

MPO Meeting Minutes

Draft Memorandum for the Record

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

May 28, 2020, Meeting

10:00 AM–12:16 PM, Virtual Zoom Session

Steve Woelfel and 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 April 30, 2020
- Approve the work program for the Route 1 Dedham Corridor Study
- Approve the Federal Fiscal Years (FFYs) 2020–24 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Transit Amendment Four
- Approve the FFYs 2021–25 TIP
- Approve the FFY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for public review

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

See attendance on pages 17–19.

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

There was none.

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

T. Teich shared that CTPS has hired Paul Christner as the new Transit Analysis Planning Group Manager and he will start at CTPS on June 15, 2020. P. Christner recently worked at MASCO with prior experience at the Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport), the City of Boston's Transportation Department, and Volpe. P. Christner was also an alternate MPO member for Massport.

T. Teich shared that MPO staff hosted the second Virtual TIP Open House on May 18, 2020, and co-hosted the MassDOT Capital Investment Program Boston region public meeting.

MPO staff also sent a survey to Boston region municipal contacts as part of the FFY 2020 UPWP discrete study, “Exploring Resilience in MPO-Funded Corridor and Intersection Studies.” The purpose of the survey is to gather information about critical transportation assets, vulnerability assessment, and resiliency planning. T. Teich asked board members to encourage participation for their own municipality and subregion before the survey closure date on June 9, 2020.

T. Teich reminded MPO members to contact Jonathan Church, MPO Staff, about joining any of the MPO committees: Administration and Finance, UPWP, and Congestion Management.

T. Teich highlighted the work scope for the Route 1 corridor study in Dedham, the discussion and vote to endorse the FFYs 2020–24 TIP Amendment, the FFYs 2021–25 TIP, the vote of FFY 2021 UPWP for public comment, and the discussion on scenario planning with Marty Milkovits, MPO Staff.

The next MPO meetings will be on June 11, 2020, and June 25, 2020. The July 2, 2020, meeting is cancelled.

4. Public Comments

Julia Wallerce (Boston Program Manager, Institute for Transportation & Development Policy [ITDP]) commented on project #606226 (Reconstruction of Rutherford Avenue, from Sullivan Square to North Washington Street Bridge). J. Wallerce stated that ITDP has conducted recent traffic analysis with AECOM on Rutherford Avenue and wanted to share the results with the Boston Region MPO. This work is part of an analysis ITDP has been doing in Everett along the Broadway corridor to explore options for bus rapid transit from Everett Village into downtown Boston, and the potential for that roadway to include Rutherford Avenue per the Lower Mystic Plan. J. Wallerce stated that ITDP thought it would be important to share some of the findings and concerns while the MPO approves the FFYs 2021–25 TIP. J. Wallerce stated that ITDP is by no means trying to thwart the progress on this project and recognizes the decades of work that has gone into the project, but wants to acknowledge the significant impact the project will have on travel patterns and quality of life in Charlestown.

J. Wallerce stated that ITDP have concerns about the project design conflicting with city and state goals for people-oriented design, greenhouse gas emissions reduction, and shifting to multimodal priority and Vision Zero designs. J. Wallerce stated that Rutherford Avenue was designed based on a projection of demand that has not materialized. ITDP conducted counts using automatic traffic video recorders after the opening of the Encore Casino in January 2020. J. Wallerce stated that the roadway was

originally designed to support an exponential increase in demand that has not materialized. The traffic growth rate has been approximately 0.2 percent per year.

J. Wallerce stated that the southbound and northbound flows are dramatically different and that the underpasses carry a very small amount of the actual volume on the roadway, which caused ITDP to question the utility of maintaining those underpasses for capacity and vehicular flow alone.

J. Wallerce stated that ITDP conducted traffic counts using video recorders near Bunker Hill Community College during a nonholiday week with no inclement weather. ITDP compared the data to 2008 and 2015 City of Boston counts and found that overall, the highest traffic volumes occurred at a time when the casino activity was very low. The takeaway is that the casino has had little to no impact on the peak-period traffic volumes, because it has been spread throughout the day.

