

Draft Memorandum for the Record Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meeting

May 17, 2012 Meeting

10:00 AM – 1:00 PM, State Transportation Building, Conference Rooms 2 & 3, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

David Mohler, Chair, representing Richard Davey, Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

Decisions

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization agreed to the following:

- approve two work programs: the *South Station Expansion Project: Support work program* and the work program for *Health Impacts of Lowering Speeds on Local Roads*
- approve the minutes of the meeting of May 3
- advance proposals from the following organizations, which are requesting funding from the federal Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program, to MassDOT for consideration to receive one year of funding (listed by organization and project):
 - 128 Business Council
 - *Alewife A3 Route 128 Corridor Plan/Reverse Commute Program*
 - *Waltham Innovation – Route 128 Corridor Plan/Reverse Commute Program*
 - MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MetroWest RTA)
 - *JARC Route 9 Extended Service*
 - Salem North Shore Career Center (NSCC)
 - *Mobility Management and Employment Express*
- advance proposals from the following organizations, which are requesting funding from the federal New Freedom program, to MassDOT for consideration to receive one year funding (except for Friendship Home and MBTA which received three years of funding as noted below) (listed by organization and project):
 - Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)
 - *Reaching Beyond Borders: The GLSS Mobility Links Projects* (two projects)
 - Friendship Home
 - *Wheels to Work* (3 years of funding)
 - Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA)
 - *Enhanced Medical Travel*
 - MBTA
 - *Taxi Vouchers for Paratranist Customers Program* (3 years of funding)

- Town of Acton
 - *LRTA Road Runner*
- MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
 - *Mobility Management and Training Support*
- Town of Acton
 - *MinuteVan Dial-a-Ride*
 - *Mobility Manager*
- Salem North Shore Career Center (NSCC)
 - *Mobility Management and Employment Express*
- New England Paralyzed Veterans of America (NEPVA)
 - *NEPVA Transportation Program*

Meeting Agenda

1. Public Comments

Wig Zamore, Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership, asked when the process for determining the interim offset measures for the State Implementation Plan (SIP) projects would be starting. D. Mohler stated that it was expected to begin this month.

Linda Malone, Friendship Home, discussed her organization's *Wheels to Work Program*, which is a candidate for funding through the New Freedom Program. Based in Norwell, the *Wheels to Work Program* helps people with developmental disabilities to obtain jobs and provides them with transportation to work.

Monica Tibbits, 128 Business Council, discussed two programs for which the Council is requesting one year of JARC funding: the *Alewife-A3-Route 128 Corridor Plan/Reverse Commute Program* and the *Waltham Innovation-Route 128 Corridor Plan/Reverse Commute Program*. Both are extensions of commuter service that the Council has been providing along the Route 128 corridor for 20 years. The Council provided service to 371,000 riders last year. It would like to purchase new vehicles to extend service to office parks in Lexington and Waltham.

Jeannette Rebecchi, Town of Lexington, and Chris D'Aveta, Town of Waltham, added their support for the 128 Business Council's proposal.

J. Rebecchi also voiced support for the MBTA's *Taxi Vouchers for Paratransit Customers Program*, which is a candidate for New Freedom funding, given that there will be premium fare areas in Lexington when the MBTA fare increase goes into effect this summer.

Norm Ketola, North Shore Career Center (NSCC), discussed his organization's *Mobility Management and Employment Express* program, which is a candidate for JARC and New Freedom funding. The program provides a ride service to employment for people with disabilities and low incomes between the hours of

6:30 AM and 11:30 PM every day for a fare of \$2 one way. It has served 52 customers to date and has provided about 4,000 trips through April. The growth rate is averaging about 10% per month. If their proposal is successful, the NSCC plans to expand service to Beverly in FFY 2013 to serve people who will no longer be eligible for THE RIDE when the new MBTA fare structure goes into effect. The following year, NSCC plans to expand its service to Lynn. N. Ketola shared a success story from the program by describing how a working mother was able to increase her hours working and advance in her job so that she is now able to purchase her own vehicle. (He provided a handout with details about the program.)

Christine Stickney, South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree), inquired about the number of customers served by the NSCC program. N. Ketola explained that 20 people are currently using the service. The number of people served is projected to grow to 30 by the end of this June and to 100 by June 2013.

