

# Draft Memorandum for the Record

## Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

### March 21, 2013 Meeting

10:00 AM – 1:30 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 three work programs:
  - *Household Survey-Based Travel Profiles and Trends*
  - *MBTA Bus Service Data Collection VIII*
  - *MBTA Rider Oversight Committee Support*
- Advance project proposals to the MassDOT Rail and Transit Division for consideration for funding through the federal Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom Programs

### Meeting Agenda

#### 1. Public Comments

Kristina Johnson, City of Quincy, requested that the MPO amend the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) so that the *Intersection and Signal Improvements at Hancock Street and East/West Squantum Streets* project may be advertised this year. The project is currently programmed in the FFY 2014 element of the TIP and is ahead of schedule. The City requests that it be re-programmed in the FFY 2013 element. The project would implement recommendations from a MPO study that was in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and would improve pedestrian circulation issues in the project area.

Wig Zamore, Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership and Mystic View Task Force, expressed support for the work programs for the *MBTA Rider Oversight Committee Support* and the *Household Survey-Based Travel Profiles and Trends*, both of which were on the MPO's agenda for approval at this meeting.

Valerie Parker Callahan, of Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS) and affiliated with the Aging and Disability Resource Consortium of the Greater North Shore, thanked the

MPO for their past support of GLSS's Mobility Links project, a travel counseling and community education project that includes Kiosks for Living Well that assist consumers with trip planning. She reported that there has been national interest in this project and asked the MPO to continue its support through the New Freedom Program. She also urged the MPO to support GLSS's proposed strategic planning project.

Mark Whitmore, of the North Shore Career Center (NSCC) and affiliated with the Aging and Disability Resource Consortium of the Greater North Shore, thanked the MPO for their past support for NSCC's employment transportation and mobility management programs. These programs provide transportation to jobs for individuals with disabilities and those with low-incomes in five communities: Lynn, Salem, Danvers, Peabody, and Beverly. They have provided over 10,000 rides and served about 115 customers, who would not otherwise be able to secure employment. He asked for the MPO's continued support of these programs.

Sharon Wason, Town of Foxborough, spoke regarding the town's application for a J ARC grant to fund a feasibility study for a bus or shuttle service from Patriot Place to the Mansfield commuter rail station. She distributed a handout summarizing the project.

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

There was none.

## **3. Committee Chairs' Reports**

Callida Cenizal, of MassDOT and Chair of the UPWP Committee, announced that the committee would meet in the afternoon to discuss the staff recommendation for new projects for the FFY 2014 UPWP. The committee will also meet next week if they do not come to a conclusion on a committee recommendation today to bring to the MPO. The MPO will be presented with the committee recommendation on April 4.

Lourenço Dantas, Massachusetts Port Authority, reported that the Congestion Management Committee met this morning and discussed the proposal for the implementation of an Intersection Improvement Program in the TIP. The proposal was approved by the committee. This topic will be discussed at an upcoming MPO meeting.

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

S. Olanoff reported that the Advisory Council met on March 13 and heard a presentation from Stephen Woelfel, MassDOT, on the agency's proposed transportation finance plan, *The Way Forward*. The Advisory Council also received updates on the TIP and

UPWP from the MPO staff. It also adopted changes to its bylaws as recommended by the MPO.

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

There was none.

**6. Work Programs—Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff**

Members were presented with three work programs. K. Quackenbush provided an overview of each one and addressed questions from members.

***Household Survey-Based Travel Profiles and Trends***

In 2010 and 2011 the MPO and MassDOT jointly paid for and administered a statewide travel survey that gathered travel and socioeconomic data from 15,000 households in the Commonwealth. Participants kept a travel diary and recorded all their trips over a 24 hour period. The last time that such a survey was administered in the Boston Region was in the early 1990s.

The primary purpose of such surveys is to gather data for building travel models and work is now underway to use the data for just that purpose. Staff had thought that it would also be useful and interesting to use the data to create a profile of travel behavior in the region. Therefore, under this work program, and while the model building is proceeding, staff will use the survey data to prepare narratives, maps, and graphics that describe the travel behavior of people in the region and, where possible, to compare it to the old survey.

This project is included in the UPWP and will be paid for with MPO funds.

A motion to approve the work program for the *Household Survey-Based Travel Profiles and Trends* was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (Paul Regan), and seconded by the North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) (Ed Tarallo). The motion carried.

***MBTA Bus Service Data Collection VIII***

The work program for the *MBTA Bus Service Data Collection VIII* is a continuation of work that staff has been doing for the MBTA for a number of years. CTPS began this work in the late 1990s when the MBTA called upon it to conduct a comprehensive data collection on the MBTA bus system. The data gathered was used in the MBTA's service planning process and to establish a baseline of data on bus ridership.

Since that time, CTPS has continued to be engaged in the ongoing monitoring of buses, and to a much lesser extent, light rail lines and rapid transit stations. As in previous work programs, this one would employ field checkers to collect data on bus ridership and travel times. Activities that would take place include ridechecks, pointchecks, and timechecks.

