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MEETING CALENDAR

For the most recent information on the following public meetings and others that may have been scheduled after TRANSREPORT went to press, go to www.bostonmpo.org or call (617) 973-7100. A photo ID is required to access most meeting sites.

AT THE STATE TRANSPORTATION BUILDING, 10 PARK PLAZA, BOSTON

March 15 (Thursday)

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization: Unified Planning Work Program Committee. Suite 2150. 9:15 AM

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization. Conference Rooms 2 and 3. 10:00 AM

March 26 (Monday)

MBTA Rider Oversight Committee. Conference Rooms 1 and 2. 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

March 28 (Wednesday)

Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA. Conference Rooms 2 and 3. 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

March 29 (Thursday)

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization: Unified Planning Work Program Committee. Suite 2150. 10:00 AM

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization: Congestion Management Process Committee. Suite 2150. 1:00 PM

April 4 (Wednesday)

MassDOT and MBTA Board of Directors. Suite 3830. 1:00 PM

April 5 (Thursday)

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Calendar continued on p. 2

MPO Conducting Project Evaluations

DISCUSSION ON APRIL 5

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) will meet on April 5 to discuss two planning documents that are under development and are expected to be released for public comment later in April. They are the federal fiscal years (FFYs) 2013–16 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the FFY 2013 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

The TIP documents federal financing for highway and transit projects to be implemented over the next four

years. On April 5, the MPO staff will present its recommendations for projects to receive federal funding in the FFYs 2013–16 time frame. The recommendations are based on the results of an evaluation process that helps determine how effective each project is at advancing the MPO's visions and policies, which include maintaining the transportation system, improving mobility, making the system safer, enhancing livability, reducing air quality impacts, and improving access to transportation in underserved areas.

• TIP/UPWP *cont. on p. 2*

New GIS Tool for Natural Hazards

The Boston Region MPO has posted a new interactive Web application on its website, www.bostonmpo.org, that allows users to view the transportation network and proposed transportation projects in relation to natural-hazard zones. To view the app, click on the "All-Hazards Planning" tab on the website.

The tool allows users to display 100-year and 500-year

• Hazards *cont. on p. 2*

Intersection Safety Fixes Studied

Traffic engineers and planners from the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS), the staff to the MPO, have released their recommendations for ways to improve safety and traffic operations at eight problematic priority intersections in the municipalities of Arlington, Framingham, Hudson, Malden, Milton, and Newton.

Some typical problems associated with the intersections that were studied were related to pedestrian safety, poor intersection geometry,

• Intersections *cont. on p. 2*



The MPO's most recent Safety and Operations Analyses at Selected Intersections study identified ways to improve safety and traffic flow at intersections like this one in Malden. Upgrading old traffic signals to fully actuated systems with pedestrian signals were among the recommendations from the study. (For more details see page 4.)

The members of the Boston Region MPO: Massachusetts Department of Transportation, cities of Beverly, Boston, Everett, Newton, Somerville, and Woburn, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Advisory Board, Massachusetts Port Authority, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Regional Transportation Advisory Council, towns of Arlington, Bedford, Braintree, Framingham, Lexington, Medway, and Norwood

Transportation Infrastructure Vulnerable to Natural Hazards

• Hazards *cont. from p.*

flood zones, areas that may be at risk of seawater inundation from hurricane storm surges, the locations of soil types that are susceptible to liquefaction in an earthquake, and areas potentially at risk due to future sea level rise. It works in conjunction with the MPO's database of

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) projects.

The information provided on the app helps the MPO apply some of the criteria it uses for prioritizing TIP projects to receive funding. The MPO considers whether a proposed project will improve the transportation network in ways that will

help maintain mobility during times of severe weather and emergencies. In addition, the MPO considers whether a project would enhance the ability of a transportation facility or roadway to withstand extreme weather conditions and continue to be functional.

Project Evaluation Results Online

• TIP/UPWP *cont. from p.1*

The full list of criteria that the MPO uses to evaluate projects may be found on the MPO's website, www.bostonmpo.org, along with the evaluation results for this TIP cycle. (Click on the TIP tab for both the criteria and the TIP Evaluation Matrix.)

The second document under development, the UPWP,

describes the regionally significant transportation studies that will be conducted in the region in FFY 2013 and the funding sources for them.

Ideas for new studies have been collected, and evaluated for their consistency with the MPO's visions and policies. The MPO will also discuss the UPWP on April 5.

Examples of UPWP studies that the MPO staff has recently completed include the MBTA Bus Route 1 Transit Signal Priority Study and the FFY 2011 Safety and Operations Analyses for Selected Intersections.

The MPO is planning to hold a vote on April 19 on whether to release the TIP and UPWP for a 30-day public review period.

