

## Kendall Square Mobility Task Force Meeting

**LOCATION OF MEETING: MIT Stata Center, Cambridge, MA**

**DATE/TIME OF MEETING: September 6, 2016 from 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM**

**TASK FORCE ATTENDEES:**

Joe Barr, City of Cambridge – Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department  
Kelley Brown, MIT  
Brian Dacey, Kendall Square Association (Co-Chair)  
Bob Dorer, Volpe National Transportation Systems Center  
Melissa Dullea, MBTA  
Tom Evans, Cambridge Redevelopment Authority  
Jim Gascoigne, Charles River TMA  
Scott Hamwey, MassDOT  
Patrick Magee, East Cambridge Business Association  
Michael O'Hearn, Boston Properties  
Michael Owu, MIT Investment Management Company  
Susanne Rasmussen, City of Cambridge (Co-Chair)  
Jeff Rosenblum

**MASSDOT, MBTA, CITY OF CAMBRIDGE AND PROJECT TEAM ATTENDEES:**

Tegin Bennett, City of Cambridge  
Adam Shulman, City of Cambridge  
Brian Kane, MBTA  
Joanne Haracz, McMahon Associates  
Duncan Allen, IBI Group  
Regan Checcho, RVA  
Ben Dowling, CTPS  
Scott Peterson, CTPS

**PUBLIC:**

John Attanucci, MIT  
Phineas Baxandall  
Brad Bellows  
Marc Ebuña, Transit Matters  
John Hawkinson  
Stephen Kaiser  
Gerald O'Leary  
Al Raine, AECOM  
Mike Stanley, Transit X  
Sarah Wetmore, VHB

**PURPOSE/SUBJECT: Task Force Meeting #6**

**SUMMARY:****Introductions**

Brian Dacey, Kendall Square Association (KSA), opened the meeting at 5:06 PM. He acknowledged the work the City of Cambridge had done to secure funding to allow the Task Force work to continue beyond the September 30 completion dates.

Susanne Rasmussen, City of Cambridge, provided an overview of the agenda and reviewed some administrative items pertaining to the project's transition from MassDOT to the City of Cambridge.

**Task Force Scope**

Ms. Rasmussen explained that she and Mr. Dacey will remain as Task Force Co-Chairs. The project website has transitioned to the City of Cambridge at [www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Transportation/kendallsquaremobilitytaskforce](http://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Transportation/kendallsquaremobilitytaskforce). The work of the MassDOT consultant team will be completed by September 30, 2016.

She noted that the project will continue to coordinate with the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) on the 2040 Base Case modeling and evaluation of bus alternatives. The project will also be coordinating with MassDOT through the Focus40 goals process, gaps analysis, and evaluation criteria. MassDOT and MBTA representatives will remain on the Task Force, as well.

The Task Force will continue to meet through January 2017 and will work on the following items:

- Tying the opportunity statements and associated actions to the existing conditions data,
- Finalizing the evaluation criteria and performance measures,
- Developing transportation priorities,
- Recommending short and long-term policies and projects.

Ms. Rasmussen also reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule:

Type	Description	Date
Task Force	Bus priority concepts/Red Line capacity	September 20, 2016
Public	Bus alternatives/priority concepts/Red Line capacity	October 12, 2016
Task Force	Bus alternatives analysis (CTPS) and Grand Junction mobility changes	October 25, 2016
Task Force	Draft policy recommendations	November 22, 2016

Type	Description	Date
Public	Summary of work and discussion of draft recommendations	December 13, 2016
Task Force	Present/finalize recommendations	January 17, 2017

Ms. Rasmussen also identified some additional study resources that could be used in future phases. \$50,000 is available from Boston Properties (developer) mitigation and could be used to analyze Red Line capacity. This analysis would need to be scoped and put out to bid. Ms. Rasmussen noted that the scope may not be clear until 2017.

\$35,000 is also available from Grand Junction Greenway design funds. This funding will be used to conduct a Grand Junction Transit Feasibility study and workshop. The workshop is scheduled for October 25, 2016.

Additionally, as part of MIT mitigation, \$175,000 is available for transit and mobility studies prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for commercial development over 300,000 square feet of Gross Floor Area. \$250,000 is also available for transit investments prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for commercial development over 600,000 square feet of Gross Floor Area. These funds are also future funds, as they will only become available as MIT builds out these projects.

Finally, the Kendall Square Transit Enhancement Project (KSTEP), a group involving the City of Cambridge, Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, Boston Properties, the MBTA and MassDOT, will be working to “preserve, enhance, and expand transit access and mobility in Kendall Square.” Boston Properties has committed \$6 million initially for this. Funding could be used to provide capital investment for the Red Line, buses, and shuttles. It could also be used to provide operating and capital support for new ground transportation.

Kelley Brown, MIT, asked about the timing of KSTEP. Tom Evans, Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, said the funds come in in 2017 should the project get approved (upon issuance of a building permit).

### **Bus Enhancements**

Scott Hamway, MassDOT, then gave a presentation about possible bus service improvements for the area. First, he provided the bus service to Kendall in context of the whole MBTA system.

Mr. Hamway then summarized the principles guiding these possible improvements:

- Improve existing services that have strong linkage to/from the study area and direct routes but poor quality of service.
- Provide new direct connections to/from locations identified as poorly connected relative to others (like Charlestown, Allston/Brighton, Somerville, Medford).
- Create high-quality bus corridors to improve generally low-speed local bus operation and poor service reliability.

He noted that the existing bus routes that carry the highest shares of total transit travel to/from the study area are the MBTA 1, EZRide, MBTA 64 and MBTA 85.

Mr. Hamway then discussed some possible operational improvements and enhanced connections for the corridor, based on the guiding principles. These enhancements were narrowed down to a shorter list of proposed improvements:

- Consistently routing MBTA 64 on Main St. to Kendall
- Running the MBTA CT2 through on Ames Street, skipping the Kendall loop
- Route MBTA 87 and MBTA 88 to Kendall instead of Lechmere (after the Green Line Extension is in place)
- Reroute MBTA 92 to Kendall via First St. (after the Green Line Extension is in place)

Mr. Brown asked about the CT2 rerouting. Mr. Hamway explained that it streamlines service as people are not using it for a transfer.

Mr. Evans noted that the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority is in the final design phase of Ames St. improvements. He wants to make sure the final design will not preclude a bus stop if that ends up being a Task Force recommendation.

Jim Gascoigne, Charles River TMA, suggested re-routing the CT2 along Rutherford Avenue through Charlestown as an Express Bus. Mr. Hamway said the peak load for the CT2 occurs at Union Square. Mr. Gascoigne suggested that using some of the resources Ms. Rasmussen mentioned earlier to beef up MBTA 85.

Mr. Evans asked where MBTA 88 and MBTA 87 originate. Mr. Hamway said 88 originates at Clarendon Hill and 87 originates at Arlington Center.

Mr. Hamway explained that these proposed improvements could be looked at two different ways – through a constrained scenario, which means identifying things that won't require more vehicles or cost more in terms of operating budget, or through an unconstrained scenario, which assumes additional funds (could include more vehicles and increased operating costs). To provide context, Mr. Hamway noted that an estimated total Operations and Maintenance cost of improving CT2 service<sup>1</sup> is \$952,000 (2014 dollars).

Mr. Evans asked if there was a way to learn more about the costs of adding service. Mr. Hamway said that it was hard to add buses during peak service as the buses would need to be shifted from somewhere else in the MBTA system.

Jeff Rosenblum said that it would be helpful to know how the Task Force could make the case to spend additional funds on a proposed improvement. He said it would be important to know how MassDOT makes cost-benefit calculations and what is valued. Mr. Hamway said that Secretary Pollack is interested in identifying gaps in service, even in a constrained environment so the MBTA can meet its service standard goals.

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<sup>1</sup> Increase peak service to 15-minute headway, increase mid-day service to 20-minute headway, and extend evening service (2 hours) at 30-minute headway.

Ms. Rasmussen asked if the evaluation criteria being developed for Focus40 will be helpful. Mr. Hamwey noted that Focus40 is a capital, not service, plan, but will provide some context. As part of the Focus40 effort, the project team is conducting a capacity gap analysis (both for present day and for the future).

Mr. Dacey asked what the relationship is between fares and cost of service. Mr. Hamwey said that fares cover about 35% of costs systemwide, but noted it would be lower on the bus network. He said this information is not broken out by route. Melissa Dullea, MBTA, said that the MBTA website has Route Performance Indicators that could provide some context.

Mr. Hamwey then reviewed some representative scenarios (constrained and unconstrained) for each potential improvement type.

Improvement Type	Route	Potential Scenario - Constrained	Potential Scenario - Unconstrained
Connections to Charlestown	92	Reroute 11 of 22 existing weekday peak trips each way to/from Kendall Instead of downtown Boston via [streets TBD]. Frequency ~ 30 minutes to each station.	Add 22 weekday peak trips in each direction between Sullivan Station and Kendall via [streets TBD] (headway ~ 15 min).
Connections to Somerville/Medford	88	Reroute 5 of 10 existing weekday peak trips each way to/from Kendall Instead of Lechmere via [streets TBD]. Frequency ~ 40 minutes to each station.	Add 10 weekday limited-stop peak trips in each direction between Clarendon Hill and Kendall via [streets TBD] (headway ~ 20 min).
Connections to Somerville/Medford	87	Reroute 5 of 10 existing weekday peak trips each way to/from Kendall Instead of Lechmere via [streets TBD]. Frequency ~ 45 minutes to each station.	Add 10 weekday limited-stop peak trips in each direction between Broadway @ Mass Ave and Kendall via [streets TBD] (headway ~ 25 min).
Operational improvements	85	Stop consolidation and Transit Signal Priority (TSP) at key intersections	Stop consolidation and TSP per 'constrained' scenario, plus increase peak period frequency from 25 to 15 minutes, and off-peak frequency from 30 to 20 minutes.
Connections to Cambridgeport/Allston/Brighton	64	Reroute 16 peak period trips each way between Kendall and Central (~ every 15 min) on the mapped route	Operate all 37 weekday trips each way to/from Kendall on the mapped route

He asked if the Task Force was interested in exploring any of these in more detail. Tegin Bennett, City of Cambridge, said that the City would take the feedback from the Task Force and bring it back to the consultants to see what scenarios should be analyzed further.