Valery Parker Callahan, Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS), discussed the *Reaching Beyond Borders* program, which is a candidate for New Freedom funds. GLSS is the paratransit provider for the North Shore. Its proposed program will address gaps in the existing paratransit service and serve people who are not eligible for THE RIDE. It would serve 19 North Shore communities. The program has three components: a travel counseling call center, a kiosk pilot, and a volunteer driver program. The call center would coordinate existing transportation and mobility services. The kiosk pilot program would set up kiosks with mobility coaches who would help customers with transportation needs so that they may live independently in the community. The volunteer driving program would train drivers in areas that are not currently served. GLSS expects the program to generate about 20,000 rides per year. (She provided a handout with details about the program.)

Emily Kearns, GLSS, discussed GLSS's proposal for a planning grant that would bring together stakeholders (including businesses, veterans groups, and faith-based organizations) from 19 communities on the North Shore to focus on leveraging existing resources for mobility management. The goals of the program are to: organize education sessions for the stakeholders that focus on mobility management and its role in helping people to be active in their community; grow awareness that mobility management must include health self-management; and design action steps and implement them. GLSS is requesting three years of funding. Part of the grant would be used to hire an organizer. (She provided a handout with details about the program.)

2. Chair's Report – David Mohler, MassDOT

There was none.

3. Committee Chairs' Reports

There were none.

4. Regional Transportation Advisory Council Report – *Steve Olanoff, Chair, Regional Transportation Advisory Council*

The Advisory Council met on May 9. They heard a presentation on the Mystic Valley Parkway Green Line Community Visioning Process, received an update on the draft federal fiscal years (FFYs) 2013—16 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and draft FFY 2013 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and discussed the comment letter that the Advisory Council is preparing for the MPO regarding the TIP and UPWP.

The Freight Committee awarded former MPO staff member Michael Callahan with a plaque in appreciation of his service to the Advisory Council.

The next Advisory Council meeting will include a presentation on the status of the Green Line Extension project.

5. Executive Director's Report – *Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff*

Staff provided copies of the MPO's Public Participation Plan to members. This version has been updated with references to the new MPO structure. There are no substantive changes to the document in terms of the MPO's policies. Staff expects to present a draft revised version of the Public Participation Plan reflecting revisions related to accessibility policy to members in the coming months.

6. Work Program for South Station Expansion Project: Support – *Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff*

Members heard a presentation on the *South Station Expansion Project: Support* work program at the meeting of May 3. K. Quackenbush noted that staff has inquired about the possibility of conducting an environmental analysis on a potential layover facility that could be part of the expansion of South Station. The MassDOT project manager stated that the analysis could be done as part of MassDOT's work on the project.

A motion to approve the *South Station Expansion Project: Support* work program was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (Paul Regan), and seconded by the City of Boston (BTD) (Jim Gillooly). The motion carried.

7. JARC and New Freedom Project Prioritization – *Alicia Wilson, Regional Equity Manager, MPO Staff*

Members received a presentation regarding the requests for funding from two federal formula grant programs, the JARC and New Freedom Program, at the meeting of May 3. JARC provides grants for programs that transport welfare recipients and eligible low-income individuals to and from jobs and employment related activities. New Freedom provides grants for new public transportation

services for people with disabilities that go beyond the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

A. Wilson provided an overview of additional information that staff provided today. This included a matrix explaining the matching funds for each project, the number of trips served by the projects, whether the projects are ongoing, whether multi-year funding is essential for the project, and whether the projects are for services in environmental justice areas. A. Wilson reported that most project proponents reported that their projects could operate with one-year of funding.

Another matrix provided information regarding the evaluation of projects. All the criteria used to evaluate the projects did not apply to every project, therefore staff provided weighted scores to normalize the resulting scores. Two staff members evaluated each project and the final score is an average of each evaluator's score, shown as a percent of possible points. The evaluators considered the following factors when reviewing the projects: route descriptions, details on the project, and how well the target population is served.

Comment letters in support of specific projects were also distributed.

