



Regional Transportation Advisory Council

December 13, 2017, Meeting

3:00 PM, State Transportation Building, Conference Room 4,
Boston, MA

DRAFT Meeting Summary

Introductions

Tegin Teich, Chair (Cambridge), called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM. Members and guests attending the meeting introduced themselves. (For attendance list, see page 8.)

Chair's Report—Tegin Teich

T. Teich announced that a construction team has been selected for the Green Line Extension (GLX) project, with a bid that was less than \$1.3 B including six “additive options.” Several components of the original proposal were removed from the construction plan as part of the value-engineering process that was conducted; some of these components were included in the new bid in the form of optional add-ons. The cities of Cambridge and Somerville, the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) have all contributed funds for the construction cost of this project. The expected completion date for construction is 2021.

In other news, T. Teich noted that the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the I-90/Allston Interchange project is out for public review with a [public meeting scheduled in Cambridge for January 3, 2018](#). The DEIR includes alternatives for construction design options.

At the last MPO meeting on December 7, 2017, MassDOT presented on the prioritization process for their Bridge Program. MassDOT advised Municipalities contact or visit the MassDOT district offices when seeking clarification on specific bridge ratings.

MaPIT: Project Planning Development Tool—Bryan Pounds and Quinn Molloy, Office of Transportation Planning, MassDOT

Bryan Pounds introduced the Massachusetts Project Intake Tool (MaPIT) and the process with MassDOT of initiating projects involving federal aid funds. MaPIT is the new tool for tracking all new projects and is currently being used by cities and towns that are initiating roadway projects for review by MassDOT's Project Review Committee (PRC). The new system integrates multiple processes and forms through the project initiation phase. The PRC reviews projects and assigns project numbers for tracking within the system. The new process automates the project development initiation steps and integrates all activities with the geographic information system (GIS) for better tracking, analysis, and reporting purposes.

Quinn Molloy introduced several of the MassDOT web-based geographic mapping and data portals. She noted that the project intake tool was designed to eliminate some of the duplicated processes carried out by the state and the local municipalities. Projects are geocoded onto a GIS data layer and information from associated databases is automatically updated for each project area, retrieving information, for example, from the roadway inventory, safety, and transit data files.

Q. Molloy is introducing the MaPIT tool to cities, towns, and other interested parties throughout the state. The tool adds all relevant data layers associated with any given project once the project information number is assigned, making all specific project information available in a GIS context. Q. Molloy demonstrated the use of the mapping tools using [GeoDOT](#) to show how a project proposal sheet is populated with data drawn from the various data layers that intersect with the hypothetical project. The resulting Project Notification Form (PNF) was generated with data directly from the existing data files prior to submittal. The submitted information is tracked throughout the life of the project.

One of the goals of converting the submittal to this format was to minimize the need for municipalities to hire consultants to complete forms and to decrease barriers to applying for funding for highway (roadway) projects. The duplication of information requested from one form to the other has been eliminated, reducing administrative activity.

Discussion

In response to a member's question (John McQueen), B. Pounds explained that average daily traffic (ADT) data generated from the statewide travel model projections is considered in planning and scoring projects.

Q. Molloy explained that she works together with cities and towns that employ their own GIS layers. (Robert McGaw) The primacy of the data depends on who owns the roadway. She also noted that data on the maps are often filtered to reflect the project study areas and that continuous data are available for surrounding areas; it is simply not mapped in all cases. Underlying data are coordinated among the various levels of government and administration.

B. Pounds explained that project approval process will also happen through the system.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) FFY 2019—Sandy Johnston, UPWP Manager, CTPS

S. Johnston explained that the UPWP is the document that lays out the MPO's work program for the year with the budget for Federal 3C planning funding. It also includes the contract work that is undertaken by CTPS for other agencies over the course of the federal fiscal year (FFY). FFY 2019 will begin on October 1, 2018.

Each year the MPO approves a reserved amount of money for funding discrete studies. These studies typically focus on a particular issue of interest to the MPO. The general criteria for these studies are that they are regionally relevant, they should not be redundant with work being done elsewhere, they should relate to the nexus of work of the MPO, and they should provide value relating to the goals established by the MPO and noted in the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Anyone can submit an idea for the discrete studies, which are compiled into a list of potential studies called the Universe of Proposed New Studies. (See [Appendix C – Universe of Proposed New Studies: FFY 2018 UPWP](#)). The potential studies are reviewed by MPO staff, a special committee of the MPO Board, and the Advisory Council, and then are sorted to match the amount of funding available based on the prioritization of the MPO.

S. Johnston stated that the activity from the current meeting is to collect ideas from the Advisory Council for potential studies for next year's UPWP. As the document develops throughout the spring of 2018, the Advisory Council will officially respond to studies proposed and selected through an official comment letter.

Discussion

In response to a comment from a member, S. Johnston pointed out that the studies undertaken in last year's UPWP included one called "Transportation Mitigation of Major Developments," which touches on a capacity-limited transportation system in an area of

Regional Transportation Advisory Council
Meeting Summary for December 13, 2017

rapid population growth.

