

Draft Memorandum for the Record

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

May 5, 2016 Meeting

10:05 AM – 1:40 PM, State Transportation Building, Conference Rooms 2&3, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA

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

Decisions

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) agreed to the following:

- Release Draft Amendment 4 to the federal fiscal years (FFYs) 2016-20 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for a 30-day public review period with the intention to move the funding currently programmed for the Green Line Extension from College Avenue to Route 16 in Medford (Phase 2) to the Green Line Extension from Lechmere Station in Cambridge to College Avenue in Medford (Phase 1). This 30-day period will allow for a revised scope, procurement method, and budget to be provided to the MPO to confirm the necessity of these funds to be reprogrammed. In doing so, the MPO recognizes and incorporates into the record of this vote the commitment by the Secretary of MassDOT to file by December 31, 2016 an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) under the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act (MEPA) for Phase 2 of the Green Line Extension, and after such filing to carry forward the MEPA review process to its conclusion, so long as Phase 1 of the Green Line Extension continues to go forward.
- Resume a discussion about cost overruns and municipal contributions to TIP projects at the next MPO meeting

Meeting Agenda

1. Public Comments

Members heard comments about the following projects:

Green Line Extension (Somerville, Medford)

Elected officials and members of the public commented on the MPO's forthcoming agenda item (item #6 below) regarding a vote to release Draft Amendment 4 to the FFYs 2016-20 TIP to reallocate funding from Phase 2 of the Green Line Extension project to Phase 1. Phase 1 would extend the line from Lechmere Station in Cambridge

to College Avenue in Medford and Phase 2 would extend the line further, from College Avenue to Route 16 in Medford.

Mayor Stephanie Burke, City of Medford, discussed the value of the collective project, which would extend the line to Route 16. She remarked on US Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx's recent comments regarding the ability of infrastructure to either divide or bring together communities. She stated that the Green Line Extension will serve as a "ladder of opportunity" and a bridge to help people get access to jobs and education, which is particularly important to residents in the five state-designated environmental justice communities in the vicinity of the project. Further discussing the benefits of the full project to Route 16, she noted that the highest projected ridership numbers are associated with the extension to Medford Hillside, the original promised location of the terminus, and that the Route 16 terminus offers the most potential for promoting economic development and increasing the Commonwealth's tax base. She referenced the support from the Towns of Arlington and Winchester for the full project.

Mayor Burke expressed concern about the potential loss of Phase 2, despite MassDOT's recent commitment to begin the project's environmental review process. She urged the MPO to conduct due diligence over the upcoming 30-day public review process for Amendment 4 by reviewing the new budget for Phase 1 and encouraging MassDOT to meet the \$2 billion cost estimate for the project. Only after exhausting all funding opportunities should the MPO consider voting to approve the reallocation of funds from Phase 2 to Phase 1, she said.

Mayor Joseph Curtatone, City of Somerville, lent support to the comments made by Mayor Burke and discussed his commitment to working to bring the Green Line to Route 16. He remarked on the necessity of completing the full project as the terminus at Route 16 would serve 10,000 residents in a half-mile radius at the borders of Somerville, Medford, and Arlington, and because of the environmental benefits and economic opportunities the Green Line Extension would provide for the region. He discussed how the municipalities in the project area are taking unprecedented steps to keep the project moving forward and collaborating with the Baker Administration, Secretary of Transportation Stephanie Pollack, and Green Line Interim Project Manager Jack Wright and his team to meet the challenge going forward. He remarked on Secretary Pollack's commitment to begin the environmental review process for Phase 2 and asked the MPO to conduct due diligence going forward.

State Representative Christine Barber spoke on behalf of the legislative delegation representing the municipalities in the Green Line corridor. She discussed the benefits that the extension to Route 16 would bring to the region, including the ability to increase

mobility, boost transit ridership, and create a more equitable distribution of transit services to environmental justice communities. She expressed appreciation for the work that MassDOT and the MBTA have done to reduce the project's cost. She asked that, if during the public review period for Amendment 4, the MPO determines that the reallocated funds are not needed for Phase 1, that the MPO revert the funds back to Phase 2. She also requested that the MPO continue to program Phase 2 in the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). A letter signed by Senator Patricia Jehlen, and Representatives Christine Barber, Timothy J. Toomey, Sean Garballey, and Denise Provost was also submitted to the MPO.

Laurel Ruma, Medford resident (abutter to project area) and member of Green Line Extension design working group, expressed support for the project extending to Route 16 where she said, there is the only hope for transit-oriented development (TOD) along the corridor in Medford. She discussed how the College Avenue terminus is surrounded by land owned by Tufts University and is perfect for "Tufts-oriented development," but that the Route 16 terminus would be ripe for TOD that benefits the region as a whole. She discussed the long, disappointing process that project supporters have dealt with over the years and noted that the residents who support the project have been the only constant in that process that has spanned administrations and changes in MassDOT and MBTA leadership.

Elisabeth Bayle, Medford Hillside resident, expressed her long-standing support for building the extension to Route 16, which she has been backing since 2006. She remarked on the work of the Medford Neighborhood Green Line Alliance, the importance of the project to the community in the Green Line corridor and the region, and the constant support of residents as the project has been delayed over the years.

She noted that the terminus at Route 16 was the preferred build alternative chosen by MassDOT after conducting years of reviews and analyses, public processes, and environmental reviews, and that the terminus at that location meets the definition of Medford Hillside (as College Avenue does not). Further, she said that the full extension to Route 16 brings the greatest air quality and ridership benefits. Improving air quality was the original purpose for extending the line and the basis of the State Implementation Plan (SIP) commitment. She reported that some 2,000 residents of surrounding communities signed a petition in favor of the extension to Route 16.