Staff ranked the proposals for JARC funding in the following order (highest ranked to lowest):

- 128 Business Council
 - *Alewife A3 Route 128 Corridor Plan/Reverse Commute Program*
 - *Waltham Innovation – Route 128 Corridor Plan/Reverse Commute Program*
- MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MetroWest RTA)
 - *JARC Route 9 Extended Service*
- Salem North Shore Career Center (NSCC)
 - *Mobility Management and Employment Express*
- MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
 - *Wellesley Reverse Commute and Mobility Manager*

The JARC proposals amount to a total request of \$1.7 million for one year. There is \$2.1 million available from the JARC program. Staff recommended that the MPO forward all of the proposals to MassDOT for final review.

Staff ranked the proposals for New Freedom funding in the following order (highest ranked to lowest):

- Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)
 - *Reaching Beyond Borders: The GLSS Mobility Links Projects* (two projects)
- Friendship Home
 - *Wheels to Work*

- Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA)
 - *Enhanced Medical Travel*
- MBTA
 - *Taxi Vouchers for Paratranist Customers Program*
- Town of Acton
 - *LRTA Road Runner*
- MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
 - *Mobility Management and Training Support*
- Town of Acton
 - *MinuteVan Dial-a-Ride*
 - *Mobility Manager*
- Salem North Shore Career Center (NSCC)
 - *Mobility Management and Employment Express*
- MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
 - *New Freedom Call Center*
- New England Paralyzed Veterans of America (NEPVA)
 - *NEPVA Transportation Program*

The request for New Freedom funds exceeds the amount available. Staff recommended that the MPO forward all of the proposals to MassDOT for final review except for the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority's *New Freedom Call Center* proposal. Staff also recommended second year funding for the MBTA's *Taxi Vouchers for Paratranist Customers Program*, since that program serves the largest area.

Members discussed the proposals.

P. Regan noted that the MetroWest RTA's *Route 9 Extended Service* proposal does not include projected ridership numbers. A. Wilson noted that MassDOT's application did not request that information, and although the MPO staff requested the information, it was not provided. P. Regan expressed concerns that the MetroWest RTA is attempting to shift its operating costs to the JARC Program.

Ed Tarallo, North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn), inquired as to whether staff has a recommendation for use of the remainder of the JARC funds. D. Mohler noted that the remainder would also be available for projects forwarded by other MPO's in the Boston urbanized area (UZA).

John Romano, MassDOT Highway Division, recommended providing two year funding for the Friendship Home's *Wheels to Work* program. He noted that the applicant has indicated that a commitment for multi-year funding would help with raising matching funds.

David Koses, At-Large City (City of Newton), asked about how the costs per rider of the NSCC's program compare to other types of services. N. Ketola responded that NSCC pays \$24 for a one-way trip. NSCC has a contract with GLSS, which provides the local match. He also noted that the service does not compete with THE RIDE.

D. Mohler asked how many trips NSCC provides. N. Ketola replied that, in April, NSCC provided 350 trips for 20 people. NSCC projects that 1,500 trips will be provided in FFY 2013.

Christine Stickney, South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree), asked whether the NSCC's service area coincides with the service area for the MBTA's *Taxi Vouchers* program. N. Ketola replied that NSCC serves Danvers, Peabody, and Salem currently, and plans to expand to Beverly in FFY 2013. Michael Lambert, MBTA, added that the MBTA has not yet determined where the taxi vouchers will be used. D. Mohler noted that THE RIDE's premium service is less expensive than the NSCC service. Given the relatively high subsidy for the NSCC program, C. Stickney suggested reducing the amount awarded to NSCC and directing some of those funds to other programs.

In response to other questions about ridership, N. Ketola explained that the ridership figures NSCC provided do not distinguish between those riders that are eligible for JARC or New Freedom.

D. Mohler raised questions about why staff is recommending projects for funding that score low based on the staff evaluation process, given that there are other projects being advanced by other MPOs to compete for the same pool of funds. A. Wilson explained that the approach taken was to maximize the number of organizations that can be funded. The information and scores provided by staff then enable the MPO members to make their choices about which projects to fund. K. Quackenbush further explained that the scoring system provides a way for members to not only see the rank order, but to also see how closely or far apart various projects were ranked. While it is true that one particular JARC proposal ranked well below the others, staff felt that it was still sufficiently worthy to merit consideration by the MPO and MassDOT.