J. Wallerce stated that the concern is that it will increase the roadway capacity when the volumes are being split between surface road and underpasses, which increases speed and danger to pedestrians. A lot more pavement is required, which goes against the goals of the project to create green space and increase pedestrian safety. ITDP stated that the capacity limits of saturation for two lanes are not reached. Even with one lane in each direction, the volumes could be maintained with just one lane for traffic per side.

Ari Ofsevit (ITDP) stated that the graphs show that the traffic volumes do not reach the capacity of the roadway; therefore, increasing pavement is not what is necessarily needed.

J. Wallerce stated that the surface option (with just four lanes) could have less shoulders and save pavement space that could be used for green space or bus rapid transit. If all the traffic is put on to the surface, it is still not hitting the maximum throughput approximate to 600 to 700 vehicles per hour per fifteen minutes.

J. Wallerce stated that the key takeaways are that southbound traffic volumes are higher than northbound but neither experience volumes that remotely come close to hitting capacity with the underpass option. She stated that ITDP wanted to acknowledge that the designs presented in October do show dramatic improvements for this roadway, because there are elements of a road diet and more green space. She stated that there are significant threats to meeting goals of attacking climate change and responding to today's context in a post-COVID world, where people's travel patterns could be dramatically different. She advocated for a roadway that has less pavement space, less capacity, and a transit option, like bus rapid transit. She stated that the current design includes some accommodation for a bus lane but it is unclear what that will look like.

With a surface option, the needs of the neighborhood and the goals of the project of the state and the city could be met much more effectively.

A. Ofsevit added clarification for data displayed stating that the first slide shows an older traffic count from the North Area Study in 1962, which anticipated 80,000 vehicles in 1980, so the roadway was built for 150,000 vehicles.

J. Wallerce stated ITDP encourages the MPO to consider improving the design and to get clarification from the team on why the underpass option is necessary, and how green space, pedestrian space, and transit space can be better incorporated into the corridor.

Tom Kadzis (City of Boston, Boston Transportation Department [BTD]) responded stating that it is incumbent upon Boston to respond to the comment letter and presentation. T. Kadzis stated that in ITDP's comment letter, in the second paragraph, there is a note that the project will provide minimal improvements for people walking, riding bicycles, or using transit, which T. Kadzis stated, is false. T. Kadzis stated that the letter indicates a subjective mindset and not an objective review of what the design features are. T. Kadzis stated that there are many improvements for bicycling and walking. T. Kadzis added that some newer MPO members might not have been part of the discussions and presentations on the surface option and tunnel option. The Mayor of Boston made a decision to go with the tunnel option that was bolstered by an independent analysis conducted by the Lower Mystic Working Group, a collection of municipalities surrounding this roadway. That group made the determination that the underpasses were more appropriate.

T. Kadzis stated that there is a comment in the ITDP comment letter that states that Rutherford Ave has 50,000 vehicles per day of traffic only. T. Kadzis commented that 50,000 vehicles is still a large amount of vehicles and verdict on traffic from the casino is still far from out on that. T. Kadzis stated that as far as the bus lanes go, it just patently not true that the City of Boston did not pursue bus lanes. The City talked with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) about possible bus lanes. The MBTA wants to operate the buses coming off of the highway into Sullivan Square. T. Kadzis stated that they are working with the MBTA and a bus lane is not on the table. Bus accommodations are provided through the project at Sullivan Square and the roll in at the Route 1 Tobin Branch. There is Transit Signal Priority at all signals and there are robust bike facilities with separated bike lanes southbound and a 14-foot wide, two-way separated bike lane on the northbound side. There is a road diet and there is a linear park on the neighborhood side. T. Kadzis added that the opponents of the underpass ultimately cite the reduction in park space from the underpasses. T. Kadzis reminded

MPO members that this is a transportation project that is optimizing park space. This is not a park project that is providing transportation space. The priority is transportation. Sullivan Square underpass decking will create a dedicated park that will link to the Ryan playground, a new green space at the Hood Park. The city is raising Main Street for resiliency from flooding by the water. There will be pedestrian facilities at all intersections and through the park space separated from the bike path. There is a new pedestrian bridge going in at Bunker Hill Community College, a new signalized intersection at Bunker Hill Community College Industrial Park and Hood Park allowing neighborhood access to the west side of Rutherford Ave. The City of Boston has spoken with the MBTA and the MBTA has preferences for how they operate the system, and the City will work with them on that. The MBTA is trying to increase the Orange Line ridership. As far as the surface option, the City of Boston's analysis indicated that it would create a new Leverett Circle-like mess at Sullivan Square due to the Interstate 93 ramp connections and Gilmore Bridge. The City of Boston disagrees with the commenter's notion.

T. Kadzis stated that for MPO members who were not at past meetings with Jim Gillooly and with Eric Mackey, the consultant, the City of Boston did a good job of civilly and politely debunking the surface option. The theory that that is based upon, which is that traffic will dissipate, might work in a larger area but there is no place for the traffic to dissipate at Sullivan Square. With that in mind, T. Kadzis wanted to give the City of Boston's comments, especially for members of the MPO who may not have been following this: The City of Boston has engaged the community in various means of outreach. There are many people in the community who do not want the all-surface option, because they thought it would change the space into a new Leverett Circle.

John Bechard (MassDOT Highway) commented that he appreciated T. Kadzis comments. Project #606226 is a city proponent project and MassDOT is working with the City and the MPO on the funding. J. Bechard stated that the City has been going through a very diligent and all encompassing input process working with MassDOT at the Highway Division, and the MBTA, to try and make all the improvements work.

J. Wallerce responded apologizing to T. Kadzis if it did not come across clearly in the presentation that ITDP certainly recognizes that the redesigns for this project, even at its current state, is a dramatic improvement, and that there are accommodations for biking, for pedestrians, for multimodal, for green space. ITDP wanted to share their results to underscore the volumes found, and show the potential for not requiring as much pavement space to meet those goals. J. Wallerce wanted to share these data with the MPO so they were aware, and possibly take a moment to revisit the design if there is an opportunity to make the project even better than it is today. ITDP is also working

on the potential for bus priority with or without the underpass recognizing that both are options and that with improved transit access, there is also potential modal shift to take even more cars off the road.

T. Kadzis responded stating that the comment letter stated that there were minimal improvements and that the city did not do anything with buses, which is different from what was stated in the presentation. T. Kadzis stated that the comment letter is going on record and that he believes that some of the items in the letter are untrue or they reveal subjectivity.

5. Committee Chairs' Reports

Ben Muller (MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning and Chair of the UPWP Committee) shared that at the UPWP Committee meeting preceding the MPO meeting, the committee voted to put forward the Draft FFY 2021 UPWP to the MPO board for release for public comment. B. Muller stated that this year's document has some excellent upcoming planning work identified and the narrative is updated to remove some redundancies and improve readability. B. Muller stated that staff did an excellent job preparing the document. Additionally, the Committee arrived at a consensus to move forward with the MPO staff proposal presented at the MPO board to use the remainder of the transit mitigation budget, \$30,000, for a literature review on successful Vision Zero policies in other geographies.

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

L. Diggins shared that the Advisory Council hosted an extra meeting on May 27, 2020, to have Andrew Clark, MPO staff, present on two previous studies, "Future of the Curb," and "Access to Central Business Districts," prior to leaving CTPS.

7. Action Item: Approval of April 30, 2020, MPO Meeting Minutes—*Ariel Patterson, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [April 30, 2020, MPO Meeting Minutes](#)

Vote

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of April 30, 2020, was made by the Town of Arlington (Daniel Amstutz) and seconded by the MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham) (Thatcher Kezer III). The motion carried.

8. Action Item: Work Scope, Route 1 Dedham Corridor Study—Mark Abbott, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

2. [Work Program: Route 1 Corridor Study - Dedham](#)

M. Abbott shared that the work scope for the Route 1 Corridor Study in Dedham and Boston is a non-MPO funded study and is only for the task that CTPS will be completing. CTPS will conduct a corridor study similar to the ones they have conducted for the MPO, and they will work with MAPC, who is coordinating a community engagement effort for the study.