Remarking on the cost increase to the full extension – which rose from an original estimate of \$700 million – she stated that the high cost of project delays pales in comparison to costs to residents' health from poor air quality, and diminished opportunities to access affordable housing, healthcare, jobs, education, and other

elements central to quality-of-life. Further, she stated that there is now a danger of “trading short-term gain for long-term pain,” and that the people who will suffer are those that need transportation and the benefits of TOD at the Route 16 location. She referred to a visioning study prepared by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) that illustrates the benefits of TOD at Route 16. She asked the MPO to defend the long-term vision and significantly improve the lives of thousands of people in the project area.

John Elliott, Medford resident, also expressed his long-standing support for building the extension to Route 16. He presented a series of maps comparing the locations of the proposed stations at Route 16 and College Avenue that illustrate the following:

- The location of the station at Route 16 is 0.3 miles inside the Medford Hillside area (meeting the definition of Medford Hillside), while the College Avenue Station would be 0.6 miles short of Medford Hillside.
- There are a larger number of high-density residential buildings within a one-third mile radius of the Route 16 station while the College Avenue station is predominantly surrounded by land owned by Tufts University.
- The Route 16 station would provide better connections to planned and existing bicycle and pedestrian trails as the station is at an intersection of these trails, whereas the College Avenue station is farther away from those trails.
- Fifty-five percent of the area within a one-third mile of the Route 16 station is in environmental justice areas, whereas less than one percent of the area around the College Avenue station is in an environmental justice area.
- There are commercial properties around Route 16 that are ripe for development, while there is almost no opportunity for TOD at College Avenue.

Josh Ostroff, Partnerships Director for Transportation for Massachusetts, expressed support for the full Green Line Extension to Route 16. He noted that the project has the potential to be transformative for the region and to reduce vehicle usage and increase transit ridership. (He made other comments, recorded below regarding the *Cochituate Rail Trail* project in Natick and funding for transportation.)

Ken Krause, Medford resident, expressed appreciation for Secretary Pollack’s commitment to advancing and funding the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Phase 2. He noted the importance of building the full extension because the Environmental Assessment for the project showed that the Route 16 station had the highest ridership projections (10,500 daily boardings). Those ridership numbers may increase because of the bicycle and pedestrian trail access to that station. He expressed hope that the EIR will capture the benefits the project will have in terms of reducing polluted run-off generated from vehicles on the Mystic River Parkway that flows into the Mystic River.

He asked for funding to be restored to Phase 2, if the MPO determines after reviewing the revised budget for Phase 1 and exhausting other funding sources, that those funds are not needed for Phase 1.

Rafael Mares, Conservation Law Foundation, asked the MPO to commit to using the public review period for Amendment 4 to carefully review the revised budget for Phase 1 and other information that will be available prior their final vote on the amendment. If the final vote results in the reallocation of funds from Phase 2 to Phase 1, the MPO would need to amend its LRTP to remove Phase 2 from the years in which its funds are currently programmed. In that case, he asked members to reprogram Phase 2 in an outer year of the LRTP to show the MPO's commitment to the full Green Line Extension.

Wig Zamore, Somerville resident, expressed support of the Green Line Extension and Community Path projects in their entirety. He expressed concern that the revised design of the Community Path would leave a half-mile gap in what will be a 20-mile length of path (from Charlestown to Lexington) that would attract the most bicycle and pedestrian commuters in the state. He called for the state to conduct an EIR as well as an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) for the full project to Route 16, so that the final segment of the project will be ready to go when the opportunity arises. He also noted the benefits of the project for reducing polluted run-off into the Mystic River.

He then discussed the connection between transportation and health, and the work of an academic group at Tufts University that has released a number of peer-reviewed articles about health impacts in Somerville. This research has shown that there is a statistically significant relationship between the level of ultra-fine particles from tailpipe emissions and cardiovascular disease and inflammation (as measured by levels of C-reactive protein, an inflammatory biomarker, in subjects). The researchers concluded that in neighborhoods within 100 meters of highways, residents have significantly higher risk of mortality from cardiovascular disease and lung cancer, higher risk for childhood asthma, and potentially an increased risk of childhood autism. W. Zamore expressed concern about a design of the Community Path that would require bicyclists to use city streets as tailpipe emissions put those users at greater risk of heart attack after exposure. He also discussed the health benefits that come from active transportation facilities and the benefits to the region for moving away from polluting transportation modes. He distributed two handouts: a study abstract and summary of study results.

In response to W. Zamore's comments, Marc Draisen, MAPC, noted that parts of the Community Path, although not on roadways, would still be in proximity to heavily trafficked areas. He asked W. Zamore to comment about the difference in exposures

between roadway and trail facilities in this area. W. Zamore explained that the Tufts studies he referenced focused on near-source exposure to primary pollutants (affecting people in the immediate area of the source of pollution). He drew a distinction between the pollutants that are the focus of these local studies and the pollutants that are monitored at a regional level by the US Environmental Protection Agency, which includes fine particles and ozone.

Jim Gillooly, City of Boston, asked W. Zamore to explain a point he made about research on statins. W. Zamore discussed how studies on statins, which are prescribed for people at risk of cardiovascular disease, used C-reactive protein levels as the primary indicator of cardiovascular mortality risk. In the Tufts studies, the researchers measured C-reactive protein in their Somerville subjects and found that over time people with higher exposure to air pollution had higher C-reactive protein levels.