D. Mohler asked why the scores were weighted. A. Wilson explained that the scores were weighted because not all the evaluation criteria applied to each project. D. Mohler requested that staff provide the raw scores for the evaluations.

Members moved on to other agenda items and returned to the JARC and New Freedom applications later.

8. Meeting Minutes – *Maureen Kelly, MPO Staff*

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of May 3 was made by the City of Boston (Jim Gillooly), and seconded by the Advisory Council (S. Olanoff). The following members abstained: Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Bedford) (Richard Reed); Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (Tom Bent); and At-Large Town (Town of Arlington) (Laura Wiener). The motion carried.

9. Transportation Improvement Program Update – *Sean Pfalzer, TIP Manager, MPO Staff*

Members addressed items regarding the TIP: a proposed amendment to the FFYs 2012 – 15 TIP and updates on the draft FFYs 2013 –16 TIP.

FFYs 2012 – 15 TIP Amendment

S. Pfalzer summarized a proposed FFYs 2012 – 15 TIP Amendment, which includes proposed changes to reflect the following:

- a cost increase of approximately \$650,000 for the *Belmont/Watertown – Trapelo Road* project
- an increase in dollars programmed under the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funding category that reflects the eligibility of the *Belmont/Watertown – Trapelo Road* and *Natick/Wellesley – Intersection Improvements on Route 9 and Oak Street* for CMAQ funding
- the *Brookline Bike Share* (year 2) project in the Clean Air and Mobility Program which no longer requires second year funding
- cost increase of about \$185,000 to the *Somerville – Multi-use Path, Phase 1* project
- a cost increase of about \$2 million to the *Danvers – Bridge Replacement – Route 35 over Waters River* project
- the earlier completion time on the *Boston – Bridge Replacement – Chelsea Street over the Chelsea River* project (funding for this project is no longer needed in FFY 2013)
- the earmark for the *Acton/Maynard – Assabet River Rail Trail* project moved to the FFY 2014 element
- the earmark for the *Boston – Improvements to Gainsborough and St. Botolph Street* project moved to the FFY 2013 element
- adjustments to the *Central Artery/Tunnel* project Grant Anticipation Notes (GANs) payments

These changes were reflected in TIP tables that were provided to members.

Joe Cosgrove, MBTA, indicated that the MBTA may have changes to the transit element of the TIP.

Members will take action on circulating the amendment for public review at their next meeting.

Draft FFYs 2013 –16 TIP

S. Pfalzer provided an update on earmarks that are shown to be programmed in the draft FFYs 2013 –16 TIP. The earmarks are for the following projects (with amounts and proposed element for programming in parentheses):

- *Acton/Maynard – Assabet River Rail Trail* (\$769,314 in FFY 2014)
- *Arlington – Reconstruction of Massachusetts Avenue* (\$2.19 million in FFY 2013)
- *Franklin – Reconstruction of Route 140, Main Street, and Emmons Street* (\$5.75 million in FFY 2013)
- *Boston – Reconstruction of Melnea Cass Boulevard* (\$2.4 million in FFY 2014)
- *Framingham – Reconstruction of Route 126* (\$3.98 million in FFY 2013)
- *Boston – Improvements to Gainsborough and St. Botolph Streets* (\$3.5 million in FFY 2014)
- *Somerville – Reconstruction of Beacon Street* (\$2.58 million in FFY 2013)

Staff is proposing to add the following new earmarks to the TIP for the following projects:

- *Boston – Reconstruction of Rutherford Avenue* (\$4.1 million in FFY 2013)
- *Boston – Improvements to Commonwealth Avenue* (\$4.4 million in FFY 2015)

All of these earmarks were summarized in a handout.

Members discussed this information.

J. Gillooly noted that there are two earmarks for the *Boston – Reconstruction of Melnea Cass Boulevard* project. S. Pfalzer stated that both are shown to be programmed on the draft TIP. The handout distributed today only reflects earmarks that had a change in dollar amount or programming year.