Advisory Council members proposed the following studies, including key points that indicate areas of particular detail and interest:

| Title | Source |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Transportation System Capacity | Robert McGaw (RTAC-Belmont) |

- Study capacity of regional transportation network to accommodate population growth
- Transportation system is straining capacity

| Title | Source |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Measuring Economic Benefits of Bike and Pedestrian Improvements | Tegin Teich (RTAC-Cambridge, Chair) |

- Understand economic and other measurable benefits of expansion of bike and pedestrian infrastructure
- Possibly use tax data as a passive measure

| Title | Source |
|--|---|
| Infrastructural Missed Transit Connections | Schuyler Larrabee (RTAC-Boston Society of Architects) |

- These are areas where there are small, fixable gaps between two elements of transit infrastructure
- Case study: commuter rail and Green Line at Riverside (there was historically a commuter rail station)
- Suggestion (from Tegin Teich): This could turn into a “gap management” technical assistance program.

| Title | Source |
|-----------------------|--|
| Bike Share Management | Scott Zadakis (RTAC-CrossTown Connect) |

- Many private bike-share companies are entering our regional market
- Different municipalities have signed on with different providers for both dockless and docked bike-share
- Can the MPO play a role in coordinating between these and other mobility services?

Regional Transportation Advisory Council
Meeting Summary for December 13, 2017

- Potentially work with MAPC

| Title | Source |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Closing Paratransit Gaps | Dee Whilleby, Boston Resident |

- Some municipalities do not have paratransit service
- Others have only from non-MBTA providers

| Title | Source |
|--|---|
| Planning for Autonomous and Connected Vehicles (AVs/CVs) | John McQueen (RTAC- <i>WalkBoston</i>) |

- Continue to plan for AVs/CVs
- Include transportation network companies (TNCs) and their interactions with AVs
- Effect of AVs/CVs on MBTA

| Title | Source |
|---|---|
| Effects of Bicycle/Pedestrian Infrastructure Implementation | John McQueen (RTAC- <i>WalkBoston</i>) |

- Pre/post survey of abutters to trail and greenway infrastructure
- Concerns often precede construction
- Reporting actual results about safety and crime can help assuage concerns
- Make sure the suburban aspect is considered (Trevor Laubenstein)

| Title | Source |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Commuter Rail Parking and Access | Trevor Laubenstein (RTAC- <i>Westwood</i>) |

- How can commuter rail parking be reduced in an AV context?
- What other options can be provided?

| Title | Source |
|---|---|
| Pre-and Post-Evaluation of Freight Infrastructure Modifications | Marilyn Wellons (RTAC-Riverside Neighborhood Association) |

Regional Transportation Advisory Council
Meeting Summary for December 13, 2017

- Look at traffic impacts and overall costs/benefits of freight infrastructure changes
- Case in point: the relocation of freight traffic from Beacon Yards to Worcester—did it increase truck traffic?

| Title | Source |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| The Future of the Curb | Tegin Teich (RTAC-Cambridge, Chair) |

- There is an increasing amount of competition for curb space
- AVs/CVs may require less curb space for parking
- Deliveries (Amazon, etc.) are increasingly common
- Bus/bike lanes, often curbside, are in demand
- MPO should study what the curb of the future will look like and how to balance demand between all of these modes/dynamics
- Article on this concept: <https://www.wired.com/story/city-planning-curbs/>

| Title | Source |
|----------------|---|
| Bus Efficiency | Lenard Diggins (RTAC-Ridership Oversight Committee) |

- Increase use of transit by increasing the number of buses
- How to decongest roadways specifically for transit use

| Title | Source |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Intersection Safety | John McQueen (RTAC-WalkBoston) |

- Consider safety implications of roundabouts/rotaries
- Develop best practices for bike/pedestrian safety at roundabouts and rotaries specifically and all intersections the MPO staff work on generally

| Title | Source |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Blue-Red Connector Modification | Barry Steinberg (RTAC-Association for Public Transportation) |

- Study full elimination of Bowdoin station to reduce costs for the Red-Blue connector

| Title | Source |
|---------------------------|--|
| Green Line Allston Branch | Barry Steinberg (RTAC-Association for Public Transportation) |

- Study a branch of the Green Line from Packard's Corner to Boston Landing

| Title | Source |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mobility Around West Station | Robert McGaw (RTAC-Belmont) |

- Study multimodal mobility implications of West Station
- Consider 12,000-space parking garage at West Station, frequent rail service to downtown as a park and ride

| Title | Source |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| West Station/Allston Transit Study | Tegin Teich (RTAC-Cambridge, Chair) |

- Study north-south and other transit mobility through the West Station area
- Along the same lines as City of Boston's proposal for FFY 2018 but with broader scope

Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2017, and November 8, 2017, meetings was made and seconded. The minutes were approved.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 4:40 PM.

Attendance

Municipalities - Voting

Belmont
Cambridge
Marlborough
Millis
Westwood
Weymouth

Citizen Advocacy Groups - Voting

Association for Public Transportation
Boston Society of Architects
Boston Society of Civil Engineers
CrosstownConnect
MBTA Ridership Oversight Committee
(ROC)
MoveMassachusetts
National Corridors Initiative
Riverside Neighborhood Association
WalkBoston

Agencies Non-Voting

MassDOT - Agency
US EPA

Guests

Malden Resident
Boston Resident

Staff

Lourenço Dantas
Sandy Johnston
Jen Rowe

Attendee

Robert McGaw
Tegin Teich
Walter Bonin
Ed Chisholm
Trevor Laubenstein
Owen MacDonald

Barry M Steinberg
Schuyler Larrabee
Paul Moyer
Scott Zadakis

Lenard Diggins
Jon Seward
John Businger
Marilyn Wellons
John McQueen

Bryan Pounds; Quinn Molloy
Eric Rackauskas

Ed Lowney
Dee Whittlesey

David Fargen
Matt Archer