Reconstruction of Route 1A (Walpole)

James Johnson, Town Administrator of Walpole, joined by Elizabeth Dennehy, Community Development Director, asked the MPO to consider programming the *Reconstruction of Route 1A* project in the FFY 2019 element of the TIP. He noted that the project has been in the TIP Universe of Projects since 1997, and that it was programmed in the FFY 2019 element previously, but was delayed by the MPO until FFY 2020. He reported that the project is at the 75% design stage and is ready for construction.

Marie Rose, MassDOT Highway Division, asked if the Town of Walpole is willing to accept a discontinuance of that route. J. Johnson confirmed that the town could make that commitment after the construction is completed.

Timothy Kochan, MassDOT District 5, also advocated for this project. (He made other comments which are recorded under the “MassDOT District 5 Priorities” heading below.)

Reconstruction of Route 27 (Natick)

Jamie Errickson, Director of Community and Economic Development for the Town of Natick, advocated for and provided an update on the *Reconstruction of Route 27* project, which is programmed in the FFY 2019 element of the TIP. The town continues to work with MassDOT District 3 to advance the design and the project remains on target. He described the significance of the Route 27 corridor and the project for providing access for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians between Natick Center and the town’s commuter rail station. He noted that the corridor serves large regional employers such as TGX and Mathworks, and new housing projects along the corridor.

Cochituate Rail Trail (Natick)

Geoff Lewis, Planner for the Town of Natick and Natick resident, provided an update on the *Cochituate Rail Trail* project. The trail will link employment centers (such as TGX headquarters and Mathworks), housing, and retail centers with Natick Center and the commuter rail station. By providing this connection, the trail is expected to boost transit ridership. The trail, which will connect to the Saxonville branch in Framingham, will also provide bicycle and pedestrian amenities and recreational opportunities for the town and region. The town has already spent \$800,000 to bring the project to the 25% design stage. The first phase of the environmental review process is nearly complete. Town meeting recent approved the spending of \$2.5 million for right-of-way acquisition of the Saxonville branch and voted to acquire the Wonder Bread spur. Private fundraising is also underway for right-of-way acquisition costs, but the town will need further assistance to purchase the \$6.3 million Saxonville branch from CSX.

Josh Ostroff, Chair of Natick's Rail Trail Advisory Committee, lent support to G. Lewis' comments and discussed other methods being used to raise funds for the trail, such as a program for providing naming rights for bridges. Also, proponents are exploring an agreement with the Town of Framingham to allow for sponsorship of a bridge connecting Natick and Framingham. He provided members with a copy of community newsletter that contains an update of project.

Transportation Financing

J. Ostroff then spoke as the Partnerships Director for the Transportation for Massachusetts coalition in regards to the overall funding situation for transportation. He observed that many worthy transportation projects are not being funded through MassDOT's Capital Investment Plan because the Commonwealth does not have the financial resources and because there are insufficient resources available from the federal government. As such, communities are taking action to help themselves. He underscored the necessity for the MPO to convey the need for adequate resources to state leaders to fulfill the vision for improved mobility.

MassDOT's District 5 Priorities

Timothy Kochan, MassDOT District 5, spoke in support of several projects in the District 5 region and made suggestions for years in which those projects could be programmed in the TIP based on discussions at MassDOT's TIP Day.

The *Intersection Improvements at Route 1 and University Avenue/Everett Street (Norwood)* project has been proposed for programming in the FFYs 2017-21 TIP after scoring well in both the MPO's project evaluation process and the MassDOT Project Selection Advisory Council's (PSAC) evaluation process. The project will address

multimodal accommodation and safety and congestion issues. Proposed improvements include upgrades to traffic signals and the addition of left-turn lanes.

The *Improvements at Route 1A and Upland Road/Washington Street/Prospect Street/Fulton Street (Norwood)* project is at the 25% design stage. A public hearing was held last year. The project could be programmed in the FFY 2018 element of the TIP.

The *Reconstruction of Union Street (Route 139) (Holbrook)* project is also at the 25% design stage. This project will provide multimodal accommodations and make improvements to safety along the corridor. FFY 2018 would be an appropriate year for programming.

The *Reconstruction of Route 1A (Walpole)* project is at the 75% design stage. FFY 2020 would be an appropriate year for programming.

Regarding the *Construction of Interstate 495/Route 1A Ramps (Wrentham)* project, T. Kochan noted that there are significant safety and congestion issues at the project location, which is near the Wrentham Village shopping center. District 5 is requesting that the MPO revisit the scores this project received in the MPO's project evaluation process. The project received scores of zero in several categories, but District 5 believes the project should receive points for improving bicycle and pedestrian safety, emergency response, and the pedestrian network, and for enhancing economic vitality. The project would add bicycle lanes, update traffic signals, and possibly add full sidewalks or a shared-use path. MassDOT has engaged a firm to begin designing the project; notice to proceed is expected today.

M. Draisen suggested that staff of the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS), MAPC, and District 5 should meet to discuss the evaluation of the Wrentham project as there are professional disagreements about how the project's rating. T. Kochan noted that District 5 has submitted a comment to both MAPC and CTPS staff. District 5 staff will be glad to discuss the matter further.

Reconstruction and Widening on Route 18 (Main Street) (Weymouth, Abington)

Owen MacDonald, Traffic Engineer for the Town of Weymouth, speaking on behalf of Weymouth Mayor Robert Hedlund, asked for the MPO's continued support for the *Reconstruction and Widening on Route 18* project. He touched on the points referenced in the comments he made at the MPO meeting of April 28 regarding the project's ability to improve safety, reduce traffic congestion, and support economic development at the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station. Mayor Hedlund will be submitting a letter to the MPO, as well.