Solutions for Problematic Intersections

• Intersections *cont. from p. 1*

outdated signal equipment, congestion, and confusing signage. Recommendations for improvements ranged from short-term, low-cost solutions – such as adding signs, pavement markings, and signal retiming – to longer-term, more expensive solutions, such as making modifications to intersection geometry to correct for skewed approaches and limited sight distance, installing pedestrian bulb-outs to reduce crossing distances, and installing warranted new traffic signals or signal

equipment upgrades. (The recommendations are listed in the chart on page 4.)

The study was the fourth in a series that the MPO staff has been conducting to evaluate intersections throughout the region and to recommend safety improvements that could be addressed by traffic management and operations strategies. A fifth study is already underway for intersections in Quincy, Southborough, and Wilmington.

Many recommendations from past studies have been implemented in the region. Often, for state-owned roadways, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) can address recommendations through its maintenance program, or municipalities can make the recommended improvements.

The MPO staff selects locations for study by applying safety, mobility, and other criteria and by contacting

• Intersections *cont. on p. 3*

Calendar cont. from p. 1

Conference Rooms 2 and 3. 10:00 AM

April 11 (Wednesday)

Regional Transportation Advisory Council Freight Committee. Conference Room 4. 1:00 PM

Regional Transportation Advisory Council. Conference Room 4. 3:00 PM

April 12 (Thursday) Tentative

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization. Conference Rooms 2 and 3. 10:00 AM

April 18 (Wednesday)

Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA. Conference Rooms 2 and 3. 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

April 19 (Thursday)

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization. Conference Rooms 2 and 3. 10:00 AM

April 30 (Monday)

MBTA Rider Oversight Committee. Conference Rooms 1 and 2. 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

May 3 (Thursday)

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization. Conference Room 4. 10:00 AM

AT OTHER BOSTON AREA LOCATIONS

March 22 (Thursday)

MassDOT: Public Meeting on the Roxbury/Dorchester/Mattapan Transit Needs Study. Mattapan Library, 1350 Blue Hill Avenue, Roxbury. 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

March 29 (Thursday)

MassDOT: Public Meeting on the Roxbury/Dorchester/Mattapan Transit Needs Study. Dudley Library, 65 Warren Street, Roxbury. 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

April 12 (Thursday)

MassDOT: Public Meeting on the Roxbury/Dorchester/Mattapan Transit Needs Study. Grove Hall Community Center, 51 Geneva Avenue, Dorchester. 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Meetings sponsored by the Boston Region MPO are conducted in accessible locations, and materials can be provided in accessible formats and in languages other than English. If you would like accessibility or language accommodation, please contact the MPO at (617) 973-7100 (voice), (617) 973-8855 (fax), or (617) 973-7089 (TTY), or e-mail publicinformation@bostonmpo.org.

• Intersections *cont. from p. 2*
municipalities and MassDOT highway district offices to determine their interest in implementation.

The full report on the study FFY 2011 Safety and Operations Analyses for Selected Intersections is available on the MPO's website, www.bostonmpo.org. For questions or comments, please contact Efi Pagitsas, at epagitsas@ctps.org, or call (617) 973-7106.

MassDOT Offers Safety Improvements for High-Crash Intersections

MassDOT is reaching out to municipalities to inform them of the opportunity to receive signage, pavement markings, and tree trimming services that will help to reduce motor vehicle crashes at intersections. Eligible locations are stop-sign controlled intersections that experienced an average of nine or more crashes between 2006 and 2008.

MassDOT will fully fund the cost of improvements, which may include the installation of new stop signs, advance warning signs, and double-arrow signs for T-intersections. They may also include new pavement markings up

to 100 feet from an intersection, and the removal of foliage or other sight obstructions.



For more information, contact Carrie Lavallee, MassDOT Highway Division, at (617) 973-8834 or carrie.lavallee@state.ma.us.

Graphic courtesy of Richard C. Moeur

Boston Region MPO Activities

BOSTON REGION MPO ACTION ITEMS

Following a 30-day public comment period, the Boston Region MPO endorsed Amendment One to the FFYs 2012-15 Transportation Improvement Program on March 1. The MPO also released three new studies. The report *Improving the Southeast Expressway: A Conceptual Plan* is the outcome of a study that examined how to connect the high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) lane that was built as part of the Central Artery/Tunnel project with the "zipper lane" on the Southeast Expressway. The MBTA Bus Route 1 Transit Signal Priority Study evaluated the potential for implementing transit signal priority (TSP) strategies and queue jumps for buses on the corridor between Harvard Square, Cambridge, and Dudley Square, Boston. The study FFY 2011 Safety and Operations Analyses for Selected Intersections is the fourth in a series of studies the MPO staff has been conducting to examine intersections in the region for recommending safety improvements (see the article on page 1). Reports on these studies are available on the MPO's website, www.bostonmpo.org.