David Anderson, MassDOT, asked if there were other funds programmed in the draft TIP for the *Somerville – Reconstruction of Beacon Street* project. S. Pfalzer replied that there is about \$4 million shown to be programmed in the draft TIP (including the earmark). D. Anderson stated that MassDOT estimates that the total cost of the project is \$13 million.

10. JARC and New Freedom Project Prioritization – Alicia Wilson, Regional Equity Manager, MPO Staff

The discussion of the JARC and New Freedom projects resumed. Members continued discussing the evaluation system.

D. Mohler raised questions about the evaluation of the projects and the weighting of scores. As noted previously, staff weighted scores because not all of the evaluation criteria applied to each project. He raised the issue that some applications did not have all the data included to allow staff to evaluate the proposed projects on all criteria.

As an applicant, M. Tibbetts noted that her organization would have provided more information regarding populations served, but the application did not request the data. P. Wolfe noted that this year there was a new MassDOT application process and that MPOs were not given much time to implement the solicitation and evaluations. A. Wilson added that the new application does not address all of the MPO evaluation criteria and that, for this reason staff has group discussions about the projects to supplement the evaluation.

E. Tarallo inquired about the projects being advanced by other MPOs in the Boston UZA for comparison purposes. D. Mohler replied that it is MassDOT's view that MPOs should not be recommending projects to MassDOT that do not serve an identified need well. He cautioned against supporting a project that is likely to fail; this kind of a recommendation could feed negative perceptions about transit. Also, a project must be viable after the three years of JARC or New Freedom funding has expired.

A motion to advance all of the JARC project proposals to MassDOT as recommended by staff was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (P. Regan), and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa).

A motion to amend the previous motion to advance the JARC project proposals with the exception of the MetroWest RTA's proposals (the *JARC Route 9 Extended Service* project, the *Wellesley Reverse Commute and Mobility Manager* project, and the *New Freedom Call Center* project) was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (P. Regan), and seconded by the South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree) (C. Stickney).

During a discussion of the amended motion, P. Regan cited his reasons for recommending that the two MetroWest RTA projects be removed, noting that the RTA was unresponsive to staff's request for additional data regarding trips and people served. He also expressed concern that the projects do not qualify for JARC and New Freedom funds. He noted that the RTA is now receiving the funds from the Town of Wellesley's transit assessment, which formerly went to the MBTA.

D. Anderson advised that applicants should be informed about all the criteria that they will be scored on.

E. Bourassa noted that he is comfortable forwarding all of the projects to MassDOT for final review. D. Mohler expressed concern again about the MPO forwarding unviable projects.

A. Wilson noted that MassDOT has asked for recommendations on how to improve the application process. She noted that in past solicitations applicants were provided with a scoring matrix. D. Mohler encouraged A. Wilson to contact the MassDOT staff with recommendations.

J. Gillooly asked the MBTA to comment regarding MBTA assessments on municipalities in its service area, and noted that the City of Boston is now paying a larger annual assessment to make up for the assessments that some towns are no longer paying to the MBTA. J. Cosgrove explained that if a municipality belongs to two RTAs the MBTA gives that town a credit and the assessment goes to the RTA. If a municipality leaves the MBTA system the other municipalities in the MBTA system have higher assessments.

P. Regan added that this movement of municipalities to other RTAs has resulted in the MBTA giving approximately \$7 million in deductions (out of about \$155 million in total assessments). Boston has borne a large share of the cost of making up for those funds, having paid about \$5 million extra this year. P. Regan expressed concern again that the MetroWest RTA is attempting to shift its operating costs to the JARC and New Freedom Programs.

In response to a question, D. Mohler described the JARC and New Freedom application process going forward. MassDOT will review the proposals advanced by all of the MPOs in the Boston urbanized area and select projects to award funding. MassDOT will not consider proposals that have not been supported by an MPO. After MassDOT makes its selection, MPOs will be informed so that those projects can be programmed in the TIP.

E. Bourassa raised the issue of the policy implications of municipalities such as Wellesley that are shifting their transit assessments away from the MBTA to RTAs. He remarked on MAPC's work to encourage smart growth on the Route 9 corridor noting the need to concentrate growth so that transit service can be effective. While supporting pilot transit projects, he also expressed concern that Inner Core communities are being penalized when municipalities shift their assessments to RTAs. (Assessments are based on weighted population.)

