DATE: **August 18, 2016**
TO: **Draft Memorandum to File**
FROM: **Ryan Hicks, Central Transportation Planning Staff**
RE: **Congestion Management Process (CMP) Committee of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)—Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Time/Location
9:00 AM-9:50 AM, State Transportation Building**,** Conference Rooms 2 and 3, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA

Chairperson
Jay Monty

Decisions
Follow-up tasks are cited on page three.

Meeting Agenda

Introductions
All present introduced themselves. (See the attendance list on the last page.)

Approval of February 18, 2016, CMP Committee Meeting Minutes
The minutes of the prior meeting were approved.

Federal Highway Administration Congestion Rule – Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Update
As a part of MAP-21 and the FAST Act, the FHWA has implemented a notice of proposed rulemaking for the Congestion Management Process. Ryan summarized the changes this ruling will bring. Under the new rule, all MPOs will be required to monitor two performance measures: travel-time reliability and peak-hour travel-time ratio. To calculate these measures, MPOs will be asked to use a data set from HERE Technologies, which is provided by the FHWA and updated monthly. MPOs will be allowed to use different data sets if they get approval from the FHWA. Another feature of the update is that state DOTs and MPOs will need to coordinate closely for performance monitoring to ensure their performance measures are targeted and consistent. The deadline for the state DOTs to start monitoring is June 2017 and the MPOs must start by December 2017.

The FHWA has solicited comments on their proposed updates. Comments are due August 20. CTPS has drafted a letter in response to the new rules. Ryan introduced the

main comments in the letter, which he said echo comments from many other MPOs across the nation:

- The required performance measures are overly focused on vehicle traffic, and place too much emphasis on measuring delay.
- It is recommended that the first two year period be a trial run to help ease the transition for MPOs new to congestion management.
- The dataset provided by FHWA was studied by CTPS in 2015 and was found to lack several key features as compared to the INRIX data set previously purchased by CTPS. The FHWA data did not flag outliers and lacked built-in analytics, which might make analysis difficult for smaller MPOs. The FHWA data did have the added benefit of separating vehicles into trucks and passenger vehicles, although the accuracy of this distribution was called into question. A memo summarizing the findings of the 2015 CTPS study was included in the comments to be sent to FHWA.
- Not every region is the same, so this standardized approach may not suit all MPOs.
- The contract with HERE expires in 2017 and the status of future data contracts is uncertain.

The CMP committee approved the comments letter and it was signed by Jay Monty.

Congestion Scan Presentation

Ryan gave a presentation describing the new congestion scan graphics that he had generated for the CMP. The CMP should cover four dimensions of performance: duration, intensity, reliability, and extent of congestion. CTPS had created the express highway performance dashboard and arterial performance dashboard to cover duration, intensity, and reliability, but needed a method to communicate the extent of congestion.

To accomplish this, Ryan developed congestion scans, which are graphs indicating the spatial and temporal distribution of congestion along a given corridor. These graphics used INRIX data from 2012 and sampled the same days as the other CMP performance metrics, namely Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays during the school year. The CMP committee decided to use congestion scans to study all 11 major freeways in the Boston MPO as well as 22 arterials with average annual daily traffic (AADT) of over 35,000. Insights that can be drawn from the congestion scans include the number of hours each day a corridor is congested, what time of day congestion starts and ends, the maximum severity of congestion, and the intersections or interchanges which are most prone to congestion. The congestion scans will be used for choosing priority corridors in the Long-Range Transportation Plan, among other things.

The congestion scans were received positively by the committee although there were a few comments. Some members called into question the definition that was used for "congested" and commented that it was confusing that different metrics had been used to calculate congestion for freeways and arterials. Some thought the arterial congestion scan was a bit difficult to understand and wondered if it could be more closely tied to geographic landmarks. Finally, it was suggested that any public presentation of the congestion scans should also include the congestion-mitigation measures the CMP is studying.

Other Business
None

Follow-Up Tasks
- Submit comments letter to FHWA.
- Post the congestion scans online, which might require some polishing, and examples to make their meaning more accessible to the public.
- A Request for Proposal for the purchase of a roadway dataset will be posted in September/October.

Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 9:50 AM.

Attendance

Members	Representatives/Alternates
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Tegin Bennett
At-Large Town (Town of Lexington)	David Kucharsky
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Jay Monty (Chair)
MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning	Bryan Pounds
MassDOT Highway	John Romano

Other Attendees	Affiliation
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood)	Steve Olanoff

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff
Mark Abbott
Lourenço Dantas
Ryan Hicks