The MPO has also authorized work to begin on two new projects. The project for MBTA 2012 Title VI Program Monitoring is one of a series of work programs that the MPO staff has been conducting to assist the MBTA in its compliance with the Federal Transit Administration's Title VI requirements. The project for the Priority Corridors for the Long-Range Transportation Plan Needs Assessment will analyze a subset of arterial roadway segments that were identified through the Needs Assessment of the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan as having problems associated with safety, mobility, and bottlenecks, and will identify the segments most in need of remedial action.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATE

The February Advisory Council meeting featured Chris Caplice, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Center for Transportation and Logistics. Dr. Caplice discussed the topic "Scenario Planning to Assist in Long-Term Planning." His work focuses on helping state DOTs with long-term planning techniques for freight systems and the associated infrastructure planning. Considering future

alternatives for contingency planning purposes was a guiding theme of this presentation.

At its March 14 meeting, the Advisory Council will hear a presentation from the City of Quincy on the development of a project for transportation infrastructure and streetscape improvements to support the future Adams Green park space in Quincy Center. In addition, CTPS will present the findings of a recently completed study of possible HOV lane improvements for the Southeast Expressway.

The Executive Committee of the Advisory Council sent a letter to the MPO to express concerns about the proposed MBTA fare increases and service cutbacks.

ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MBTA (AACT) UPDATE

AACT members were introduced to Tarnya Steward, the manager of operations for the MBTA's planned CharlieCard store at Downtown Crossing Station in Boston, which is expected to open in June. The store will be located in the Chauncy Street concourse between the Red

and Orange lines. This is a fully accessible location.

MBTA customers will be able to purchase any type of pass at the location, including the Senior CharlieCard, Blind Access CharlieCard, and Transportation Access Pass (TAP) Charlie Card for persons with disabilities.

These passes are available at the Senior TAP Office at Back Bay Station until the store opens in Downtown Crossing. After the new store opens, the Back Bay office will close permanently.

Recommended Intersection Improvements

from the FFY 2011 Safety and Operations Analyses at Selected Intersections Study

Location	Issues and Concerns	Recommended Solutions
Massachusetts Avenue at Appleton Street and Appleton Place, Arlington	Many pedestrian crossings, especially by students of nearby school; short sight distance due to irregular intersection geometry; high number of bicycle and pedestrian crashes; outdated traffic and pedestrian signal equipment and settings.	Maintain school crossing guard at this location; upgrade traffic signals to a fully actuated system with countdown pedestrian signals; and modify the geometry of the intersection.
Union Avenue at Mount Wayte Avenue, Framingham	No pedestrian signals; outdated traffic signal equipment; substandard sidewalks and crosswalks; traffic congestion during peak hours.	Retime traffic signals; install "turning vehicle yield to pedestrians" signs; upgrade traffic signals to a fully actuated system with countdown pedestrian signals; lengthen northbound left-turn bay.
Lincoln Street (Route 85) at Cox Street and Packard Street, Hudson	Short sight distances; insufficient and outdated traffic control and warning signs; minor street approaches experience delays during peak hours; adjacent to an elementary school.	Replace and install traffic regulatory and warning signs; install a fully actuated traffic signal system with countdown pedestrian signals, and make minor geometry modification.
Main Street at Mountain Avenue, Malden	Outdated traffic signal equipment; non-functioning pedestrian signals; faded crosswalks; traffic congestion during peak hours.	Install "turning vehicle yield to pedestrians" signs; upgrade traffic signals to a fully actuated system with countdown pedestrian signals.
Neponset Valley Parkway at Brush Hill Road and Milton Street, Milton	Skewed intersection approaches; confusing traffic operation on Parkway northbound; truck traffic encroaching into the lane of oncoming traffic.	Restripe Parkway southbound to two lanes; install stop control on Milton Street and remove yield control on Parkway northbound; and make geometry modifications of both intersections and adjacent roadways.
Crafts Street at Albemarle Road and North Street, Newton	Student and other pedestrian crossings throughout the day; speeding traffic; confusing traffic control signs at the Albemarle Road intersection; spillover traffic from Crafts Street to North Street and Albemarle Road; no clear bicycle connections from Albemarle Road to Charles River Bike Path.	Optimize signal timing at North Street; replace and install new traffic regulatory and warning signs; install "slow" and "do not block intersection" pavement markings; designate Albemarle Road as a bicycle route to connect with Charles River Bike Path; signalize the Albemarle intersection and coordinate with the North Street intersection; install pedestrian countdown signals.

TRANSREPORT

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Richard A. Davey, Chair
David J. Mohler, Chair Designee
Marc Draisen, Vice Chair

EDITORS

Maureen Kelly
Mary Ellen Sullivan

CONTRIBUTORS

David Fargen
Janie Guion
Efi Pagitsas
Sean Pfalzer

GRAPHICS and PHOTOS

Jane Gillis

Richard C. Moeur,
www.richardcmoeur.com

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Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

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