M. Abbott shared that this past year, the Town of Dedham was awarded a grant to fund a study of Route 1 by the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism. The Town of Dedham approached CTPS at the suggestion of the Boston Planning and Development Agency to conduct a study of Route 1 from the Intersection at Route 109 (Spring Street) and the VFW Parkway in Boston to the Marine Corps Rotary at Washington Street in Dedham. CTPS has developed a scope with four tasks.

Task One is to establish an Advisory Committee with MAPC. This Advisory Committee will include the Town of Dedham, the City of Boston, MassDOT, MBTA, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), and the Army Corps of Engineers, and various local stakeholders.

Task Two will be to collect existing transportation information and data and analyze existing conditions to establish a list of problems, needs, safety concerns and other baseline transportation conditions. Staff will use these data to evaluate gaps and conditions, pedestrian and bike networks, and transit service and review impacts to exiting utilities.

Task Three will be to develop and analyze improvement alternatives and conceptual designs, which will include site-specific recommendations to help create Complete Streets improvements. These improvements would be in response to community context and may include sidewalks, bicycle lanes, cycle tracks, accessible public transportation, safe pedestrian crossing, and accessible pedestrian traffic signals.

Task Four will be to document the results of the study and provide the final report to all of the stakeholders and public. The study is expected to take approximately one year, and is budgeted at \$120,593.

Discussion

Ken Miller (Federal Highway Administration [FHWA]) asked for clarification on the implementation of the study's recommendations since Route 1 is a state highway. M. Abbott stated that the Town of Dedham will pursue the project going forward with design and the funding of the project will be determined later with the Town of Dedham and MassDOT. K. Miller stated his appreciation for the Advisory Committee since that section is a major regional highway facility. K. Miller asked about the intent of Complete Streets on the state highway. M. Abbott responded that the roadway was designed in the 1950s to act like a highway through Dedham into Boston. Since that time, more neighborhoods and different activities have developed in the area, and there is potential along the waterfront area to expand the use of the roadway to include access to multiple users, whether it is people visiting the river way, to improve transit, or even walking to the businesses along the corridor. The current roadway has six lanes and it is not particularly pedestrian or bike friendly to get across. Staff want to make recommendations and analyze if the roadway is at full capacity or if it is underutilized; there might not need to be six lanes in that section of the corridor.

K. Miller reiterated that it is a major regional highway and the commercial development is all on one side. It would be good to have a parallel bicycle facility. M. Abbott stated that there is a large right-of-way and staff will be looking at a separated bike facility or those types of options. K. Miller asked if the Army Corps of Engineers owned all the lanes. M. Abbott responded that DCR has a portion of the roadway, and the Army Corps of Engineers has the waterfront area at the Charles River. K. Miller asked if any of the waterfront land is developable. M. Abbott stated that the Town of Dedham did not think it was healthy to develop the waterfront land, and instead were thinking more about redevelopment on the Dedham side of the road. K. Miller added that a few public meetings would be beneficial, and M. Abbott reiterated that MAPC is managing the public engagement task, which includes public meetings and outreach.

T. Teich commented that at the highest level, a Complete Streets approach means taking into consideration the needs of all the users on the roadway and that its design and implementation varies based on the context of the roadway.

Jim Fitzgerald (Boston Planning and Development Agency [BPDA]) commented that the City of Boston is looking forward to working on this project with CTPS, MAPC, and Jeremy Rosenberger (Planning Director) of the Town of Dedham. J. Fitzgerald stated that himself, Joe Blankenship (BPDA) and Bill Conroy (BTD) will be engaged in this effort, and that there will be a robust community process. J. Fitzgerald added that on the City of Boston portion of Route 1 going towards Spring Street, there is an existing

residential development on the west side of Route 1 and a trailer park. There is also an approved project for more than 200 new units on the west side.

Eric Bourassa (MAPC) added that MAPC is involved as they are wrapping up the Dedham Master Plan, and did extensive community outreach. The Town of Dedham enjoyed the level of engagement that MAPC facilitated. Recently, the MAPC team hosted a virtual public meeting with several hundred participants. MAPC is also looking at multimodal transportation along the Route 1 and Route 1A corridors with the Three Rivers Interlocal Council (TRIC) and the South West Advisory Planning Committee (SWAP) subregion. E. Bourassa stated that on the land use size, a lot of Dedham's rezoning and redevelopment is along these corridors, and the Town of Dedham are looking at all the commercial and retail spaces for mixed-use development. This vision for infill mixed-use development is the motivation for looking at a multimodal design.

L. Diggins shared his appreciation for T. Teich's comment on Complete Streets since he had some confusion on the specific requirements of a Complete Streets redesign. He suggested further defining the Complete Streets term when discussing these projects.

T. Teich responded that Complete Streets is a consideration of a baseline accommodation for the needs of people walking and biking, which does not mean that the design should automatically include a bike lane on every roadway, because that might not be the best way to accommodate safety for people who want to bike anywhere. T. Teich will check with staff for a concise definition.

Vote

A motion to approve the work program for the Route 1 Dedham Corridor Study was made by the North Suburban Planning Council [NSPC] (City of Woburn) (Tina Cassidy) and seconded by TRIC (Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce) (Tom O'Rourke). The motion carried.

Note: At this time, Laura Gilmore (Massport) left the meeting.

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

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

3. [FFYs 2020-24 TIP Amendment 4: Proposed MBTA Capital Programs \(Federal Funds Only\)](#)

M. Genova shared that the FFYs 2020–24 TIP Transit Amendment Four was released for public review on May 1, 2020, and the comment period closed on May 21, 2020. There were no public comments on the amendment.

M. Genova shared that Amendment Four aligns the MBTA's FFYs 2020–24 programming with their proposed FFYs 2021–25 allocations, and will allow the MBTA to move forward with making its final obligations to projects and programs in FFY 2020.

There are two tables posted to the MPO meeting calendar that outline the changes. 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. This table mirrors the draft programming included in FFYs 2021–25 TIP, which was released for public review on the same timeline as this amendment.

The second table compares the proposed totals presented in the first table to the most recent FFYs 2020–24 TIP. FFY 2020 was adjusted to reflect the projects the MBTA expects to incorporate using Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grants during the rest of FFY 2020 based on project readiness. FFYs 2020–24 were adjusted to be consistent with the draft FFYs 2021–25 TIP.

FFY 2020 FTA formula funds have increased to reflect the carryover of FFY 2019 funds. FFYs 2020–24 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 increase is due to \$150 million of FFY 2019 funds being carried forward into FFY 2020. The Ferry Grant funding is also carried forward from FFY 2019 into FFY 2020. The Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing has been increased to include Automatic Train Control (ATC) 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 State Fiscal Year 2021 MassDOT Capital Investment Plan, which has also been released for public comment. The only significant reduction in this Amendment is for the Signals/Systems Upgrade Program, which is due primarily to a change in funding for the ATC Northside project from FTA formula funds to a Railroad Rehabilitation Improvement Financing loan. These funds were reallocated to other TIP programs, such as Revenue Vehicles, Bridges and Tunnels, and Stations and Facilities.

Vote

A motion to approve FFYs 2020–24 TIP Transit Amendment Four was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (Brian Kane) and seconded by the NSPC (T. Cassidy). The motion carried.

10. Action Item: FFYs 2021-25 TIP—Matt Genova, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

4. [FFYs 2021–25 TIP Draft for Public Review](#)
5. [FFYs 2021–25 TIP Written Public Comments Received During Public Review](#)
6. [FFYs 2021–25 TIP Summary of Public Comments Received During Review Period](#)
7. [FFYs 2021–25 TIP Public Comment Letter on Project #610537 Ellis Elementary School, Boston Planning & Development Agency \(BPDA\)](#)

M. Genova stated that the FFYs 2021–25 TIP includes more than \$4.5 billion in investments in highway and transit projects throughout the Boston region. It details all of the investments proposed using the MPO’s Regional Target funds, and the investments proposed by MassDOT, the MBTA, Cape Ann Transit Authority, and MetroWest Regional Transit Authority. The FFYs 2021–25 TIP reflects the programming in FFYs 2021–24 of both TIP Amendments Three and Four, which have already been endorsed by the board.

A final endorsed version of the FFYs 2021–25 TIP will be posted after endorsement, and will include the self-certification pages, any changes based on public comments, Greenhouse Gas information for transit projects, and the public comments received during public review. The FFYs 2021–25 TIP will go into effect at the start of FFY 2021 on October 1, 2020.

M. Genova stated that the draft FFYs 2021–25 TIP was released for public review on May 1, 2020, for a 21-day public review period. The comment period officially closed on May 21, 2020, and all public comments received during this time have been posted to the MPO meeting calendar under May 28, 2020. In addition, there is a table posted to the meeting calendar that summarizes all of the public comments, and the MPO staff responses to them.

M. Genova shared that staff hosted two virtual TIP open houses where staff discussed the contents of the draft TIP, and any comments or questions that arose. More than 30 people attended these virtual sessions and staff heard that these events helped make the TIP more accessible than some of the traditional in-person outreach events. M. Genova thanked MPO staff members Matt Archer, Róisín Foley, and Kate White for their help facilitating the public comment period, compiling comments and responses, and hosting open houses.

Staff received 35 public comments on the draft TIP during the comment period. M. Genova provided an overview of the written public comments submitted to the MPO. These comments are posted to the MPO meeting calendar.

Note: Steve Woelfel left the meeting at this time and David Mohler (MassDOT) took over as Chair.

Discussion

David Koses (City of Newton) commented that the City of Newton is happy that MassDOT sent a letter recommending funding project #610674 (Reconstruction of Commonwealth Avenue in Newton) with statewide funds in FFY 2025. The City of Newton had not seen MassDOT's letter in advance and would have written their own letter of appreciation to MassDOT if they had known. D. Koses thanked MassDOT on behalf of Mayor Ruthanne Fuller and all the pedestrians and cyclists who will have a much safer cycling experience along that corridor now.

L. Diggins asked about the two projects recommended by MassDOT for FFY 2025. He is in favor of them but wanted clarification that Regional Target funds were being used to program. D. Mohler responded that MassDOT had a draft list of bike and pedestrian projects that they wanted to program across the Commonwealth. However, one of the other MPOs was not able to come up with their share of funding, making those funds available in the Commonwealth for programming other projects. MassDOT went to the next priority project, and that happened to be in the Boston Region. MassDOT works to ensure that all funding is used statewide.

Vote

A motion to endorse the FFYs 2021–25 TIP was made by the City of Newton (D. Koses), and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane). The motion carried.

11. Action Item: FFY 2021 UPWP—Sandy Johnston, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

8. [FFY 2021 UPWP](#)

S. Johnston introduced the draft FFY 2021 UPWP to ask the MPO to vote to release the document for a 30-day public comment period. The UPWP programs how the MPO will spend the federal funds it receives for transportation planning each year.

S. Johnston shared that for FFY 2021, the UPWP programs almost \$6 million in federal funding, with \$4.8 million for CTPS, and almost \$1.1 million for MAPC. In addition, the UPWP includes work that CTPS executes on contract to other state agencies and other entities at a total of \$1.5 million.

S. Johnston stated that the MPO's UPWP Committee meets regularly to guide the development of the document. At the May 28, 2020, UPWP Committee meeting, the Committee voted to send the draft document to the MPO to release for public review. The 30-day public comment period will run from June 1, 2020, to June 30, 2020. The MPO will be asked to vote to endorse the final FFY 2021 UPWP on July 16, 2020.

S. Johnston stated that the document no longer distinguishes between FHWA 3C PL and FTA Section 5303 funding for individual tasks. These contracts are now awarded jointly and do not lay out the breakdown for each individual item. Tasks for which MAPC receives UPWP funding have been reorganized and are now in a MAPC chapter rather than split by two chapters. S. Johnston thanked E. Bourassa for facilitating that change. Staff has inserted a new task into the Certification Requirements section called, "Research Next Generation Data and Tools," to help staff examine new and emerging data tools and the applicability of the tools to the MPO's work.