P. Regan raised the issue of expanding transit service when the existing service cannot be maintained with existing funding.

D. Mohler noted that the MetroWest RTA is entirely within the MPO area and is eligible for federal funding.

Laura Wiener, At-Large Town (Town of Arlington), requested a friendly amendment to split the previous motion so that members could vote on each of the MetroWest RTA's proposals individually. P. Regan accepted.

A motion to remove from the MetroWest RTA's *JARC Route 9 Extended Service* project from the list of priorities was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (P. Regan), and seconded by At-Large Town (Town of Arlington) (L. Wiener). The motion failed. The MBTA Advisory Board (P. Regan) voted yes. All others voted no.

A motion to remove the MetroWest RTA's *Wellesley Reverse Commute and Mobility Manager* project from the list of priorities was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (P. Regan), and seconded by At-Large Town (Town of Arlington) (L. Wiener). The motion carried. The Advisory Council (S. Olanoff) voted no. All others voted yes.

During a discussion of this last motion, L. Wiener stated that her reason for voting against the *Wellesley Reverse Commute* project is based on that fact that staff gave the project a low evaluation.

A motion to advance the amended list of JARC proposals to MassDOT was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (P. Regan), and seconded by the MassDOT Highway Division (J. Romano). The motion carried.

A motion to advance the New Freedom project proposals to MassDOT as recommended by staff, with the exception of the MetroWest RTA's *New Freedom Call Center* project, and including second year funding for the MBTA's *Taxi Vouchers for Paratransit Customers Program*, was made by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (T. Bent), and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (P. Regan).

During a discussion of this motion, A. Wilson provided information as requested by members including more information about NEPVA's service area. NEPVA serves veterans in the Greater Boston area for trips that are not covered by other federal transportation funds. These trips include visits to the Veterans Administration Hospitals in Boston and Brockton and social events. NEPVA is requesting funding to purchase a small vehicle for transporting people with wheelchairs.

A motion to amend the previous motion to add second and third year funding for the Friendship Home's *Wheels to Work* program was made by the MassDOT Highway Division (J. Romano), and seconded by the City of Boston (BTD) (J. Gillooly). The motion carried.

A motion to add third year funding for the MBTA's *Taxi Vouchers for Paratransit Customers Program* was made by North Suburban Planning Council (City of

Woburn) (E. Tarallo), and seconded by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (T. Bent). The motion carried.

D. Mohler encouraged those applicants who would receive one-year funding (if their projects are approved by MassDOT) to apply for second year funding in the next solicitation if the projects are going well.

A motion to advance the New Freedom projects as amended to MassDOT was made by the Massachusetts Highway Division (J. Romano) and seconded by the City of Boston (BTD) (J. Gillooly). The motion carried.

The proposals approved by the MPO for consideration by MassDOT for one year of JARC funding are as follows:

- 128 Business Council
 - *Alewife A3 Route 128 Corridor Plan/Reverse Commute Program*
 - *Waltham Innovation – Route 128 Corridor Plan/Reverse Commute Program*
- MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MetroWest RTA)
 - *JARC Route 9 Extended Service*
- Salem North Shore Career Center (NSCC)
 - *Mobility Management and Employment Express*

The proposals approved by the MPO for consideration by MassDOT for one year of New Freedom funding (with the exception of Friendship Home and MBTA recommended for three years of funding) are as follows:

- Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)
 - *Reaching Beyond Borders: The GLSS Mobility Links Projects* (two projects)
- Friendship Home
 - *Wheels to Work* (3 years of funding)
- Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA)
 - *Enhanced Medical Travel*
- MBTA
 - *Taxi Vouchers for Paratranist Customers Program* (3 years of funding)
- Town of Acton
 - *LRTA Road Runner*
- MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
 - *Mobility Management and Training Support*
- Town of Acton
 - *MinuteVan Dial-a-Ride*
 - *Mobility Manager*
- Salem North Shore Career Center (NSCC)
 - *Mobility Management and Employment Express*

- New England Paralyzed Veterans of America (NEPVA)
 - *NEPVA Transportation Program*

