

Attendance

Committee Members

John Attanucci, Kelly Brown, Devin Chausse, Karen Dumaine, Jim Gascoigne, Denise Jillson, Jeremy Mendelson, George Metzger, Rob Ricchi, Arthur Strang, Saul Tannenbaum

City of Cambridge

Tegin Bennett and Cleo Stoughton (Community Development), Adam Shulman (Traffic, Parking and Transportation)

Presenters, official entities, and members of the public

Seven members of the public were present. Scott Hamwey (MassDOT) and Philip Groth (MBTA) were present.

Committee Introductions and Administrative Business

November minutes were not voted on for approval because quorum was not met.

Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

Program for Mass Transportation

The Program for Mass Transportation (PMT) is the MBTA's long-range capital planning document, which defines a 25-year vision for public transportation in eastern Massachusetts. Scott Hamwey, Manager of Long Range Planning for MassDOT, presented the "Focus 40" road map and discussed the planning process with the Committee.

Information and discussion:

- So far, MassDOT has had conversations with experts in areas that will affect transportation trends. The PMT public outreach process will likely be launched in February and will last about a year.
- Hamwey noted that the PMT is traditionally not fiscally constrained. This PMT will not be financially constrained, but will be as fiscally responsible and cost effective as possible. "Fiscally responsible" still needs to be defined as part of the process. A Committee member advocated for determining what is most needed (however substantial) and then seeking out necessary funding.
- Hamwey introduced the State of the System reports, which will likely be released in December 2015 and describe existing conditions. The Committee discussed the makeup of the bus and train fleets (e.g., the number of buses and trains beyond their useful life, the number of spare vehicles available), as well as use and capacity of bus maintenance facilities compared to industry standards. An example of the MBTA's deviation from industry standards is its relatively high spare ratio for buses (about 25% overall) for various reasons such as an aging or unreliable vehicles (e.g. Silver Line has a 100% spare ratio).
- Hamwey and the Committee discussed the need to generate enthusiasm from the public about necessary but not flashy improvements (e.g., signal upgrades, maintenance facilities).
- Hamwey and the Committee discussed the balance between fixing the current system and addressing future needs.
- Hamwey and the Committee discussed investment and ridership by mode (e.g., the commuter rail, which is high cost with low but vocal ridership, but has better cost recovery and takes cars off the highways).
- Hamwey noted that project selection criteria, recently developed to be used in MassDOT's capital investment planning (CIP) processes, will also be incorporated into the PMT process.
- The Committee discussed comprehensive service planning and how to use the existing public transit system, as well as future investments, better (e.g., TOD near commuter rail, especially stations close to downtown Boston).
- Hamwey noted the PMT will include an analysis of relevant trends and future conditions—for example, climate change adaptation, population growth, aging population, and increases in bicycling and ridesharing mode shares. The Committee noted that not all populations are able to use other modes either all or some of the time (e.g., low income populations and Uber/Lyft, people with disabilities that limit bicycling ability, bicycling in rain/snow), so public transit will remain vital. A member of the public commented that new technologies (e.g., ridesharing services and autonomous cars) could support transit.
- Hamwey noted changes in travel demand modeling and MBTA service standards, both of which will be involved in PMT development. The PMT process will include developing scenarios based on future outcomes (e.g. what if all service standards are met, or what if 20% of all trips are made by bicycle). The project ideas will have to be matched to the scenarios to be analyzed.

- Hamwey and the Committee discussed short-term improvements. The CIP is typically a five-year plan (while the PMT is a 25-year plan) and the CIP process incorporates input from the public, including the Committee. The City will continue to work toward improving bus service where possible (e.g., by implementing bus priority treatments).
- Hamwey, the Committee, and the public discussed fare collection models—proof-of-payment systems, rear door collection, off board fare collection, free bus trips, etc.

Announcements, Events, and Updates

Staff provided regular updates over email and Committee members had opportunity to highlight topics to discuss at the meeting.

- The Committee and Phil Groth (MBTA) noted there has been a rewrite of the MBTA's fare policy, with public comments due in the coming week.
- Groth noted that many documents of interest are located on the MBTA Fiscal and Management Control Board [webpage](#).

Final Public Comment

Most comments were addressed during wider PMT discussion. Mike Stanley described a proposal to provide personal rapid transit along the Grand Junction corridor, with a pilot in 2018 or 2019.

Adjourned at 7:33pm