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

There was none.

3. Committee Chairs' Reports

There were none.

4. Regional Transportation Advisory Council Report—*Tegin Bennett, Advisory Council Chair*

T. Bennett announced that the Advisory Council will meet next on May 11 at 3:00 PM in the State Transportation Building. The agenda will include a discussion on the Green Line Extension project and the TIP.

5. Executive Director's Report—*Karl Quackenbush, MPO Executive Director*

K. Quackenbush informed members about the current staff assignment for the TIP. Lourenço Dantas and Anne McGahan are working on the TIP in the short-term while Sean Pfalzer is working remotely. Alexandra Kleyman will become the TIP Manager in the near future.

He also announced that an Administration and Finance Committee meeting will be scheduled in early June.

6. Draft Federal Fiscal Years (FFYs) 2016-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment 4—*Lourenço Dantas, Manager of Certification Activities Group, and Anne McGahan, MPO Staff*

D. Mohler opened the discussion of proposed Amendment 4 to the FFYs 2016-20 TIP by reading a statement from a letter from Secretary Stephanie Pollack to Mayor Burke of Medford. The letter conveys that MassDOT commits to file an ENF for the Green Line Extension from College Avenue to Route 16 (Phase 2) by the end of calendar year 2016, and to carry out the MEPA process through to a Final EIR so long as the Green Line Extension from Lechmere Station to College Avenue (Phase 1) continues to advance.

A. McGahan then introduced the proposed Amendment 4, which would reallocate approximately \$158 million in MPO target funding, which is currently programmed for Phase 2 between FFY 2016 and FFY 2020, to Phase 1. This action would trigger an amendment to the LRTP because both phases of the Green Line Extension project are regionally significant projects that would add capacity to the transportation system, and because Phase 1 is a legal commitment under the State Implementation Plan (SIP).

This action would also require staff to conduct new environmental justice and greenhouse gas (GHG) analyses for the LRTP, which involves traffic model runs for the build and no-build scenarios (forecast to 2020 and 2040), and to prepare a new air quality conformity determination. The amended LRTP and air quality conformity determination would be released for a 30-day public review period. The MPO members would also be required to sign a new GHG certification document to comply with the Global Warming Solutions Act (GSWA). Amendment 4 and the new FFYs 2017-21 TIP cannot be finalized until the LRTP amendment is finalized.

D. Mohler explained that an LRTP amendment is not being presented today because there are other factors that may arise during the development of the new TIP that could also trigger an LRTP amendment. The MPO members could, for example, decide to remove from the TIP regionally significant projects that are over-budget or delay the implementation of projects.

He also pointed out that Amendment 4 addresses Green Line Extension funds programmed from FFY 2016 through FFY 2020 only, but that an additional \$32 million is programmed in the LRTP for FFY 2021. When members address the FFY 2017-21 TIP, the \$32 million will be reallocated to Phase 1 of the Green Line Extension so that all funding for Phase 2 will eventually be reallocate to Phase 1.

Motion

A motion to release Draft Amendment 4 to the FFYs 2016-20 TIP for a 30-day public review period was made by MassDOT (D. Mohler), and seconded by the MBTA (Thom Dugan).

Discussion

Members discussed the motion.

M. Draisen asked for clarification about the total amount of funding that would be reallocated in Amendment 4 and the additional amount that will be reallocated when the FFY 2017-21 TIP is addressed. D. Mohler stated that Amendment 4 would reallocate \$158 million programmed in FFYs 2016-20 and \$32 million would be reallocated when the FFY 2017-21 TIP is addressed. As a result of these two actions, a total of \$190 million would be transferred from Phase 2 to Phase 1. Of that amount, \$152 million is federal aid, which requires a 20% local or state match (\$38 million). The match may be available from state funds already committed in the Full-Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) for Phase 1, or it may be available from contributions anticipated from cities in the Green Line corridor. If the match is not available from these sources, the state will make funds available for the match.

M. Draisen asked if the state has committed to use the amount previously programmed as the state match on Phase 2 to pay for the environmental review of Phase 2. D. Mohler assured him funding for the ENF is already in MassDOT's planning budget.

M. Draisen asked for more information about the rationale for amending the LRTP and the timing of that amendment. D. Mohler discussed the need for consistency between the TIP and the LRTP as TIP projects that produce significant air quality impacts must be programmed in the LRTP. Phase 2 is currently programmed in the current timeband of the LRTP, but will not be implemented in that timeframe; therefore Phase 2 will either be removed from the LRTP or delayed to a future LRTP programming year. Also, because Phase 1 was paused, there may be a delay in the date that the line opens for service. If so, the LRTP would be amended to place Phase 1 in a future year showing the time that air quality benefits from that project would begin to accrue. The milestone years for calculating air quality impacts in the LRTP are FFYs 2020 and 2040. An amendment to the LRTP may place Phase 2 in the FFY 2040 element for the purposes of modeling, even if the project implementation date is much earlier.

M. Draisen noted that a primary reason for the implementation of the Green Line Extension project is because of the air quality implications. He suggested that the proposed actions before the MPO – which recognize the delay of Phase 1 and potentially reduce the commitment to Phase 2 – indicate that a lesser air quality benefit will be achieved. As Phase 1 is a legal commitment of the state with deadlines for implementation under the SIP, he suggested that other actions would have to be taken in order to attain the required level of air quality improvement required by the SIP and GWSA.