11. Work Program for Health Impacts of Lowering Speeds on Local Roads – *Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff, and Eric Bourassa, Transportation Director, MAPC*

Members were presented with the work program for *Health Impacts of Lowering Speeds on Local Roads*. K. Quackenbush introduced the work program.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) would like understand the implications on public health of lowering the posted speeds on local roads from 30 miles per hour (mph) to 25 mph. The potential benefits for public health include the following:

- fewer fatalities and serious injuries to motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians resulting from crashes
- friendlier environments for bicycling and walking
- reductions in vehicular emissions

MAPC has been retained to conduct a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) on this topic. Through this work program, CTPS would assist MAPC in conducting its HIA. CTPS would use the regional model to conduct two model runs for the MPO region, one on baseline conditions and another for a scenario based on lower posted speed limits on local roads.

CTPS would provide the output of the model runs to MAPC. The outputs would include: changes in model speeds by functional roadway class; changes in demand by mode; and changes in emissions. CTPS will then assist MAPC to extrapolate the results for the MPO region to the whole state.

E. Bourassa added that the result of the work program will be data analysis that would be provided to DPH. MAPC would not be making recommendations. Mariana Arcaya, MAPC project supervisor, offered to answer questions.

Members discussed the work program.

E. Tarallo asked how staff would determine appropriate speeds for roadways and raised concerns that lowering speeds based on functional class of roadway would not matter in terms of actual speeds people drive. K. Quackenbush explained that the MPO's Congestion Monitoring Process (CMP) maintains a database of speeds on functional classes of roadways. This information allows staff to relate actual travel speeds to posted speeds. For this work program, staff would use the CMP data to evaluate impacts of a five mph decrease in posted speed limit. The model would be applied to get an estimate of actual speeds.

D. Mohler asked if the CMP is gathering data on all functionally classified local roads. K. Quackenbush replied that the CMP gathers data on arterial roadways. Staff can use that data on the relationship between posted and actual speeds to infer speeds on local roads. There are four kinds of speeds that are relevant to the analysis: free flow speeds (a modeling concept that represents speeds travelled when a driver is obeying speed limits and traffic controls, but when she/he is the only vehicle on the road and therefore unimpeded by other vehicles); congested speeds (actual modeled speeds travelled at a specific time); posted speeds; and actual speed.

D. Mohler asked how the model accounts for the fact that due to congestion a driver may not be able to reach the posted speed, and whether it assumes that drivers will self-regulate and reduce their speeds if the posted limit is lower. K. Quackenbush replied that under some conditions a change in the speed limit may not make a difference in actual speeds, but in cases of non-congested conditions it may have an impact on behavior. The model assumes that a reduction in posted speed limit will have an effect on driver behavior. Scott Peterson, MPO staff, added that staff will examine existing data (including from MPO studies and professional organizations) to understand how observed speeds equate with posted speeds.

D. Mohler asked about how much data CTPS has on local roads. K. Quackenbush replied that while there is a paucity of data for local roads, staff can extrapolate from existing data and use other sources.

D. Mohler asked how staff would extrapolate the results of the analysis on the MPO region to the state. S. Peterson noted that the MPO region model results would cover two-thirds of the population of Massachusetts. The model results will yield data on vehicle miles travelled (VMT) by functional class. Those relationships would be used to infer VMT and changes in VMT for the whole state.

In response to other questions, K. Quackenbush noted that the proposed legislation pertains to changing posted speeds on roadways that are currently non-posted. S. Peterson added that MAPC would provide staff with a GIS data layer showing the roadways to which the legislation pertains.

S. Olanoff raised the point that drivers may not know what the speed limit is on non-posted roads and questioned the accuracy of the model for use in the analysis. K. Quackenbush stated that the model would assume that drivers are aware of the speed limits. He also noted that the outcome of the model results would be aggregate figures for changes in speed and emissions.

D. Mohler asked if the model would reflect safety impacts with congestion. J. Gillooly spoke about the idea that reducing the speed limit on local roads to 25 mph coupled with education and enforcement could improve safety on local roads. S. Peterson noted that the model assumes enforcement of the speed limit.