S. Johnston stated that some material relating to the budget and financing of the UPWP has been deleted in Chapter Two because it appears in the Executive Summary and Chapter Eight. A list of acronyms is now included at the beginning of the document. Some of the appendices have been rearranged to mirror the format in the TIP.

S. Johnston stated that although funding through the UPWP process goes towards maintaining the core MPO activities, each year the MPO sets aside funding for UPWP discrete studies. S. Johnston provided an overview of the discrete studies. These are also posted to the MPO Meeting Calendar.

S. Johnston stated that the public is invited to comment on the content of the UPWP during the public comment period, particularly on the discrete studies. Detailed scopes for these studies will be presented to the MPO after the beginning of FFY 2021. MPO staff are also hosting two UPWP virtual open houses during the comment period to hear any feedback and answer questions.

Discussion

B. Kane asked for clarification on the different lengths of comment periods for different MPO documents. D. Mohler responded that the Boston Region MPO has a 30-day public comment period requirement for the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and UPWP, and a 21-day public comment period requirement for all other documents and amendments. T. Teich confirmed D. Mohler's statement. D. Mohler added that those timelines are included in the MPO's Public Participation Plan.

Vote

A motion to approve the FFY 2021 UPWP was made by MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham) (T. Kezer III). The motion carried.

At this time, J. Bechard and T. Cassidy left the meeting.

12. Scenario Planning Discussion—*Marty Milkovits, MPO Staff*

M. Milkovits, Associate Director of Regional Modeling and Analysis at CTPS, shared an overview of how transportation modeling practice has evolved, particularly in regards to scenario planning.

M. Milkovits stated that, traditionally, a model is built on observations from travel behavior and system usage. Those observations are fit with a mathematical model, programmed into a computer, run against scenario inputs of land use and networks, and validated against a different set of observations like traffic counts or transit ridership. However, when considering new types of transportation, like autonomous vehicles (AVs), there are no observations to either estimate or validate the model. M. Milkovits stated that in his previous work, the approach was to define a reasonable range of negative and positive impacts of AVs, and model select points across those ranges. Because of the uncertainty of the impacts of AVs, the value in modeling is looking at the relationships and the complex interactions across all inputs. This represents a change from the traditional “predict then act” approach of modeling to a more exploratory approach, where the model is used as a tool to gain insight into how these different assumptions play out across the complex system of roadway, transit networks, demographics, and land use distribution. M. Milkovits shared an example of this different approach to modeling from his previous work.

M. Milkovits stated that in his current role at the Boston Region MPO, he supports modeling needs and a robust scenario planning effort for the next LRTP and maintaining and enhancing the model for project work. Doing the exploratory modeling approach first is going to give the decision maker and the analyst more confidence to focus on a specific scenario and produce a single point prediction result.

M. Milkovits stated that scenario planning fits in at the beginning of the LRTP and feeds into the revision of the vision, goals, and objectives from previous LRTPs, which then goes through the Needs Assessment, the selection of transportation investments, and the adoption of the LRTP. Scenario planning is critical in understanding the changes in the network due to climate change, sea level rise, storm surge, and how those factors might affect the network and people’s travel choice. Micromobility could also affect

travel behavior and connections to transit in the last-mile and the level of congestion and experience on the roadways. In the advent of COVID-19, there are new changes that will shape how modelers do the work. Scenario planning is an iterative process. M. Milkovits used a visual to display an example context of scenario planning.

M. Milkovits stated that in order to do a quantitative analysis, staff needs an analytical tool with reasonable sensitivities. He shared that this initial scenario planning work will lead to the FFY 2021 UPWP study, "Informing the Big Ideas Behind the MPO's Scenario Planning Process." In this study, staff are going to engage stakeholders and identify key interests for scenarios to run in the LRTP scenario planning process. This effort will also support a program to update CTPS analytical tools to evaluate the scenarios and uncertainty dimensions that have been identified, and to adopt new tools and post processors. Through the current work, staff will be addressing both needs to update tools and to provide an analytical context to the FFY 2021 UPWP study.