A ridecheck involves a person counting people as they board or exit a bus and recording the time at milestone points along the route. The MBTA is employing automatic passenger counting (APC) technology on its vehicles, but this technology is not yet available on all buses, so there is still a need for some manual ridechecking. A pointcheck involves a person stationed along a bus route at the peak load point recording an estimate of the number of people on a bus and the time it passes. A timecheck involves a people standing at milestone areas along a route and recording the time the bus passes.

The work program also includes a task for the analysis and review of the data collected. Staff would report any problems regarding schedule adherence and crowding to the MBTA. The data gathered through this work provides information necessary for making decisions about modifying the bus system.

This project will be funded by the MBTA.

During a discussion about the work program, D. Mohler raised a question about whether GPS technology installed on buses could make the timechecks superfluous. K. Quackenbush noted that the MBTA's Service Planning Department requested that the timechecks be included in the scope. He offered to look further into the matter.

S. Olanoff asked how the APC system works and why the automated fare collection (AFC) could not replace it. K. Quackenbush explained that in the APC system, a light beam across the door of a bus registers when a person boards or alights from the bus. The AFC system only records entries to the system, not exits, so it cannot be used to determine bus loads. And because not all passengers interact with the AFC equipment, the system does not capture all boardings. S. Olanoff suggested that a comparison of the APC and AFC data could be made to determine the amount of fare evasion that occurs.

Dennis Crowley, South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway), raised questions about how the MBTA is using the data collected from the past work programs and the amount of MPO resources used for this work. K. Quackenbush noted that the MPO staff interacts regularly with the MBTA's service planning staff, who use the data to make decisions about schedule changes on an ongoing basis. About 80% of the

hours set out in the work program are for temporary workers or part-time specialists who are employed at CTPS solely to perform work such as this.

David Koses, At-Large City of Newton, noted that the City of Newton uses this data, which is the best available. He suggested that staff use the new work program as an opportunity to update certain bus stop names in its database. K. Quackenbush noted that the work does involve updating stop names. If data users have any questions about interpreting the data, they are invited to contact Jonathan Belcher, MPO staff.

### ***MBTA Rider Oversight Committee Support***

The work program for *MBTA Rider Oversight Committee Support* describes the body of work that CTPS would continue to perform in support of the MBTA's Rider Oversight Committee (ROC). The ROC was formed in 2003. Its areas of interest include the issues of fare increases, service reliability, communications, and resumption of late night transit service. The ROC meets monthly and has two standing committees as well as ad hoc committees, all of which are supported by MBTA personnel. CTPS staff attends the meetings as a technical resource and provides modest amounts of analytic work for ROC. This work program represents a four-year contract that would be funded by the MBTA.

During a discussion of this work program, Paul Regan, MBTA Advisory Board, asked whether the contract covers the cost of additional research that staff might be asked to provide. K. Quackenbush replied yes.

S. Olanoff asked if the ROC membership has been rising. K. Quackenbush noted that there are fewer advocates on the ROC.

A motion to approve the work program for *MBTA Rider Oversight Committee Support* was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (P. Regan), and seconded by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

## **7. JARC and New Freedom Recommendation—Alicia Wilson, MPO Staff**

Members were provided with a memorandum and materials providing information about the applications for Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom funds and staff's recommendation for funding those proposals. A. Wilson provided an overview of the requests, the evaluation of the proposals, and the staff recommendation.

MassDOT's solicitation for FFY 2014 proposals ended on March 1. There were five applications for JARC funds and eight applications for New Freedom funds in the

Boston Region MPO area. All but one would service low-income and minority tracts, as determined by MassDOT.

**JARC Requests**

Below is a list of applicants and their proposals for JARC funding. All except the North Shore Career Center's proposal met their goals in the recent program evaluation. The total amount requested is less than the amount of JARC funds available to the Boston Urbanized Area (UZA).

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Request</b>
128 Business Council	<i>Alewife A3-Route 128 Corridor Reverse Commute Program</i> (a shuttle service from Alewife Station to workplaces in Lexington and Waltham)	\$128,740 (match by corporate sponsors)
Town of Acton	<i>Mobility Manager</i> (to hire a part-time mobility manager to coordinate transportation services)	\$16,000 (match by CrossTown Connect)
Town of Foxborough	<i>Planning study</i> (to determine need and feasibility of transportation services for transporting people with low-incomes to jobs in Foxborough)	\$30,720 (match by Foxborough Planning Board)
MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA)	<i>Wellesley Route 9 Reverse Commute</i> (to provide fixed-route bus service between Woodland Station on the Green Line and places of employment along Route 9 and in Wellesley)	\$600,000 (match by State Contract Assistance)
North Shore Career Center (NSCC)	<i>Mobility Management and Employment Express</i> (to provide transportation for people with low income to places of employment in Salem, Peabody, and Danvers)	\$468,790 (match by Greater Lynn Senior Services and NSCC)
<b>Total Amount Requested</b>		<b>\$1.24 million</b>

**New Freedom Requests**

Below is a list of applicants and their proposals for New Freedom funding. The total amount requested exceeds the amount of New Freedom funds available to the Boston UZA.