D. Mohler replied that Phase 1 was required, under the SIP, to be operational by December 31, 2014. When the state missed that deadline, it implemented other air quality projects to mitigate for the delay in opening of the line. As Phase 1 continues to be delayed, the state will continue to operate these mitigation projects. No further mitigation requirements would be expected to be triggered by the MPO's proposed action. A. McGahan added that the emission reductions from the existing mitigation measures also continue to apply in terms of the GWSA requirements for carbon dioxide reductions.

M. Draisen expressed hope that the MPO's certification for the GWSA requirement could assert that, while fewer air quality benefits are being achieved because of the delay of the Green Line Extension, the same level of air quality improvement the extension would have generated will be achieved as a result of mitigation measures

until the Green Line Extension opens. The results of the air quality modelling will have to be conducted before the MPO makes this assertion, however.

Substitute Motion

MAPC (M. Draisen) made a substitute motion, which replaced the prior motion. The motion was seconded by the City of Boston (J. Gillooly). The motion is as follows:

The Boston Region MPO votes to release Draft Amendment 4 to the FFYs 2016-20 TIP for a 30-day public review period with the intention to move the funding currently programmed for the Green Line Extension from College Avenue to Route 16 to the first phase the GLX from Lechmere Station to College Avenue. This 30-day period will allow for a revised scope, procurement method, and budget to be provided to the MPO to confirm the necessity of these funds to be reprogrammed. In doing so, the MPO recognizes and incorporates into the record of this vote the commitment by the Secretary of MassDOT to file by December 31, 2016 an ENF under MEPA for the second phase of the Green Line Extension from College Avenue to Route 16, and after such filing to carry forward the MEPA review process to its conclusion, so long as the Lechmere to College Avenue portion of the Green Line Extension continues to go forward. The motion carried unanimously following the discussion detailed below.

Discussion

Member discussed the substitute motion.

D. Mohler reiterated that Amendment 4 (addressing 5 years' worth of Phase 2 funding) plus the MPO's future action on the FFYs 2017-21 TIP (which will address the 6th year of Phase 2 funding) will result in the reallocation of a total of \$190 million from Phase 2 to Phase 1. Of that amount, \$152 million is federal aid requiring a 20% state or local match. The \$38 million match may be available from state funds already committed in the FFGA for Phase 1, or it may be available from contributions expected from cities in the Green Line corridor. Otherwise the state will make funds available for the match.

T. Bennett announced that the City of Cambridge expects to make information available to the public about its contribution to the project this evening. She then asked the Chair to restate the reason that Amendment 4 addresses the entire amount of Phase 2 funding. In response, D. Mohler stated that, despite the interim project management team's efforts to reduce the project cost, MassDOT expects that all of the MPO's Phase 2 money and city contributions will be required for Phase 1. The MassDOT Board of Directors and the MBTA Fiscal and Management Control Board resolved that other commitments (beyond the FFGA monies) would be required to advance Phase 1. If the MPO's funds are not needed for Phase 1, they would be returned to the MPO. Also, the

MPO could choose to reject Amendment 4 after the 30-day public review period. Further, if the board's vote not to advance Phase 1, Phase 2 cannot be built.

Jay Monty, At-Large City of Everett, asked if it is possible that the boards would make no definitive decision about advancing Phase 1 at their upcoming meeting on May 9. D. Mohler replied that the boards will be presented with information on May 9 regarding the revised project budget, how the project will be procured, how it will be funded, whether MassDOT and the MBTA have the wherewithal to deliver the project, and the schedule. He assured members that they would have the information they need to decide on Amendment 4 during the 30-day public review period and he expressed confidence that the MPO would know in that timeframe whether the boards are supportive of advancing Phase 1.

Paul Regan, MBTA Advisory Board, noted that if the boards vote to advance the project, federal approval will be required to access the FFGA funds. He asked about the process for securing federal approval. D. Mohler stated that a new finance plan would have to be submitted that gives the FTA confidence that the state can pay for the project.

Dennis Giombetti, Metro West Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham), expressed support for Amendment 4, but noted his concern about the potential impact on funding for other municipal projects in LRTP that may result from Phase 2 advancing through the MEPA process without committed construction funding. He asked about MassDOT's plan for funding Phase 2 construction. D. Mohler replied that MassDOT has no commitment at this time to funding the capital costs of Phase 2 as the project has yet to go through the MEPA process.

Ken Miller, Federal Highway Administration, pointed out that the MPO cannot program Phase 2 in the LRTP if no construction funds are identified for it. He then asked how the state intends to fulfill the SIP requirements if the boards vote against advancing Phase 1. D. Mohler replied that the state would have to take the legal steps necessary to implement substitute projects.

K. Miller asked if there have been discussions with Tufts University about contributing to the project given that the University will benefit from the Green Line Extension. D. Mohler confirmed that conversations have taken place.

Laura Wiener, At-Large Town of Arlington, inquired about the funding source for the ENF for Phase 2. D. Mohler replied that MassDOT has sufficient funding in its planning budget to complete the ENF. MassDOT will file the ENF by December 31, 2016.

L. Wiener acknowledged and thanked MAPC, and the Cities of Somerville, Medford, and Cambridge for their work to advance the project. On behalf of MassDOT, D. Mohler also expressed thanks to these partners.

T. Bent also thanked the MPO, elected officials, advocates, and residents who have gone through this long process. He noted that the Green Line Extension remains as worthy a project as when the MPO first voted to fund it based on the project's merits. He noted that the MPO has not, traditionally, gone back on its commitments. While recognizing that Phase 2 cannot go forward without Phase 1, he expressed dismay that there is still discussion about canceling the project, which won federal funding by out-competing other regions in the nation. He stated that the contribution from the City of Somerville will be substantial. He expressed the City of Somerville's expectation that a new state policy on value capture will be enacted and applied consistently to municipalities where transportation projects will provide economic benefits. Also the city expects that MassDOT will follow through on its commitment to initiate the MEPA process for Phase 2 using state funds in order to deliver an EIR. He noted that time is of the essence given that construction costs continue to escalate, and that the FTA will need to approve a new finance plan. He stated that the City of Somerville supports Amendment 4.

D. Crowley asked for more information about the how close the interim project management team is to reaching the budget for Phase 1 and if the revised budget could be shared with the MPO today. D. Mohler indicated that the revised budget information would not be available until the boards meet on May 9.

Richard Reed, Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Bedford), inquired about the timing of infusions of municipal contributions to the project, and whether the municipalities would have to follow through on the commitments before the project is advertised. M. Draisen replied that in discussions with the Cities of Somerville and Cambridge, many mechanisms for injecting funding into the project were discussed, including up-front investments and debt-service investments. He expects that there will be ongoing discussions going forward about the best way to garner those contributions. MAPC intends to be engaged going forward and will be looking at financial models used in other parts of the country.

Noting that local approvals to authorize the use of municipal contributions will be required, R. Reed asked if the state will require binding legal commitments before the Green Line Extension project is advertised. D. Mohler confirmed that letters of intent from the cities are expected to be sent to the boards by May 9. Firm commitments (binding memoranda of understanding) from the cities will be required by for the

development of the new finance plan that will be sent to FTA, prior to advertising the project.

P. Regan noted that members should make it clear in their vote on Amendment 4 that if funds are moved from Phase 2 to Phase 1, this action does not commit the MPO to funding Phase 2 in the future.

M. Draisen remarked on MAPC's long-standing support for the Green Line Extension project to Route 16, which is MAPC's priority transit expansion project. He discussed the benefits of the project in terms of economic development, as highlighted in MAPC's visioning study. He also noted that the Route 16 station is projected to have the largest percentage of trips converted from auto to transit, which will support the goals of moving people from single-occupant vehicles to transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes to improve the environment and public health, and reduce congestion. He discussed his reasons for supporting Amendment 4. First, the \$190 million currently programmed for Phase 2 will likely not be sufficient, so a new project cost will need to be developed and financing methods identified. Also mitigation requirements that come out of the MEPA process will need to be considered. He stated that, to the greatest degree possible, he would aim to keep the Green Line Extension to Route 16 as MAPC's priority transit expansion objective and to work to identify funding for this project and other worthy projects in the region.

L. Wiener inquired about the design of the College Avenue station and whether the design would preclude further expansion of the line. M. Draisen replied that the station would be designed in such a way as to present no impediment to future extension.

Richard Canale, At-Large Town of Lexington, reflected on the rationale that members had for voting to commit funding to Phase 2 originally, and noted that, despite the changed situation, the original rationale for supporting Phase 2 is still valid. He suggested that members keep that in mind when considering Phase 2 in the future.

R. Mares asked why in Amendment 4, the \$38 million in state funding that matches the federal funds the MPO has currently programmed for Phase 2, would not be reprogrammed to Phase 1. D. Mohler explained that the boards are not, at this time, committing additional state dollars (beyond those already committed in the FFGA) to the project. The MPO's affirmative vote on Amendment 4 would make \$152 million in federal aid available. Those funds will require a local or state match. If there is not a sufficient match from other sources, the state will make the \$38 million available. Otherwise, those funds could be used for other state bond purposes.

M. Draisen added that, despite the cost-cutting measures, there still may be a gap in funding for Phase 1 and that the board members might be confronted with the question of whether or not to make other state revenue available. In that event, MAPC would advocate for applying the \$38 million to Phase 1 to help fill the funding gap.

J. Gillooly remarked on the pressing issue of keeping Phase 1 moving ahead and stated that the City of Boston is prepared to support Amendment 4. He asked members to keep in mind, as a frame of reference when future discussions about Phase 2 arise, that the \$152 million of federal aid that the MPO commits represents only 7% of the full Green Line Extension project.

Following this discussion, the members voted unanimously to release Draft Amendment 4 for a 30-day public review period.

**7. Draft FFYs 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
Development: First Tier List of Projects and Programming
Scenarios—*Lourenço Dantas, Manager of Certification Activities
Group, MPO Staff***

L. Dantas presented a staff-prepared scenario for project programming in the FFYs 2017-21 TIP for discussion. A spreadsheet (titled “Scenario 1a”) showed potential years in which candidate projects could be programmed along with project costs to start the conversation and generate feedback from the members about how staff should proceed. Staff also distributed a First-Tier List of Highway Projects, which lists projects that scored highly in the MPO’s project evaluation process and that could be made ready for advertisement in the FFYs 2017-21 timeframe.

Scenario 1A, the baseline for today’s discussion, preserves the MPO’s commitment to projects programmed in the current FFYs 2016-20 TIP, and shows the impact of cost overruns of already programmed projects and their impact on other projects.

Reflected in the scenario are cost overruns for the following projects: *Middlesex Turnpike Improvements, Phase 3 (Bedford, Billerica, Burlington)*; *Reconstruction and Widening on Route 18 (Weymouth, Abington)*; and *Reconstruction and Related Work on Derby Street (Hingham)*.

In this scenario, staff removed the *Reconstruction of Main Street (Route 30) (Southborough)* from TIP because of readiness concerns having to do with the delay in right-of-way acquisition.

Other changes were made as a result of cost overruns. The *Gateway East (Brookline)* project and the *Reconstruction of Route 85 (Marlborough)* project would be delayed

from FFY 2017 until FFY 2018, and the *Reconstruction of Highland Avenue and Needham Street (Newton, Needham)* would be delayed from FFY 2018 to FFY 2019.

Cost increases to the *Signal and Intersection Improvements on Route 135 (Hopkinton)* project and the *Improvements to Boylston Street (Boston)* project in FFY 2019 resulted in the delay of the *Reconstruction of Route 27 (Natick)* project and the *Reconstruction of Route 129 (Lynn)* project from FFY 2019 to FFY 2020.

The *New Boston Street Bridge Replacement (Woburn)* project, which has increased in cost, would be delayed from FFY 2020 to FFY 2021. The *Reconstruction of Rutherford Avenue (Boston)* project would also be delayed one year from FFY 2020 to FFY 2021.

In this scenario, the FFY 2021 programming year affords the first opportunity for the MPO to add new projects. Staff proposed several candidate projects based on the high scores they received in the MPO's project evaluation process and their consistency with MPO investment programs.

Discussion

Members discussed the proposed scenario.

J. Gillooly expressed concern about postponing the *Rutherford Avenue* project, which is a \$109 million project programmed in the LRTP. He discussed the importance of constructing the project as soon as possible because the traffic improvement that will be generated will support the Wynn Casino development in Everett and other developments in the area of Somerville, Everett, and Boston. He remarked on the issuance of an MEPA certificate associated the casino that calls for regional coordination among parties (not only Wynn Casino) to mitigate traffic in the Sullivan Square area. He stated that the city would like to see \$7 million programmed for the project in FFY 2020 and \$25 million in FFY 2021.

D. Giombetti observed that the \$18 million cost increase to the *Route 18* project is causing a ripple effect that is delaying other projects. He asked if the cash flows to that project could be adjusted to reduce the impact on other projects. L. Dantas noted that changing the construction timeline from 4 to 5 years could reduce the number of other projects that must be delayed, however, MassDOT would need to weigh in to determine if it would be possible to change the cash flows.

D. Giombetti further discussed his concern about delays to other highly-rated projects caused by a single project with cost overruns. He also expressed concern about removing the *Route 30* project and recommended retaining the project on the TIP until a town meeting can be held in Southborough to address the right-of-way acquisitions.

D. Crowley asked if staff has notified the Town of Southborough about the possibility of the project losing its place on the TIP. L. Dantas replied that the town has not been notified as of yet because this is not a staff recommendation, rather the scenario is a conversation starter for the MPO. He stated that staff will take recommendations from members about programming the project in a future year. D. Crowley then asked staff to reach out to the Town of Southborough and ask town staff to attend the next MPO meeting to discuss the status of the project.

Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District 3, also requested that the MPO keep the *Route 30* project on the TIP, even if it must be programmed in an outer year, until the town can resolve the issues and their efforts are exhausted.

Marie Rose, MassDOT, advised programming the project in the FFY 2018 element rather than the FFY 2017 element because of concerns about right-of-way acquisitions.

M. Draisen expressed concern about removing projects that have merited a place on the TIP. He also raised the issue of addressing cost overruns of highway projects by considering if cost-savings could be achieved by redesigning the project (as occurred in the case of the *Middlesex Turnpike* project) and seeking contributions from major developers. He noted that there has been no discussion at the MPO table regarding efforts to reduce the costs of the *Route 18* project or about potential contributions from the developers of Southfield.

L. Wiener noted that, in previous discussions, the MPO was apprised of some projects programmed in the FFY 2016 element that would not be ready for advertisement in that year, potentially leaving excess funding available for programming. L. Dantas noted that the *Middlesex Turnpike* and *Route 18* projects are at risk of not being ready for advertisement this September. MassDOT is expecting to receive documentation regarding the *Middlesex Turnpike* project at the end of next week that will help determine its readiness. M. Rose then commented about the *Reconstruction on Massachusetts Avenue (Lexington)*, another project that was at-risk and which MassDOT now anticipates will be advertised on time.

D. Koses expressed concern about the rising cost estimate for the *Route 18* project and the potential for the MPO to be in a similar situation next year if the project's cost rises again and causes more delays to other TIP projects. D. Mohler noted that if the project is advertised in FFY 2016, MassDOT will not return to the MPO to request more funding, however, if the project is delayed to FFY 2017 its cost estimate (as the cost of other projects) will likely change.

M. Rose noted that the cost increase on the *Route 18* project became apparent when the 100% design plans were submitted in April. MassDOT is exploring alternative funding sources for this project, including bridge funds.

Christine Stickney, South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree), expressed support for the *Route 18* project and discussed its importance to the South Shore region as an economic stimulus project supporting the redevelopment of the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station.

M. Draisen requested a presentation at the next MPO meeting regarding efforts made to reduce costs on the *Route 18* project and whether there are other potential public or private party contributors. Further, he suggested that the MPO should begin to consider making efforts to minimizing cost overruns of highway projects going forward. He noted that the endeavor to reduce costs and find other sources of funding has been underway in regards to the Green Line Extension and the *Middlesex Turnpike*. He raised the idea of developing a protocol that could be used in the future to address cost overruns.

D. Mohler noted that value engineering to reduce project costs is the responsibility of MassDOT and municipal project proponents. He suggested that it is the local sponsor of the project who should be responsible for approaching other potential investors.

D. Giombetti raised another issue for consideration regarding the MPO's commitment to projects with significant cost increases; i.e. if the MPO commits to fund a project at one cost, should the body remain committed to see it through if it escalates significantly in cost? He also expressed interest in a presentation on the *Route 18* project.

D. Mohler raised the issue about removing programmed projects from the current TIP element, which could leave a significant amount of funds unprogrammed because there are not enough projects ready for construction.

D. Giombetti expressed concern that projects with cost overruns are rewarded through the MPO's current system. Proponents of projects that increase significantly in cost should have to justify those cost increases, he said.

Laura Gilmore O'Connor, Massachusetts Port Authority, suggested that it would be helpful to see the previous scores of projects. Staff provided that relevant scores. R. Reed noted that the MPO revised its project evaluation scoring system this year, so that it would be unfair to project proponents to retroactively reprioritize projects.

R. Reed called for a longer term discussion by the MPO regarding the complicated issue of municipal contributions. He suggested that the MPO focus on this issue after this TIP cycle is complete.

John Romano, MassDOT Highway Division, asked if information is available to determine if construction of multi-year projects could be extended so that cash flows may be adjusted. D. Mohler stated that cash flows should track construction. He noted that changing cash flows would still result in delaying TIP projects.

M. Rose offered to organize a presentation on the *Route 18* project for an upcoming meeting of the MPO.

Regarding the issue of municipal contributions, M. Draisen asked for MassDOT to explain the reason for the cost increase for *Route 18*, what is being done to minimize those costs, and whether the project could be revised to save costs. He also suggested that MassDOT and the affected municipalities meet and ask if there are any benefitting private parties in the vicinity of the project and whether they could contribute. He emphasized the need for the MPO to habitually insist that proponents look at ways to reduce project cost overruns and to explore the possibility of securing contributions from private parties.

Motion

A motion to cease the discussion about cost overruns and municipal contributions to TIP projects today and resume the topic at the next MPO meeting was made by the South Shore Coalition (Town of Braintree) (C. Stickney), and seconded by the Metro West Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham) (D. Giombetti). The motion carried.

Discussion Continued

Members discussed the schedule for releasing the TIP for public review. The MPO will discuss the TIP again on May 19, potentially voting to release the TIP for public review then or on June 2.

Tom O'Rourke, Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce), suggested that staff produce additional TIP scenarios for the next meeting. Members then proposed other scenarios.

D. Crowley and R. Canale suggested including a scenario that programs the *Route 30* project in FFY 2018 or FFY 2019. M. Draisen also asked for the *Route 30* project to be retained until the proponents can address the readiness issues.

J. Gillooly requested a scenario that programs *Rutherford Avenue* starting in FFYs 2020 and with funds programmed in FFY 2021, as the MPO agreed previously. He noted that the Wynn Casino developer will provide an interim level of traffic mitigation as required under MEPA, but that the *Rutherford Avenue* project is part of a larger solution for traffic mitigation in the area, as was called for in the casino's MEPA certificate.

L. Dantas assured members that all affected municipalities will be contacted about the MPO's deliberations, as is staff's practice.

D. Crowley asked staff to include on TIP spreadsheets the original cost of TIP projects, when first programmed by the MPO. R. Reed cautioned members that since projects are in various stages of design, such cost comparisons may be comparing "apples to oranges."

8. FFY 2017 Unified Planning Work Program Development: Committee Recommendation—*Bryan Pounds, MassDOT Staff, and Alexandra Kleyman, MPO Staff*

This agenda item was postponed.

9. Members Items

There were none.

10. Adjourn

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

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Jay Monty
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	Laura Wiener
At-Large Town (Town of Lexington)	Richard Canale
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Jim Gillooly
	Tom Kadzis
Federal Highway Administration	Ken Miller
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Mayor Joseph Curtatone
	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	David Mohler
	Marie Rose
MassDOT Highway Division	John Romano
Massachusetts Port Authority	Laura Gilmore
	O'Connor
MBTA	Thom Dugan
MBTA Advisory Board	Paul Regan
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Marc Draisen
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Bedford)	Richard Reed
North Suburban Planning Council (City of Woburn)	Tina Cassidy
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Tegin Bennett
South Shore Coalition	Christine Stickney
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	Dennis Crowley
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce)	Tom O'Rourke

Other Attendees	Affiliation
Jess Aptowitz	Office of State Senator James Timilty
Representative Christine Barber	State Representative
Elisabeth Bayle	Medford resident

Sarah Bradbury	MassDOT District 3
Mayor Stephanie Burke	Town of Medford
Elizabeth Dennehy	Town of Walpole
Lauren DiLorenzo	City of Medford
John R. Elliott	Medford resident
Jamie Errickson	Town of Natick
James Johnson	Town of Walpole
Todd Kirrane	Town of Brookline
Timothy Kochan	MassDOT District 5
Ken Krause	Medford resident
Geoff Lewis	Town of Natick
Rafael Mares	Conservation Law Foundation
Owen MacDonald	Town of Weymouth
David Manugian	Town of Ashland
Steve Olanoff	Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood)
Josh Ostroff	Town of Natick
Bryan Pounds	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Laurel Ruma	Medford resident
Ed Starr	Arlington Transportation Advisory Committee
Wig Zamore	Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director
Robin Mannion, Deputy Executive Director
Scott Peterson, Director of Technical Services

Lourenço Dantas
David Fargen
Maureen Kelly
Alexandra Kleyman
Anne McGahan
Jennifer Rowe