Another big part of the effort is coordination with MAPC, which will include learning from and leveraging the work on *MetroCommon 2050* to conduct an exploratory analysis and scenario planning effort. CTPS will provide the results in their tools to MAPC, as the MAPC and CTPS tools are dependent upon each other. CTPS' work will also leverage the work that has been done on the future of transportation and identify key trends through the Commonwealth's Commission on the Future of Transportation. CTPS will be mining the Commonwealth's work to help identify dimensions and the ranges.

M. Milkovits summarized the goals of this work as supporting LRTP scenario planning, facilitating exchange of exploratory modeling results with MAPC, supporting the FFY 2021, "Informing the Big Ideas Behind the MPO's Scenario Planning Process," study, assessing current tool sensitivities, and identifying needs for new model capabilities.

M. Milkovits shared that currently the Modeling team is working with Certification Activities on identifying potential scenario dimensions. The modelers are going to identify how to represent behaviors and conditions on the roadway, and then bring that back to Certification Activities. The outcome of this will be the scope of policies, projects, uncertainties, and metrics that the team wants to test. The team will run through each metric, and based on the sensitivity test, will make adjustments. Finally, the team will do the exploratory analysis (where they can leverage the tool from FHWA) to combine across the multiple dimensions, and then use visualizers and analytical tools to conduct an exploratory analysis to feed into the UPWP study.

Discussion

L. Diggins asked about back casting on past LRTPs. M Milkovits responded that back casting is a validation tool where a model has been calibrated to present day observations and then used to analyze past conditions and develop metrics. Modelers can then see if model sensitivities are valid. Back casting is a useful tool to validate the model for the point prediction. It is important but can be difficult because data from five to 10 years ago can be in different formats; however, there is a lot of benefit from the effort.

D. Amstutz (Town of Arlington) thanked M. Milkovits and asked for further details on how M. Milkovits will involve MPO members in the scenario-planning process. M. Milkovits responded that the MPO members will continue to be informed of current work, but the primary engagement with MPO board members and other stakeholders will be through the FFY 2021 UPWP study, "Informing the Big Ideas Behind the MPO's Scenario Planning Process."

13. Members Items

There were none.

14. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane) and seconded by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (Tom Bent). The motion carried.

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Jay Monty
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	Daniel Amstutz
At-Large Town (Town of Lexington)	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	Steve Woelfel
	John Romano
MassDOT Highway Division	John Bechard
	Samantha
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	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
Ben Muller	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Julia Wallerce	Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP)
Ari Ofsevit	ITDP
Brendan Callahan	Town of Peabody
Jeanette Rebecchi	Town of Bedford
Jeremy Rosenberger	Town of Dedham
Michelle Ho	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Sarah Bradbury	MassDOT Highway District 3
Steve Olanoff	TRIC Alternate
Joy Glynn	MWRTA
Will Paulitz	Town of Peabody
William Conroy	BTD
Erika Jerram	City of Framingham
Eric Johnson	City of Framingham
Rich Benevento	World Tech Engineering
Beth Suedmeyer	Town of Sudbury
Frank Tramontozzi	Quincy Mayor's Office
Joe Blankenship	BPDA
C Senior	MassDOT Highway District 5
Janie Dretler	Sudbury Selectboard
Jennifer Roberts	Sudbury Selectboard
Todd Baldwin	Town of Saugus
Pat Brown	Sudbury Selectboard
Chris Navin	Navin Associates
Constance Raphael	MassDOT Highway District 4
Barbara Rutman	
Aleida Leza	
Dan McCormack	
Darin Takemoto	
Jessica Whited	
William Campbell	
Pat Brown	
Timothy Paris	
Kien Ho	
Simon Alexandrovich	
Josh Waldman	
Leonard Simon	
Patricia Waitkevich	

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Tegin Teich, Executive Director

Matt Archer

Seth Asante

Jonathan Church

Annette Demchur

Róisín Foley

Hiral Gandhi

Matt Genova

Sandy Johnston

Anne McGahan

Marty Milkovits

Ariel Patterson

Scott Peterson

Ben Sadkowski

Michelle Scott

Kate White

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