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Request</b>
Town of Acton	<i>CrossTown Connect Dispatch</i> (to consolidate and expand dispatch services for accessible vans in Acton, Boxborough, Concord, Littleton, Maynard, Stow, and Westford)	\$135,000 (match by CrossTown Connect)
Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)	<i>Reaching Beyond Borders: The GLSS Mobility Links Project</i> (for the continued operation of a Travel Counseling Call Center)	\$551,101 (match by grants and corporate sponsors)
GLSS	<i>Community Planning, Phase 2</i> (to coordinate efforts of agencies across the region)	\$533,861 (match by grants and corporate sponsors)
MWRTA	<i>Peer-to-Peer Training Program</i> (a training program to help MWRTA paratransit users switch to fixed-route service)	\$100,000 (match by toll credits)
Mystic Valley Elder Services	<i>Connect-a-Ride Alliance</i> (to continue development of the Trip Metro North Program)	\$80,000 (match by corporate funds)
NSCC	<i>Mobility Management and Employment Express</i> (to provide transportation for people with low income to places of employment in Salem, Peabody, and Danvers)	\$252,425 (match by GLSS and NSCC)
SCM	<i>Travel Training, Counseling, and Advocacy</i> (for software and infrastructure upgrades to support a mobility management program)	\$175,200 (match by Tufts Health Plan Foundation)
SCM	<i>Planning</i> (for the development of a financial and operating plan to integrate mobility management with SCM's current transportation operations)	\$144,000 (match by Tufts Health Plan Foundation)
<b>Total Amount Requested</b>		<b>\$1.97 million</b>

### ***Proposal Evaluation***

Three staff members used criteria discussed with the MPO at a February MPO meeting. They independently scored each proposal. The key components of the evaluation included consideration of an applicant's experience with project management and whether it had previously provided service to the target population or whether the proposal had come from a study or was to conduct a study. Consideration was also given to whether the project identified a transportation gap or barrier identified in the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan, how well the applicant described the need that would be addressed, and whether the project would achieve community, state, or regional benefits. After scoring each project, staff assigned composite scores, which were an average of the three individual scores.

Staff recommended that the MPO support proposals that scored 75% of the available points or higher. (Staff had been directed after the previous solicitation for these programs to identify the best proposals from the full set of applicants.) The next step is for the Boston Region MPO (and the other MPOs in the Boston UZA) to forward recommended proposals to the MassDOT Rail and Transit Division, which will ultimately choose projects to receive funding.

### ***Discussion***

Members asked questions and made comments:

*How compatible are the projects that applied for JARC and New Freedom funds? (P. Regan)*

The two funding sources serve distinct populations. JARC serves people with low-incomes and New Freedom serves people with disabilities. (A. Wilson)

*In the new federal transportation legislation, MAP-21, the activities funded by the JARC and New Freedom Programs would be funded through formula programs. Does MassDOT have a position on how these activities would be handled in the future? (Joe Cosgrove, MBTA)*

The MassDOT Rail and Transit Division will conduct these activities going forward. Representatives from MPOs and social service agencies will help with this work. (A. Wilson)

*Can staff review the scoring criteria used in the evaluations? (J. Cosgrove)*



[A. Wilson provided an example of how the staff evaluators scored a project and developed composite scores.] The evaluators used mostly qualitative measures but also quantitative measures. (A. Wilson)

*Why not fund the JARC projects up to the available level of funding? (Dennis Giombetti, MetroWest Regional Collaborative - Town of Framingham)*

The MPO does have the option to fund lower scoring projects, which are not included in the staff recommendation. (A. Wilson)

*What happens to the unused funds? (L. Dantas)*

Funds not awarded to Boston MPO recommended projects may be applied to projects recommended by other MPO's in the Boston UZA. (A. Wilson) Last year, the MPO directed staff to not recommend inappropriate projects just because funding might be available because it could be detrimental to the program. (D. Mohler)

*Does the MPO have the ability to enhance the projects that are recommended? (L. Dantas)*

The four other MPOs in the Boston UZA may be submitting projects that exceed the amount available. This is a competitive process. It is not the MPO's role to enhance the projects. (D. Mohler)

*Do the four other MPO's in the Boston UZA use the same scoring process? Could a low scoring project from the Boston Region MPO be a better project than one from another MPO that uses a different scoring process? (John Romano, MassDOT Highway Division)*

MPO's can use whatever scoring process they would like. The Boston Region MPO's scoring process is based on MassDOT Rail and Transit Division's matrix that is used to evaluate projects receiving Section 5311 funding and uses criteria that are a blend of MassDOT's and the MPO's. (A. Wilson) MassDOT's Rail and Transit Division must be the arbiter of all the projects recommended by the MPOs. (D. Mohler) The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has the ultimate authority for selecting projects. (A. Wilson)

*Are the dollar amounts requested for the two projects proposed by SCM cumulative? (J. Romano)*

The projects are for the same program, each project serves a different population. (A. Wilson)

*Will MassDOT Rail and Transit Division review all projects or only those that are recommended by the MPOs? (Tom O'Rourke, Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC))*

It will review only those recommended by the MPOs. (D. Mohler) The Boston MPO staff does not have access to the proposals submitted by other MPOs. (A. Wilson)

*Are any of the proposals for New Freedom also eligible for JARC? There is money available in JARC. Could any New Freedom proposals be shifted to JARC? (Dennis Crowley, South West Advisory Planning Committee - Town of Medway)*

No. One program serves people with disabilities while another serves people with low-incomes. (K. Quackenbush)

*Does the cost per trip refer to a round trip or one-way trip? If a one-way trip, they should be called "boardings." (David Koses, At-Large City of Newton)*

The cost refers to a one-way trip. (A. Wilson)

*How is the cost per trip calculated? (D. Koses and D. Mohler)*

The cost refers to a one-way trip. The cost was calculated by dividing the project operating budget by the number of projected trips. Staff used figures that the applicants provided to the MassDOT Rail and Transit Division to make the calculation. The total operating cost figures deducts fares. (A. Wilson)

*Can the MPO submit all of the New Freedom proposals? In this case, low scoring projects from this region may be better than higher scoring projects from other regions. (P. Regan)*

If the MPO submits proposals that exceed the amount of money available, it would be leading applicants that will not be funded to believe that they have a chance. It is the responsibility of the MPO to make the decision about prioritizing projects. (D. Mohler)

*Why doesn't the MassDOT Rail and Transit Division develop a list of proposals and then ask the MPOs to prioritize them? (L. Dantas)*

MassDOT is not allowed to suballocate JARC money to the MPOs. (D. Mohler)

*The proposals include requests for funding for state fiscal years (SFYs) 2014, 2015, and 2016. If the MPO funded only SFY 2014 requests for New Freedom, all the projects*

*could advance with one year of funding. (Ed Tarallo, North Suburban Planning Council - City of Woburn)*

If an applicant has requested multi-year funding, all of the funds would come out of the SFY 2014 funds. (A. Wilson) This proposal would leave applicants who need multi-year funding with only one year's worth of funds. (D. Mohler)

*Does staff have information regarding the performance of projects that were funded in the past? (E. Bourassa)*

That information is provided in a table that staff distributed. Staff evaluated projects considering proponents' projected goals. Operating projects were evaluated based on ridership. Mobility management projects were evaluated based on customers served or development of call centers. (Pam Wolfe, MPO staff, and A. Wilson)

*The 128 Business Council has only requested one-year of funding. Considering that the JARC program is sunseting, is there an opportunity to fund them for SFYs 2015 and 2016 as well? (D. Koses)*

The 128 Business Council has said that their program, if successful, could be funded by their transportation management association (TMA) or corporate funds in the future. (A. Wilson) The Council is only seeking start-up funds. (D. Mohler)

*Is the information on the table referring to program performance for projects that were funded last year? What is the explanation for projects that received a "no" in the performance evaluation? How did that information play into the scoring this year? Did staff request clarification from proponents regarding information in the proposals? (Tom Bent, Inner Core Committee – City of Somerville)*

The information refers to projects funded between SFYs 2008 and 2010. Projects that received a "no" may have had fewer than projected riders. For this year's evaluation, staff considered how well the proposal was written, how much information was included in the proposal, and whether the applicant defined the unmet transportation need that their project would address. Staff had only one week to review and evaluate the applications, so they did not provide feedback to applicants. (A. Wilson) Staff provided an overview of the evaluation criteria to the MPO at a previous meeting, and staff conducted the evaluations in a step-by-step fashion. (K. Quackenbush) [The project evaluation criteria was displayed in a PowerPoint presentation at this meeting.]

*Can MassDOT Rail and Transit Division make the decision regarding how many years of funding the projects receive? (Tom Kadzis, City of Boston)*

No, MassDOT will make a decision based on what is recommended by the MPOs. (D. Mohler)

*Can staff provide information regarding how well each project scored in each category?*  
(D. Koses)

Staff can provide a narrative on each project. (K. Quackenbush)

*What is the timeline for making a decision on these proposals? (Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination, Town of Bedford, R. Reed)*

The MPO must submit its priorities to MassDOT Rail and Transit Division by the morning of March 22, tomorrow. (A. Wilson)

Following the question and answer period, L. Dantas advocated for accepting staff's recommendation.

J. Cosgrove noted that the MPO needs to decide how to distribute the available New Freedom funds. He noted that, as proposed in the staff recommendation, one organization would be receiving a large share of the available funds for two projects.

D. Giombetti expressed concern that each MPO in the Boston UZA is using different criteria to evaluate projects. He expressed that all the MPOs should use the same criteria so that they can be evaluated fairly by the MassDOT Rail and Transit Division.

Members then heard a comment from an applicant.

Reed Cochran, SCM, noted that MassDOT Rail and Transit Division did not provide applicants with information about the scoring process or evaluation criteria, and that the application was not written to allow for applicants to provide the needed information.

### ***Review of Applications***

Members then discussed each application that was *not* included in the staff recommendation. Staff provided information regarding staff's evaluation of the applications and issues staff found that lead to low scores. Applicants also had the opportunity to advocate for their projects.

### **MWRTA's Wellesley Route 9 Reverse Commute Project**

A. Wilson reported that the MWRTA's *Wellesley Route 9 Reverse Commute* project received 60% of available points. The evaluators believed that the proposal met, but did not exceed any of the evaluation criteria. K. Quackenbush added that the proposal did not make the case for serving low-income people who need transportation for job

related-needs, and it is that aspect of JARC, rather than the reverse commute aspect, that the MPO seems historically to have been most concerned about. Further, the proposal did not make clear how the proposed shuttle service would relate to existing shuttles that service job nodes in the area.

Members asked questions and made comments:

*How does the proposed service differ from existing services? (S. Olanoff)*

The MWRTA currently provides its Route 1 bus service on (highway) Route 9, but that service does not go to Wellesley. The new proposal would serve Wellesley and the Route 135 corridor as well as job centers along the corridor. The MWRTA received letters of support for the project from two Chambers of Commerce, the City of Newton, and a major employer, Newton Wellesley Hospital. Reverse-commute service is needed in this area. Of the MWRTA's riders, 69% come from households with incomes less than \$30,000 per year. The MWRTA requests that its proposal be re-evaluated to make it eligible to advance. (Lynn Ahlgren, MWRTA)

*Did the MWRTA provide schedules for reverse-commute services? It is important to know whether the shuttle schedule would coincide with Green Line service to enable people traveling from the city to the suburbs to get to work (rather than being preferential for people traveling from Wellesley into the city)? (D. Mohler)*

The MWRTA did not submit a schedule with the proposal. CTPS has developed schedules for the proposed service, however. This is a reverse-commute project that would bring people from the Boston area into Wellesley. This project has support from the businesses in Wellesley. The MWRTA is focused on building coordination with the MBTA services. (L. Ahlgren)

*What would be the routing of the service and to how many jobs would it provide access? (D. Koses)*

The route would travel to downtown Wellesley, where there are dozens of businesses (including retail), then on Route 135 to a transfer point connecting to other MWRTA services. (L. Ahlgren)

*How many people work in low-income jobs in downtown Wellesley? (D. Mohler)*

Several hundred people work in downtown Wellesley. The area is difficult to access for low-income people seeking to work in service jobs because it is not near the commuter rail station and there is a shortage of parking. The proposed service would enable

reverse-commute and could also be used by seniors mid-day. (Frank DeMasi, Advisory Council – Wellesley Designee)

*What assessment does Wellesley pay to the MBTA and MWRTA? Why would the match for the service not be provided using the assessment rather than State Contract Assistance? (D. Mohler)*

Wellesley pays \$500,000 to the MBTA. It has just recently joined the MWRTA. (F. DeMasi) The FTA allows RTA's to match new programs with funds being provided by the state for existing services. The MWRTA would use the JARC grant to do a pilot in the first year. If successful, the assessments would be used to make the project sustainable. (L. Ahlgren)

*If the service would cost \$200,000 a year, why not use the \$500,000 yearly Wellesley assessment to pay for it? (D. Mohler)*

The assessment is currently going to the MBTA service area. The MWRTA is not taking those funds yet. If the MWRTA receives the JARC grant, it is expected that in the future the Wellesley assessment would be used to make the service sustainable. In 18 months the assessment could be transferred to the MWRTA (rather than go to the MBTA). Wellesley sees a great need for fixed-route transit service. (L. Ahlgren)

*If the MWRTA is not awarded the JARC grant, will the Wellesley assessment continue to go to the MBTA? (D. Mohler)*

That is correct. (L. Ahlgren)

*If the grant is awarded, will the assessment then go to the MWRTA because it is providing fixed-route service to Wellesley? (D. Mohler)*

The assessment would continue to go to the MBTA until the MWRTA begins paying for the service to Wellesley (after the JARC grant runs out in three years). (L. Ahlgren)

*Where will the MWRTA get the funds to operate the service between the time that the JARC grant ends and before the assessments begin to flow to the MWRTA? (D. Mohler)*

RTAs are retro-actively funded agencies. They take out revenue anticipation notes to fund all of their operations. (L. Ahlgren)

*Could the MWRTA take out \$200,000 in revenue anticipation notes to start the service and then accept the \$500,000 assessment from Wellesley to continue the service? (D. Mohler)*

The impact on paratransit service would have to be considered. Currently, paratransit service in Wellesley is operated by THE RIDE. (L. Ahlgren)

*If the service is started using JARC funds, does that trigger the requirement for the MWRTA to provide ADA paratransit service? (D. Mohler)*

The MBTA currently provides THE RIDE to Wellesley, but if the MWRTA's service begins to operate, it would be MWRTA's responsibility to provide paratransit. (J. Cosgrove) The MWRTA would offer paratransit service at such time as it began receiving the assessment from Wellesley. (L. Ahlgren)

*What is the cost per trip for the service? (S. Olanoff)*

The average cost per trip on the MWRTA's buses is \$9 a ride on fixed-route services and \$30 for demand response services. The MWRTA believes that people who are currently using THE RIDE will choose to use the MWRTA's fixed-route service. The MWRTA is working with Councils on Aging and Chambers of Commerce in their service area to provide training programs to transition paratransit riders to fixed-route service. (L. Ahlgren) The proposed route is along the Lower Wellesley Corridor and would run from the Green Line station to Natick Center. There are community and senior centers along the route as well as medical services. The proposed service would provide an option, particularly for elders, to access these destinations without using cars. (F. DeMasi)

*This could result in the MBTA losing its revenue stream from Wellesley's assessment, while at the same time Wellesley will be receiving both MBTA commuter rail service and MWRTA services. Do other communities have this same option or will this be opening Pandora's Box? (D. Crowley)*

Other communities do have that opportunity. The MBTA will not lose any revenue if Wellesley's assessment shifts to the MWRTA, however, cities in the urban core will have to pay higher assessments to the MBTA to make up for the amount Wellesley will no longer be paying to the MBTA. (D. Mohler) The MBTA would see a savings of about \$500,000 because it would no longer have to operate THE RIDE in Wellesley, while other communities serviced by the MBTA would be reassessed to make up for the \$500,000 that the MBTA would not be receiving from Wellesley. (L. Ahlgren)

*Does the MWRTA operate paratransit service to the entire communities in which it operates or only within the legally-required distance from its routes? If the MWRTA operates a fixed-route service in Wellesley, will there be paratransit customers currently served by THE RIDE (which provides service to the entire town) who will not be eligible for MWRTA-provided paratransit service? (D. Mohler)*

The MWRTA provides paratransit service based on routes, however, it would provide paratransit service to the entire community of Wellesley. Customers currently served by THE RIDE in Wellesley would be covered by a grandfathered clause, as was the case when the MWRTA began providing paratransit service in Natick and Framingham. The MWRTA provides paratransit service to those communities from 5 AM to 1 AM. (L. Ahlgren)

*Would paratransit customers in Wellesley have to make a transfer to leave the MWRTA service area and enter the MBTA service area? (D. Koses)*

MWRTA paratransit customers do have to make a transfer. The MWRTA is planning on developing a mini-hub at Riverside Station to allow for better transfers with THE RIDE. (L. Ahlgren)

*Will this cost the MBTA? (S. Olanoff)*

Under state law, the MBTA receives a fixed amount of assessment dollars. When a community opts out, the inner urban core cities pick up the difference. (P. Regan) The advantage of towns opting out of the MBTA service is that it allows new RTAs to develop and to provide suburban transportation to people with low-incomes. (D. Giombetti)

*How many customers does the MWRTA serve in a year? (D. Mohler)*

It serves about 500,000 customers. (L. Ahlgren)

*What would be the implication if the legislature decides to switch the RTAs from reverse-funding to forward-funding? (S. Olanoff)*

If the legislature gives the RTA's forward-funding, RTAs would have \$100 million a year available to add needed service. In a couple of years, MWRTA would have enough money to start this service without the JARC grant. (D. Mohler) It is unlikely that the RTA's will get \$100 million a year. (L. Ahlgren) If the project is started now with the JARC grant, it can be a pilot project that does not impact MBTA funds, and it would allow the MWRTA to build ridership on the route. (F. DeMasi)



*The project does precisely what reverse-commute project is supposed to do – transport people from the city to the suburbs. There are a number of institutions – hospitals, nursing homes, etc. – along the route that would provide jobs. (D. Giombetti)*

*How much low-income housing is in Wellesley? (D. Mohler)*

Wellesley has reached about 80% of its goal for low-income housing. Every new development needs to address low-income housing to receive its permits. (F. DeMasi)

*North Shore Career Center's Mobility Management and Employment Express*

A. Wilson noted that the NSCC's proposal received a low score due to the high cost per trip and because it only serves about 100 people.

Mark Whitmore, NSCC, then provided more information about the project. Since 2011, the program has served 115 people and has served as an employment retention program for people with low-incomes. The program serves people in Lynn, Salem, Beverly, Danvers, and Peabody. There are about 30,000 residents in that area who live below the poverty line. The NSCC provides job placement services for those individuals.

He noted that transportation is the biggest barrier for people with low-incomes who need to find and retain employment. The NSCC seeks to provide transportation to the employment rich areas along Route 1 and 114 in Danvers and Peabody. There are many health care and service sector jobs along those corridors, but they are not served by transit.

M. Whitmore stated that the NSCC's program has averaged 1,000 trips per month with an average 10% increase in trips each month. That demand is projected to increase. A priority of the NSCC is to place multiple clients with the same employer so that they can be transported to work together, which should reduce the cost of the program. Another priority is to determine how to make the program sustainable after JARC funds are no longer available. NSCC is working with employers and the private-sector on this issue.

Members asked questions:

*Is the service providing door-to-door service from home to work? (E. Bourassa)*

Yes, within the communities of Lynn, Salem, Beverly, Danvers, and Peabody. The program also offers pick-ups at commuter rail stations so that people from other communities on Cape Ann and the North Shore can use the service. (M. Whitmore)

*Does the service mainly use buses? (E. Bourassa)*

The NSCC contracts with GLSS, which has a large fleet including mini-vans and sedans. (M. Whitmore)

*Staff noted that the NSCC program did not meet its goals last year. Which goals were not met? (E. Bourassa)*

The goal for number of trips served was not met. (A. Wilson) The NSCC did not meet this goal due to a contracting-related issue that halted the program. The NSCC subsequently had to rebuild its ridership. (M. Whitmore)

*What would happen if the NSCC received the JARC funds but not the New Freedom funds? (D. Mohler)*

The program serves two distinct populations – JARC serves people with low-incomes and New Freedom serves people with disabilities. If not all the funding were available, NSCC would find a way to make it work with a lower service level. It would target its mobility management services to customers with disabilities in order to help them find alternative transportation solutions. (M. Whitmore)

#### *Town of Acton's Mobility Manager Project*

A. Wilson noted that the Town of Acton's proposal to hire a Mobility Manager did not demonstrate that an unmet need was being met.

Doug Halley, Town of Acton, noted that the Town of Acton submitted three applications last year. Of those, the Road Runner service was funded, but the Dial-a-Ride service (currently funded by the town) and Mobility Manager were not. Given the construction at South Acton commuter rail station, the town is expecting that more people will be seeking to access jobs in the area. A Mobility Manager is required to assess the transportation needs resulting from that demand.

Members asked questions:

*Can you talk more specifically about the need for a Mobility Manager and the coordination of other services in the area? (E. Bourassa)*

The Town of Acton is creating a TMA, called CrossTown Connect, which involves seven communities and six businesses. It will be built off the platform of Council on Aging vans. The town recognizes the need to serve the full community, not just seniors. There are four services currently operating in the area: the Dial-a-Ride service, the Minuteman service, the Council of Aging, and the Road Runner. (D. Halley)

*Would the \$16,000 in the budget fund a part-time position operating out of Acton Town Hall? (J. Cosgrove)*

Yes. (D. Halley)

*Does it serve a minority and low-income tract? (J. Cosgrove)*

Yes, the Route 2A area in Acton is considered a minority tract in the census. (D. Halley)

### **Decisions**

A motion to recommend that the MWRTA's *Wellesley Route 9 Reverse Commute* project be forwarded to the MassDOT Rail and Transit Division for consideration for JARC funding was made by the MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham) (D. Giombetti), and seconded by the Advisory Council (S. Olanoff). The motion carried. The MBTA Advisory Board abstained.

A motion to recommend that the Town of Acton's proposal to hire a Mobility Manager be forwarded to the MassDOT Rail and Transit Division for consideration for JARC funding was made by the Advisory Council (S. Olanoff), and seconded by the Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Bedford) (R. Reed). The motion carried.

During a discussion of this motion, E. Bourassa discussed the challenging work suburban towns are undertaking to implement suburban transit. He advocated for supporting the Town of Acton's project.

A motion to recommend that the North Shore Career Center's *Mobility Management and Employment Express* proposal be forwarded to the MassDOT Rail and Transit Division for consideration for JARC funding was made by the North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly) (Tina Cassidy), and seconded by the North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) (E. Tarallo). The motion carried. The Advisory Council was opposed.

Staff was then directed to submit the JARC proposals to the MassDOT Rail and Transit Division in the order of their presentation in the staff recommendation (related to evaluation score), as follows:

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<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Project</b>
128 Business Council	<i>Alewife A3-Route 128 Corridor Reverse Commute Program</i>
Town of Foxborough	<i>Planning study</i>
MWRTA	<i>Wellesley Route 9 Reverse Commute</i>
NSCC	<i>Mobility Management and Employment Express</i>
Town of Acton	<i>Mobility Manager</i>

A motion to forward all proposals requesting New Freedom funds to MassDOT Rail and Transit Division for consideration for one year's worth of funding (SFY 2014) was made by the North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) (E. Tarallo), and seconded by the North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly) (Tina Cassidy).

During a discussion of this motion, members asked questions about the SCM proposals for *Travel Training, Counseling, and Advocacy* and *Planning*. A. Wilson noted that the SCM proposals scored low because they were not clear in regard to the request, both proposals appeared identical, and the applicant did not include an itemized budget.

Members asked further questions of the applicant.

*Can you speak to how SCM's service could help provide an alternative to THE RIDE, which is experiencing a decline in ridership, possibly based on price? (P. Regan)*

SCM's services provide a safety net for THE RIDE, providing 10,000 trips per month. The cost of a trip is less than \$30. There is a movement in the paratransit industry toward being able to connect people to a variety of transportation options. SCM has a steering committee, which includes the MBTA, to provide travel training and coordination across all constituencies affected by MBTA fare hikes and service reductions for THE RIDE. SCM is seeking assistance to turn its operations to a broader platform with a mobility management framework. The planning aspect of SCM's request will focus on creating a business plan and hiring a senior level person to operationalize the plan. The capital aspect of the request would support the creation of a call center to coordinate services. (Reed Cochran, SCM)

*Why did SCM submit two proposals instead of one? (D. Mohler)*

The reason for the two proposals was to distinguish between the planning and capital requests. (R. Cochran)

*If only one proposal could be funded, which would be your priority? (D. Mohler)*

The priority would be the request for *Travel Training, Counseling, and Advocacy*. SCM has other places to look for funding for the *Planning* proposal. The partnership of the MPO would help SCM leverage the grant. (R. Cochran)

E. Tarallo then modified his motion.

A motion to forward all proposals requesting New Freedom funds to MassDOT Rail and Transit Division for consideration for one year worth of funding (SFY 2014), based on the priority in the staff recommendation, was made by the North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn) (E. Tarallo), and seconded by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (T. Bent). The motion carried.

During a discussion of the motion, E. Bourassa raised concerns about how this action would affect the Town of Acton's services. D. Halley noted that communities are currently employing people that they do not want to lay off as they move from a town to a regional set-up. It would be helpful to get three years of funding to allow time for the transition.

Staff was directed to submit the New Freedom proposals to the MassDOT Rail and Transit Division in the order presented in the staff recommendation, by evaluation score, as follows:

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<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Project</b>
GLSS	<i>Community Planning, Phase 2</i>
Mystic Valley Elder Services	<i>Connect-a-Ride Alliance</i>
GLSS	<i>Reaching Beyond Borders: The GLSS Mobility Links Project</i>
Town of Acton	<i>CrossTown Connect Dispatch</i>
MWRTA	<i>Peer-to-Peer Training Program</i>
SCM	<i>Travel Training, Counseling, and Advocacy</i>
SCM	<i>Planning</i>
NSCC	<i>Mobility Management and Employment Express</i>

## **8. Transportation Improvement Program Update—Sean Pfalzer, MPO Staff**

Members were presented with tables showing the regional targets for the FFY 2014-17 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The total target for this four year period is \$296.78 million. The tables provide a breakdown by year and one table provides the breakdown that highlights three funding programs: Congestion Management Program,

Highway Safety Improvement Program, and Transportation Alternatives Program and provides a composite funding amount for the other main funding programs (National Highway Performance Program, and Surface Transportation Program).

E. Tarallo asked staff to prepare tables for the next meeting that show projects by funding category.

### **9. MPO Meeting Minutes**

This item was not addressed.

### **10. State Implementation Plan Update**

This item was not addressed.

### **11. Members Items**

There were none.

### **12. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by MassDOT (D. Mohler) and seconded by the MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham) (D. Giombetti). The motion carried.

## Attendance

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### Members

### Representatives and Alternates

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At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	Laura Wiener
At-Large Town (Town of Lexington)	Richard Canale
City of Boston (Boston Redevelopment Authority)	Lara Mérida
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Tom Kadzis
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	David Mohler
	David Anderson
MassDOT Highway Division	John Romano
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	Joe Cosgrove
Massachusetts Port Authority	Lourenço Dantas
MBTA Advisory Board	Paul Regan
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Bedford)	Richard Reed
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)	Tina Cassidy
North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn)	Ed Tarallo
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Steve Olanoff
South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree)	Melissa Santucci Rozzi
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	Dennis Crowley
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC)	Tom O'Rourke

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<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Lynn Ahlgren	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
Sarah Bradbury	MassDOT District 3
Valerie Parker Callahan	Greater Lynn Senior Services
Callida Cenizal	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Reed Cochran	SCM
Frank DeMasi	Regional Transportation Advisory Council / MAPC-Wellesley
Doug Halley	Town of Acton
Eric Halvorsen	MAPC
Kristina Johnson	City of Quincy
Emily Kearns	Greater Lynn Senior Services
Rafael Mares	Conservation Law Foundation
Joe Onorato	MassDOT Highway Division
Vida Poole	Mystic Valley Elder Services
Pat Sullivan	128 Business Council
Jenny Vanasse	Mystic Valley Elder Services
Sharon Wason	Town of Foxborough
Mark Whitmore	North Shore Career Centers
Wig Zamore	Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership / Mystic View Task Force

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**MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff**

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Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director  
David Fargen  
Maureen Kelly  
Elizabeth Moore  
Efi Pagitsas  
Scott Peterson  
Sean Pfalzer  
Michelle Scott  
Alicia Wilson  
Pam Wolfe

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