S. Olanoff stated that the legislation may have the outcome of municipalities raising their speed limits on local roads above 25 mph.

D. Anderson suggested that staff consult with Rick Wilson, MassDOT Highway Division, who has expertise in the area of speed studies, during the course of the study.

Richard Canale, At-Large Town (Town of Lexington), noted that this analysis will help to understand how to make streets safer and healthier in terms of Complete Streets.

D. Mohler cautioned that it is possible the results of the analysis could show negative impacts for safety and health, such as an increase in vehicle hours travelled (VHT) or emissions.

A motion to approve the work program for *Health Impacts of Lowering Speeds on Local Roads* was made by MAPC (E. Bourassa), and seconded by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (T. Bent). The motion carried.

During a discussion of this motion, Joe Onorato, MassDOT Highway Division, provided the opinion of MassDOT traffic engineers who believe that DPH's request is based upon the false premise that lowering speed limits will change driver behavior. They believe that it is enforcement that changes behavior rather than posted speed limits. J. Onorato cautioned that the results of this study could be misleading. K. Quackenbush noted that staff would make clear in the study the assumptions made in the analysis, and that staff working on the project could take such issues into account and possibly discount the results.

In response to a question from D. Mohler, Robin Mannion, Executive Deputy Director of CTPS, explained how CTPS would contract with MAPC to conduct this study. CTPS would submit invoices based on staff timesheets then, through an accounting function, revenues would be transferred from MAPC to CTPS. These agencies have had similar agreements in the past for other studies.

12. State Implementation Plan Update – David Mohler, MassDOT

The monthly status report on the implementation of the projects in the State Implementation Plan was distributed. The following updates since the last report were reported:

Fairmount Line Improvement Project

The construction advertisement for the Blue Hill Avenue Station has been delayed until January 2013.

Construction of 1,000 New Parking Spaces

The Wonderland Parking Garage is scheduled to open on June 30, 2012.

Red Line – Blue Line Connector (Design)

There are no updates since the April report.

Green Line Extension

MassDOT is awaiting a federal response regarding its Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and permission to begin preliminary engineering and to use the Construction Manager/General Contractor project delivery method.

MassDOT issued a request for qualifications for the design work. Three design teams are candidates. It is expected that the award for the work will be made in the fall of 2012.

Right-of-way and design work continues on the project.

13. Members Items

There were none.

14. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by MassDOT Highway Division (J. Romano) and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting Attendance
Thursday, May 17, 2012, 10:00 AM

Members

At-Large City (City of Newton)
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)
At-Large Town (Town of Lexington)
City of Boston (Boston Redevelopment Authority)
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)

Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)
Massachusetts Department of Transportation

MassDOT Highway Division
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)
MBTA Advisory Board
Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination
(Town of Bedford)
North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn)
Regional Transportation Advisory Council
South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree)

Representatives and Alternates

David Koses
Laura Wiener
Richard Canale
Jim Fitzgerald
Jim Gillooly
Tom Kadzis
Tom Bent
David Mohler
David Anderson
John Romano
Joe Cosgrove
Paul Regan
Eric Bourassa
Eric Halvorsen
Richard Reed

Ed Tarallo
Steve Olanoff
Christine Stickney

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director

Daniel Amstutz

David Fargen

Maureen Kelly

Robin Mannion

Elizabeth Moore

Scott Peterson

Sean Pfalzer

Alicia Wilson

Pam Wolfe

Other Attendees

Mariana Arcaya

MAPC

Valerie Parker Callahan

Greater Lynn Senior Services

Callida Cenizal

MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning

Chris D'Aveta

Waltham Planning Department

Sandra Efstratiou

North Shore Career Center

Dough Halley

Town of Acton

Emily Kearns

Greater Lynn Senior Services

Norm Ketola

North Shore Career Center

Erin Kinahan

MassDOT District 6

Michael Lambert

MBTA

Linda Malone

Friendship Home

Rafael Mares

Conservation Law Foundation

Joe Onorato

MassDOT Highway

Jeannette Rebecchi

Town of Lexington

Steven Smalley

Office of State Senator Thomas McGee

Patrick Sullivan

128 Business Council

Monica Tibbits

128 Business Council

Wig Zamore

Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership