new projects being added to the TIP this year and other projects moving out of the TIP, because they were advertised for construction.

He highlighted the new Regional Target projects added to the TIP this year by Investment Program: 1) Complete Streets (#610662: Woburn—Roadway and Intersection Improvements at Woburn Common [\$16,680,800]), 2) Intersection Improvements (#608067: Burlington/Woburn—Intersection Reconstruction at Route 3 [Cambridge Road] and Bedford Road [\$1,670,400]), 3) Bicycle/Pedestrian (#610544: Peabody—Multiuse Path Construction of Independence Greenway at Interstate 95 and Route 1 [\$6,803,400]), 4) Community Connections (pilot program that allocated \$822,000 to five small-scale projects), and 5) Transit Modernization Program (\$5.5 million for future TIP cycle projects).

He shared other key decisions that were made: 1) cost increases covered for 31 projects, 19 of which were over \$1 million, 2) thirteen projects delayed to later years, 3) advance construction schedules created for three projects, and 4) total funding increased by \$4 million across all FFYs for TIP project #606226 (Reconstruction of Rutherford Avenue in Boston).

Finally, he announced the next steps in the TIP process for the MPO. At today's meeting, there is a vote to release the draft FFYs 2021–25 TIP for public review, a vote to endorse LRTP Amendment One and FFYs 2020–24 TIP Highway Amendment Three, and a vote to release FFYs 2020–24 TIP Transit Amendment Four for public review. In early May, the MPO will release the draft FFYs 2021–25 TIP and FFYs 2020–24 TIP Transit Amendment Four for public review. At the May 28, 2020, MPO meeting, the MPO board will vote to endorse the final FFYs 2021–25 TIP and FFYs 2020–24 TIP Transit Amendment Four.

Discussion

Daniel Amstutz (At-Large Town) (Town of Arlington) asked to quantify the projects with cost increases and the ones that were delayed. D. Amstutz requested cost trends, as percentages, of TIP projects over time. M. Genova stated that 47 projects were programmed with Regional Target funds, two-thirds of which had cost increases. M. Genova stated that he would spend more time on evaluating trends and similar analyses, with the board's approval, after the current TIP cycle. D. Amstutz clarified that he is interested in analyses of the Regional Target funded projects only.

Sheila Page (At-Large Town) (Town of Lexington) thanked M. Genova for his response to the Town of Lexington's public comment regarding TIP project #607738 (Minuteman Bikeway Extension in Bedford). S. Page asked for clarification on the process of today's meeting and its voting procedures. M. Genova stated that FFYs 2020–24 TIP Highway Amendment Three serves to solve cost and schedule issues in FFY 2020 because those projects need to be advertised for construction this year so that they can move forward, and because those changes ripple through the rest of the TIP through 2021 and beyond. Programming decisions that were made for the new TIP are also reflected in both amendments. FFYs 2020–24 TIP Highway Amendment Three is essentially updating the current FFYs 2020–24 TIP to reflect most of what will be in the new FFYs 2021–25 TIP. Four years of both TIPs overlap and all projects align. M. Genova stated that the same theme applies to FFYs 2020–24 TIP Transit Amendment Four, which aligns the MBTA projects and programs in the current FFYs 2020–24 TIP with the forthcoming FFYs 2021–25 TIP. Most TIP cycles will feature a period of time in which amendments to the current TIP and the drafting of the new TIP document will overlap.

D. Mohler stated that if a member wants to make a motion on the TIP and that motion carries, then that project might also be reflected in the TIP Amendment. However, a separate motion would have to be made and carried for the TIP Amendment. M. Genova confirmed yes. D. Mohler stated that the FFYs 2020–24 TIP and the FFYs 2021–25 TIP work in conjunction together, and since you cannot approve them at once, the board will vote on the FFYs 2021–25 draft TIP on the agenda first.

S. Page stated that the public comments raised important issues regarding the Blue Hills project [MassDOT project #608611 (Randolph—Quincy—Replacement and Rehabilitation of the Highway Lighting System at I-93/Route 24)], and it should be evaluated prior to voting on the TIP. She suggested that since the project is slated for FFY 2023, MassDOT could take time to reevaluate its scope rather than losing its spot.

D. Mohler asked what year the lighting project (MassDOT project #608611) is scheduled. M. Genova stated that the project is an FFY 2020 Statewide project, and it is his understanding that FFYs 2020–24 TIP Highway Amendment Three serves to adjust the final cost of that project to what is needed to advertise the project later this FFY. M. Genova believes that the intention is to advertise that project before the end of this FFY, which would be before September 30, 2020. D. Mohler confirmed yes.

D. Mohler states that if a board member would like to put a pause on that project, he or she must make a motion to amend it out. If approved, then MassDOT would come back to the MPO when they are ready to amend it back in. If members want to put a physical pause on the project, a member would have to make a motion to delete the project from

the Amendment. Because it is an FFY 2020 project, a motion would be needed now, and then the board would debate and vote on that motion. If the project is voted out of the FFY 2020 TIP, MassDOT would come back to the MPO when ready to put it back into the TIP, if indeed the board could get a place where everybody agrees it should go back in.

S. Page appreciated the clarification on procedures and will raise the issue during the FFYs 2021–25 TIP Highway Amendment Three discussion.

Ken Miller (Federal Highway Administration) recommended that the pie chart displayed in the presentation reflect all programs covered by the TIP, including transit and statewide highway projects. The current one may be misleading to those unfamiliar with the TIP process, because it only includes Regional Target funds.

John Bechard (MassDOT Highway Division) confirmed that an environmental review was conducted for MassDOT project #608611, and stated that it is a replacement and rehabilitation project, not a complete replacement. He stated that he does not have all the specific details on the projects, as he is unable to access MassDOT's full project information system this morning. He also stated that the Highway Division reviewed its options for replacing and rehabilitating the lighting system at I-93 and Route 24 on this project. Some of the existing lighting towers are assets of the Commonwealth that MassDOT has found issues in other parts and as such, MassDOT is not reusing those towers considered to be suspect after inspection, and are replacing the towers with newer systems. He stated that he does not have the specifics on the lighting analysis that was conducted or other design elements but they did go through a site-specific environmental review, and then through the federal categorical exclusion checklist to verify any impacts to federal resources. He repeated that MassDOT tried to look at this as a replacement and rehabilitation highway lighting system at this location versus a complete replacement with a lot of new infrastructure.

L. Diggins asked for clarification on K. Miller's comment, as he is unsure of the problem with the pie chart. D. Mohler stated that the pie chart reflects highway funding controlled by the MPO, referred to as "Regional Target money." The chart does not include the entire MPO package that includes the MBTA transit program, the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) transit program and the Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA) transit program. The concern is that someone may think that only one percent of the federal transportation program funding in the Boston region goes to Transit Modernization, but it is one percent of the MPO's Regional Target highway funds that are flexed to transit through the Transit Modernization program. On a similar issue, bike and pedestrian projects are in the MassDOT Highway portion of the TIP, which are not

reflected in this pie chart. The chart shows only the highway money controlled by the MPO.

L. Diggins stated that on the pie chart, the MPO spent more money in the Major Infrastructure category than its initial goal, and asked how much this is impacted by projects that may have been categorized as Complete Streets. M. Genova agreed it was a great idea to revise the pie chart to include both statewide highway funding and transit funding. M. Genova stated the chart does not recategorize projects included in LRTP Amendment One for cost increases. The chart includes the Major Infrastructure projects that were categorized when they were first programmed, but not the three newly amended projects. If those projects were included, the level of funding within the Major Infrastructure category would increase and the Complete Streets category would decrease several percentage points. M. Genova stated that the projects were not included in the chart because there will be discussion with the MPO board on the Major Infrastructure category in the coming weeks.

D. Mohler clarified that if the projects that are now above the \$20 million project cost threshold were included, the Major Infrastructure category would be significantly higher, and the Complete Streets category would be significantly lower. He stated the chart looks okay but in essence, it shows that if there is a \$20 million threshold, a lot of the projects not thought of as “Major Infrastructure,” have now tipped over into that category. M. Genova agreed.

At this time, Samantha Silverberg (MBTA) provided an update on the MBTA’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) process.

S. Silverberg began her presentation by stating that FFYs 2020–24 TIP Transit Amendment Four and the FFYs 2021–25 TIP are closely related. The MBTA has updated its cash flow forecasts and estimates for its full suite of projects, now reflected in FFYs 2021–25 TIP, which is posted to the [MPO meeting calendar](#). The document contains tables of projects categorized into program areas, many of which were recently presented to the MPO board, but there were a few exceptions.

S. Silverberg previously presented an overview of the MBTA’s CIP process to the MPO board in February 2020. She appreciated the questions and comments received thus far. The FFYs 2020–24 TIP Transit Amendment Four reflects proposed changes to the MBTA’s federal programs since the FFYs 2020–24 TIP was endorsed in May 2019, including changes to sources of its total Federal Transit Administration (FTA) formula funds, uses, technical adjustments to cash flows, and project specifications. The TIP reflects the MBTA’s federal program in the draft state fiscal years (SFYs) 2021–25 CIP,

which is currently undergoing MassDOT and MBTA Board approval. There is one completely new project, a Bus Overhaul program, and two projects new to the TIP, but not to the MBTA CIP (“Improvements at Worcester Union Station,” and “Mattapan High Speed Line Transformation”). She noted other project scope and cost changes found in the Draft FFYs 2021–25 TIP—MBTA Capital Program tables.

Brian Kane (MBTA Advisory Board) expressed support for the MBTA’s work and projects that span across the network and transportation modes. B. Kane asked fellow MPO board members to endorse the FFYs 2020–24 TIP Transit Amendment Four and the MBTA FFYs 2021–25 TIP, which reflects its CIP.

Vote

A motion to release the Draft FFYs 2021–25 TIP for a 21-day public review period was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane) and seconded by the MWRC (City of Framingham) (Thatcher Kezer III). The motion carried.

9. Action Item: FFYs 2020-24 TIP Highway Amendment Three—*Matt Genova, MPO staff TIP Manager*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [FFYs 2020–24 TIP Amendment Three—Full Tables](#)
2. [FFYs 2020–24 TIP Amendment Three—Simplified](#)
3. [FFYs 2020–24 TIP Amendment Three—Written Public Comments](#)
4. [FFYs 2020–24 TIP Amendment Three—Written Public Comment Letter by Friends of the Blue Hills](#)

M. Genova stated that Highway Amendment Three to the FFYs 2020–24 TIP was released for public review on March 30, 2020, and the public comment period officially closed on April 20, 2020. There are two major components to Highway Amendment Three: the Statewide highway projects and Regional Target highway projects.

He stated that the purpose of Highway Amendment Three is to reconcile cost and schedule changes to projects in FFY 2020 so that they can be advertised for construction before the end of the current FFY. This reconciliation happened for both Statewide and Regional Target highway projects.

For the Regional Target highway projects, the changes in FFY 2020 rippled through the rest of the TIP, so Highway Amendment Three also serves to align FFYs 2020–24 with the draft FFYs 2021–25 programming to allow the TIP to stay within its annual financial constraints.

For Statewide highway projects, Highway Amendment Three programmed two projects in the Boston region that received grants through the first round of MassDOT's Workforce Transportation Program. One grant went to MWRTA and one to CATA for projects that help connect people to jobs in their respective service areas.

M. Genova stated that a few other adjustments were added into Highway Amendment Three due to the public comment period. He stated that MPO staff received a comment letter from MassDOT Highway District Five in early April recommending the reprogramming of two projects due to readiness concerns. The first project, TIP project #606130 (Intersection Improvements at Route 1A and Upland Road/Washington Street and Prospect Street/Fulton Street in Norwood) currently programmed for approximately \$7.9 million in FFY 2021, was recommended by District Five to move to FFY 2022. To replace this project, the District recommended moving TIP project #601607 (Reconstruction of Atlantic Avenue and Related Work in Hull), currently programmed in FFY 2022 for approximately \$8.3 million, to FFY 2021. To balance these changes, approximately \$32,000 must be transferred for the Sumner Tunnel project (TIP project #606476 [Sumner Tunnel Reconstruction]) from FFY 2021 to FFY 2022. M. Genova stated that this was briefly discussed at the last MPO meeting on April 16, 2020.

The second project, MassDOT project #608608 (Braintree—Highway Lighting Improvements at I-93/Route 3 Interchange) was completely obligated at advertisement in FFY 2019, and was removed through the Amendment from the FFY 2020 TIP. M. Genova noted that this is a different highway lighting project than the one discussed earlier in today's meeting.

He clarified that no substantive changes were made to either Workforce Transportation Program projects, but the TIP tables were slightly adjusted to include both federal funds *and* matching funds.

He proceeded to summarize the 12 additional comment letters he received regarding Amendment Three, all of which are posted to the [MPO meeting calendar](#). MPO staff received three comment letters for TIP project #608164 (Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Phase 2D) in Sudbury from Len Simon, a former member of the Select Board in Sudbury; from E. Teller of the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail; and from J. Dretler of the Sudbury Select Board. M. Genova noted that he received an additional letter from the new Town Manager in Sudbury, H. Hayes, which is not yet on the MPO meeting calendar, as it is not specifically related to Highway Amendment Three. H. Hayes notes the commitment of the Town of Sudbury to move the project forward through the design process and thanked the MPO for fully funding the project in FFY 2022 despite the significant financial constraints faced during this year's TIP process.

This letter will be posted for the board's review for the May 28, 2020, MPO meeting along with the other public comments received on the draft TIP.

MPO staff received two comment letters for TIP project #607738 (Minuteman Bikeway Extension): one from David Manugian, the Director of Public Works for the Town of Bedford, and the other from James Malloy, Town Manager for the Town of Lexington, and Doug Lucente, Chair of the Lexington Select Board. D. Manugian writes to emphasize the Town of Lexington's 15-year commitment to this regionally significant project and highlights the Town's enthusiasm for moving the design process forward with MassDOT in the coming months. While thankful for the MPO's support of the project, he expresses disappointment that the project was delayed from 2022 to 2023 in Highway Amendment Three, and requests that the project experience no further delays in future TIP cycles as it moves towards advertisement. J. Malloy and D. Lucente write to affirm the importance of the Minuteman Bikeway Extension for the entire region, noting the heavy use of the existing Minuteman by Lexington residents. Both advocate for the trail as a vital way to improve the safety of non-automobile travelers in the region, and highlight the specific benefits of the project for those with disabilities and those looking to connect to the Alewife MBTA station.

MPO staff received one letter for TIP project #605168 (Improvements on Route 3A from Otis Street/Cole Road including Summer Street and Rotary; Rockland Street to George Washington Boulevard) from Thomas Mayo, Town Administrator in Hingham. In the letter, T. Mayo thanks the MPO for supporting an increased budget for this project in Highway Amendment Three; however, he expressed his dismay that the Amendment delayed the project from 2024 to 2025, as the project does not have any readiness issues that would delay it. T. Mayo notes the Town of Hingham's commitment to keeping this project on track for a 2024 advertisement date, and requests that the MPO retain this project in 2024 because of its importance for the safety of all users along the corridor.

MPO staff received six letters of concern regarding MassDOT project #608611 (Randolph—Quincy—Replacement and Rehabilitation of the Highway Lighting System at I-93/Route 24). The project is in FFY 2020 in the Statewide highway portion of the FFYs 2020–24 TIP. Letters were submitted by: Robert Kearns of Sierra Club Massachusetts; H. Clish, on behalf of the Appalachian Mountain Club; James Lowenthal, President of the Massachusetts Chapter of the International Dark-Sky Association; K. Beatty, member of the International Dark-Sky Association; Deb Pasternak, President of Sierra Club Massachusetts; and from Judy Lehrer Jacobs, Executive Director of the Friends of the Blue Hills. M. Genova noted that, in response to R. Kearns's request to extend the 21-day review period due to the difficulty of conducting

public engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic, he told R. Kearns that the MPO had no intention of expanding the 21-day review period window.

M. Genova summarized these six submitted letters of concern, which collectively touch on several issues with the highway lighting project. All comment letters note the environmentally sensitive nature of the Blue Hills Reservation (also referred to as the Reservation), which sits immediately adjacent to the proposed project area. As a protected wildlife area, the Reservation falls within what the Illuminating Engineering Society deems a “Lighting Zone Zero,” where permanent lighting is not recommended. The proposed design for this project is 20 times brighter than the recommended brightness levels for Zone Zero.

The letters also note that the proposed lighting temperature of 4000K is nearly twice the 2200K light that is present at the interchange today. The commenters state that this increase in blue light, along with the use of high-mast poles in place of the current shorter lighting poles, will contribute to much higher levels of light pollution and could harm the wildlife in the adjacent Reservation.

They also state that the new lighting design is projected to increase energy use, rather than decrease; a result that is untenable given the cost of the project at \$5.7 million and the stated commitment of MassDOT to address climate change through investments in transportation infrastructure.

Correspondence with MassDOT’s project manager for this project is detailed in these letters. It was noted that MassDOT has proposed some mitigation measures, including the use of lighting shields to limit the amount of glare that filters into the Reservation, but that these measures do not go nearly far enough in addressing the negative impacts of the project.

The letters collectively question the reasons for the project being pursued, including asking whether there are documented safety issues due to low visibility in the area. They state that a more robust analysis of the impacts of the project on the nearby Reservation is warranted, and that more engagement should be done with key stakeholders such as the Friends of the Blue Hills organization.

Collectively, the commenters request that MassDOT not move forward with the project until other design alternatives are legitimately considered that would be more appropriate for the environmentally sensitive context in which the project sits. The letters state several options including exploring the reuse of the existing low-mast poles, the use of lower color temperature lighting, and the use of LED lane markers to enhance visibility without adjusting the overhead lighting.

Discussion

S. Page asked if MassDOT knows about the pole height and lighting visibility regarding MassDOT project #608611 (Randolph—Quincy—Replacement and Rehabilitation of the Highway Lighting System at I-93/Route 24). S. Page asked if there are safety or traffic issues with the poles. J. Bechard stated he is unable to get into MassDOT's full project information system to view plans and calculations but stated they are rehabilitating and upgrading the existing poles and not simply doing a luminaire switch. They found that some statewide light poles are deficient due to aging, so they are replacing the suspected ones that have experienced deterioration in other parts of the Commonwealth. J. Bechard stated he does not have information on pole height or candle watt on new luminaires.

D. Mohler clarified the order of voting on the Amendment, and the process of making a motion. He stated that the MPO board would first make a motion and a second to endorse Highway Amendment Three. Then, any board member can make a motion on a specific project after the discussion period is over.

L. Diggins thanked S. Olanoff for bringing the project to his attention. L. Diggins asked about the impact of what it means to put a hold on the project for MassDOT. L. Diggins raised the point that these pole replacement problems could span across other projects statewide. D. Mohler stated that the project in question uses state-allocated federal funds, and if the MPO decides to remove it from the TIP Amendment, then MassDOT cannot use federal funds for the project and cannot proceed with advertisement. If the project does not move forward this FFY, then federal funds may be allocated to a different state project, possibly out of the Boston region.

L. Diggins asked what the implications are of taking more time to decide on spending for this FFY. D. Mohler stated that no one can answer his question because, assuming this amendment passes, this project will be in jeopardy if they cannot convince the MPO board that the project's issues will be resolved. The project will either "die on the vine, will have to be put back in the queue, or will be done with non-federal aid possibly." D. Mohler stated that there is no guarantee the MPO is only pausing this project for a couple months, because once it is out, in order to get it back in enough board members must be convinced that it is an appropriate project. So, voting to take it out takes it out until we convince a majority of members that it is appropriate to move forward again with this project.

Vote

A motion to endorse Highway Amendment Three to the FFYs 2020–24 TIP as *presented today* was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane) and seconded by the MassDOT Highway Division (John Romano). The motion carried.

D. Mohler asked for discussion on Highway Amendment Three.

S. Page proposed an amendment to remove MassDOT project #608611 (Randolph—Quincy—Replacement and Rehabilitation of the Highway Lighting System at I-93/Route 24) from Highway Amendment Three.

D. Mohler stated, for the record, that there is a motion to delete MassDOT project #608611 (Randolph—Quincy—Replacement and Rehabilitation of the Highway Lighting System at I-93/Route 24) from Highway Amendment Three. He asked for a second. L. Diggins seconded it.

Discussion

L. Diggins asked if high poles are statewide practice. J. Bechard stated that MassDOT conducts inspections of existing infrastructure statewide and have found that some poles are deteriorating. As a result, MassDOT has made a conscious decision to upgrade lighting systems in different parts of the state and conduct lighting analyses to determine the appropriate height and lighting system to be installed. This particular project then uses statewide data to determine that the existing infrastructure is starting to fail and there is concern for public safety.

L. Diggins asked whether the poles that are going to be replaced based on these data would be replaced with these high poles that have the same kind of issue in other locations. D. Mohler stated that they are replacing these poles at the project site. As light projects are conducted across the Commonwealth, the degraded poles are replaced with new poles, and MassDOT is not doing projects systematically to replace all poles. J. Bechard confirmed that D. Mohler is correct.

L. Diggins stated he understands they are not replacing all poles. He asked, of the poles they are replacing, are they being replaced with the high poles in areas that may have the same problem (as the Reservation)?

D. Mohler stated that as light projects are conducted across the Commonwealth, the degrading poles are replaced with higher poles. D. Mohler stated that part of the concern is due to the location of the project, and light pollution in the Blue Hills area.

D. Amstutz pointed out that the other concern is the high brightness of the bulbs, not just the poles, which was raised during the public comment period.

David Koses (At-Large City) (City of Newton) asked if there is a concern with pole height or the strength of the attached lighting fixture. D. Koses asked if additional review could be done to improve the lighting fixtures. D. Mohler stated he believes the problem is with both the height and the type of lighting, and he is unsure of other solutions. J. Bechard stated that the only alternatives considered were a build and no-build scenario, based on the analysis conducted. D. Mohler stated that if the MPO votes out the project, then the money would be spent elsewhere. J. Bechard agreed.

Tom Bent (Inner Core Committee) (City of Somerville) asked about the light distribution levels in the pole's fixtures. T. Bent stated that the standard for street lighting is 4000K and some fixtures can be adjusted for wattage and color. He stated that if these questions are clarified, it might help move the discussion forward, and help the concerned community members.

K. Miller asked if there is existing high-mast lighting at the project site. J. Bechard stated he does not know the size of the current lighting, but knows that there are 10 new 150-foot-tall high-mast structures to be installed with 10 LED luminaires. There are 90 cobra-head light fixtures at the project site now, but he is unable to find the height information on the existing system. K. Miller clarified that they are not replacing roadside light poles from 25 to 35 feet high poles, but instead removing all roadside luminaires, and installing 150 foot high-mast lighting in middle of the interchange. He is unsure if the lighting can be focused or not.

L. Diggins asked if there is a deficiency issue, a safety issue, or both. J. Bechard said it is both a safety and a deficiency issue: there is not proper lighting, it needs to be upgraded, and they are trying to move to a statewide system that provides better illumination and increases safety.

L. Diggins clarified that if the project does not go through, then MassDOT is not replacing any inefficient lighting. J. Bechard confirmed yes. L. Diggins asked about the high-energy consumption of the proposed lighting and if there are ways to minimize it. J. Bechard stated they are proposing LED luminaires that indicate the lights would draw less energy. In response to the comments about increasing the energy draw by tenfold, he cannot find documentation in his records of tenfold increases.

S. Olanoff stated there are issues with pole height and the light color. He stated that there would be greater energy usage, even though they have LED bulbs, because you need brighter lights due to its height. S. Olanoff stated there are better options that T.

Bent referred to, and that brighter is not better and believes safety is not a big issue there.

E. Teller stated that full cutoff lighting should be installed to reduce widespread glare and asked for reconsideration of the project's lighting solutions for this remote intersection. E. Teller hopes the amendment to remove the project passes.

H. Clish stated she hopes the project gets revisited. She stated that the environmental review was conducted only on the project site, which raised some alarm, but a more thorough review should be conducted for the whole surrounding area. H. Clish directed folks to her comment letter (posted on the MPO meeting calendar) that cites standard principles for responsible lighting, and encouraged all to consider minimizing impacts on ecosystems like the Reservation in project evaluations.

K. Beatty stated, in response to T. Bent, that the proposed lights have a type zero distribution and the existing lighting infrastructure can have different lighting distributions. K. Beatty hopes to work with J. Bechard on solutions and expressed concern that the model of using high-mast lights, as a one-size-fits-all solution across the state should not be replicated since it is not cost efficient, environmentally sufficient or energy efficient.

F. Osmond asked MassDOT to revisit statewide practices on all lighting projects, using the project discussed as an example.

P. Dale stated that MassDOT is aware it needs to address transportation issues related to the Global Warming Solutions Act. P. Dale reported that he was unable to find documentation on safety issues related to the intersection in question.

Vote

A motion to delete MassDOT project #608611 (Randolph—Quincy—Replacement and Rehabilitation of the Highway Lighting System at I-93/Route 24) from FFYs 2020–24 TIP was made by S. Page and seconded by L. Diggins. There was no further discussion of the motion, and the MPO board took a roll-call vote.

Yes:

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

Metropolitan Area Planning Council - Eric Bourassa

Regional Transportation Advisory Council - Lenard Diggins

Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) - Tom Bent

Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Acton) - Austin
Cyganiewicz

MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham) - Thatcher Kezer III

North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly) - Darlene Wynne

North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) - Tina Cassidy

South Shore Coalition (Town of Rockland) - Jennifer Constable

Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of
Commerce) - Tom O'Rourke

No:

Massachusetts Department of Transportation - David Mohler

MassDOT Highway Division - John Romano

MassDOT Highway Division - John Bechard

Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) - Samantha Silverberg

Massachusetts Port Authority - Laura Gilmore

MBTA Advisory Board - Brian Kane

City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department) - Tom Kadzis

City of Boston (Boston Planning & Development Agency) - Jim Fitzgerald

The motion carried. 13-8.

Vote

A motion to approve the amended TIP Amendment Three (deletion of MassDOT project #608611 [Randolph—Quincy—Replacement and Rehabilitation of the Highway Lighting System at I-93/Route 24] from FFYs 2020–24 TIP) was made by At-Large Town (Town of Arlington) (D. Amstutz) and seconded by the North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) (T. Cassidy). The motion carried.

10.Action Item: FFYs 2020-24 TIP Transit Amendment Four—*Matt Genova, MPO Staff TIP Manager*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [FFYs 2020–24 TIP Amendment Four—Draft for Public Review](#)

M. Genova thanked S. Silverberg for her presentation. He provided an overview of TIP Transit Amendment Four for the FFYs 2020–24 TIP, which is intended to be released for public review on the same timeline as the draft FFYs 2021–25 TIP. He stated that FFYs 2020–24 TIP Transit Amendment Four aligns the MBTA’s FFYs 2020–24 programming with its proposed FFYs 2021–25 allocations. This alignment allows the MBTA to move forward with making its final obligations to FFY 2020 projects and programs.

TIP Transit Amendment Four includes two tables outlining the changes in detail. The first table shows the proposed new year-over-year funding levels for each of the MBTA’s programs, including stations and facilities, bridges and tunnels, buses, revenue vehicles, and signals and systems. It mirrors the draft programming included in FFYs 2021–25 TIP. The second table compares the proposed totals presented in the first table to the most recent FFYs 2020–24 TIP that was endorsed by the MPO. FFY 2020 was adjusted to reflect the projects the MBTA expects to incorporate into FTA grants during the rest of FFY 2020 based on project readiness. FFYs 2021–24 were adjusted to be consistent with the projected allocations for the FFYs 2021–25 TIP.

In terms of total FTA formula funds, FFY 2020 has increased to reflect the carryover of FFY 2019 funds so that FFYs 2021–24 are lower than initially projected due to a reduction in 5337 formula funds received in FFY 2020, which is then carried forward into subsequent years.

For other FTA funding programs, the Green Line Extension funding increase is due to \$150 million of FFY 2019 funds being carried forward into FFY 2020. The Ferry Grant funding is likewise carried forward from FFY 2019 to FFY 2020.

The Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) has been increased to include Positive Train Control and Fiber Resiliency and is based on the current drawdown schedule for these programs.

The changes in annual TIP program amounts are based on project readiness and the current draft SFYs 2021–25 CIP currently under development. The only significant reduction in Transit Amendment Four is for the Signals/Systems Upgrade Program, which is due primarily to a change in funding for the Automatic Train Control (or ATC) North Side Commuter Rail line project from FTA formula funds to an RRIF loan. These funds were reallocated to other TIP programs (e.g., Revenue Vehicles, Bridge and Tunnel, Stations and Facilities).

Discussion

None

Vote

A motion to release FFYs 2020–24 TIP Transit Amendment Four for a 21-day public comment period was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane) and seconded by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (Eric Bourassa). The motion carried.

11. Action Item: *Destination 2040* LRTP Amendment One—Anne McGahan, MPO staff LRTP Manager

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [Draft—Destination 2040 LRTP Amendment One](#)
2. [Comment Letter—LRTP Amendment One](#)

A. McGahan stated that voting on Amendment One to the LRTP provides consistency with the FFYs 2020–24 TIP Highway Amendment and the current FFYs 2021–25 TIP. She stated that the LRTP Amendment included a change in funding to its Major Infrastructure projects. Major Infrastructure projects are defined by the MPO as ones that change the capacity of the transportation system and cost more than \$20 million. In upcoming MPO meetings, there will be a discussion on the definition of a Major Infrastructure project.

There are three new projects in Amendment One: 1) Mount Auburn Street rehabilitation project in Watertown, 2) Route 126 in Ashland, and 3) Ferry Street construction project in Everett. Four projects in the LRTP have revised project costs: 1) Route 1A (Main Street) in Walpole, 2) Rutherford Avenue in Boston, 3) New Boston Street Bridge in Woburn, and 4) Bridge Replacement on Route 27 in Natick. The only change to the

document posted on March 30, 2020, for public review period was to revise the investment categories for the three new projects added to the LRTP from Complete Streets to Major Infrastructure/Complete Streets. MPO staff received one comment letter from City of Somerville Mayor Joe Curtatone thanking MassDOT for restarting the McGrath Highway project development process, which will implement recommendations in the current LRTP. A. McGahan asked for a vote to endorse Amendment One to the LRTP.

Discussion

None.

Vote

A motion to endorse Amendment One to *Destination 2040* was made by the Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Acton) (Austin Cyganiewicz) and seconded by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

**12. Action Item: FFY 2020 UPWP Amendment One—Sandy Johnston,
MPO staff UPWP Manager**

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [FFY 2020 UPWP Amendment One](#)

S. Johnston asked for MPO endorsement of the FFY 2020 UPWP Amendment One, which the MPO had voted to release for a 21-day review period at the March 26, 2020, MPO meeting. He stated that MPO staff did not receive any comments on the amendment during the public comment period. Amendment One authorizes \$120,000 in an additional budget line item in the FFY 2020 UPWP that will fund the Central Transportation Planning Staff Strategic Planning process, on which T. Teich had given an update in the Executive Director's Report. The funding comes from a carryover of FFY 2019 section 5303 funds. The Strategic Plan is the first step in the development of an MPO operations plan, as recommended by the 2019 Federal certification review.

Discussion

None

Vote

A motion to endorse Amendment One to the FFY 2020 UPWP was made by the North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) (T. Cassidy) and seconded by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins). The motion carried.

13. Member Items

There were none.

D. Mohler announced that the next MPO board meetings will be held on May 14, 2020, and May 28, 2020.

D. Mohler stated that MassDOT is tentatively releasing its CIP at its May 11, 2020, board meeting. MPO staff are hosting a regional forum to discuss the CIP on May 21, 2020.

14. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane) and seconded by North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) (T. Cassidy). 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
	John Romano
MassDOT Highway Division	John Bechard
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)	Austin Cyganiewicz
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
Maile Panerio-Langer	Friends of the Blue Hills
Heather Clish	Appalachian Mountain Club
Leonard Simon	Formerly Sudbury Board of Selectmen
Barbara Pike	Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail
Anne Anderson	Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail
Emily Teller	Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail
Kelly Beatty	Chelmsford resident and the International Dark-Sky Association
Franny Osmond	Acton resident
Sharon Galpin	Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail
Jared Hansen	Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail
Janie Dretler	Sudbury Board of Selectman
Paul Dale	Sierra Club Massachusetts
Frank Tramontozzi	City of Quincy

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Tegin Teich, Executive Director
Matt Archer
Jonathan Church
Annette Demchur
Róisín Foley
Hiral Gandhi
Matt Genova
Betsy Harvey
Sandy Johnston
Anne McGahan
Ariel Patterson
Scott Peterson
Michelle Scott
Kate White

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