Bob Dorer, Volpe National Transportation Systems Center, asked how “spot improvements” such as prioritizing signals fit in with some of these scenarios. Ms. Bennett noted that the MBTA 85 route includes TSP and stop consolidation as part of the unconstrained scenario.

Mr. Evans said he was interested in more data about the MBTA 87. He was curious about those who are using Lechmere as a Green Line transfer versus a destination. He wondered if re-routing would damage connectivity to the Cambridge Galleria. Mr. Hamway said the project team had some tools to analyze this, but connectivity might depend on the routes that are used to get to Kendall.

Mr. Dacey asked about including connections to Kenmore and the Green Line. Mr. Hamway said the Route 1 corridor is already being looked at by the City (connecting Mass Ave. to Hynes Convention Center) through a different process.

John Attanucci, MIT, asked if there was potential for any of these routes to be privately-run. Mr. Hamway agreed that a terminology change may be in order. “Constrained” and “unconstrained” applies to the MBTA specifically. He said that the Task Force should think about private sector options.

Mr. Rosenblum said that choosing projects with demonstrable results is also important. For example, showing how transit priority bus lanes actually operate may be the impetus to get people excited about other changes.

Michael Owu, MIT Investment Management Company, said there are challenges in the immediate term in Red Line capacity. He asked if there was a way to provide better bus connectivity to free up Red Line capacity. Mr. Hamway said that the 87 and 88 may alleviate Red Line demand if there is a direct Kendall connection by attracting trips that currently access the Red Line at Davis or Porter. Ms. Rasmussen added that improvements to MBTA 64 could result in people stopping the boarding at Central just to ride to Kendall.

Mr. Rosenblum asked if there was good Origin/Destination pair data from the PTDM information. Mr. Hamway said the data the team has now is Boston data at the municipal – not zip code – level. Joanne Haracz, McMahon, noted it was 2014 data. Mr. Gascoigne said that he has some data (origin/mode for about 25,000 employees) by zipcode. He said he would provide it to Ms. Bennett. Ms. Rasmussen said the most recent data collected by the City includes zip code, but it is still being entered into the system.

### **2040 Base Case Model Results**

Mr. Hamway then reviewed the overall growth in the Kendall area and system-wide for the year 2040. He noted that the CTPS No-Build model run completed for Focus40 was based on population and employment forecasts used in the most recent update to the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Regional Transportation Plan, and likely underestimates future transit demand since it does not assume increased square footage in Kendall Square updated from the K2C2 study. He added that the Focus40 gaps analysis and scenario analysis will help understand the scale of the challenges but may not be completed in time for this Task Force process.

Mr. Hamway noted that the data presented was relatively new to the project team and wanted to flag the 2040 predictive growth for the Red Line AM Peak from Central to Kendall, which appears relatively small. Scott Peterson, CTPS, said the dominant mode that is seen in the data is an increase in northbound ridership from housing south of Boston. Bus ridership doesn't increase as much because traffic congestion slows the buses down in the model. Mr. Hamway said that Red Line capacity issues are more on the south side of town, such as on the Braintree branch approaching JFK/UMass or the Red Line entering into South Station. Mr. Peterson also noted that the results in the model are unconstrained.

Mr. Evans asked if one of the drivers for this growth is the expansion of South Station. Mr. Peterson said the model includes South Station Expansion, improvements to the commuter rail infrastructure, plus development in the area.

### **Bus Priority Corridors**

Mr. Hamway then presented some information about bus service quality, noting that existing bus services to and from Kendall do not rate well in terms of travel time, travel time consistency and service regularity.

Mr. Hamway reviewed features a bus priority corridor including:

- Exclusive bus lanes
- Consolidated or limited stops
- Traffic Signal Priority
- Near-level boarding
- Off-board fare collection or exit by rear doors only

The Task Force then looked at opportunities to provide priority corridors between Lechmere and Kendall in order to improve EZ Ride times, improve transit access to Binney Street, and leverage the accessibility of the Green Line Extension.

The Task Force members broke out into three small groups and worked on an exercise to discuss potential improvements for bus service in key segments. They provided their written feedback to the City of Cambridge for later consolidation.

### **Next Steps**

Ms. Rasmussen explained that the consultants will take the input from the meeting and finalize constrained and unconstrained scenarios. The scenarios and performance measures will be finalized with the CTPS in late September. The results of the scenarios will be modeled throughout October and will be available for the November 22 draft recommendations meeting.

At the September 20 Task Force meeting, there will be a presentation on gaps analysis and the Red Line.

Mr. Evans asked if there will be a final report generated in January 2017, summarizing the final recommendations. Ms. Rasmussen said there will be a final report documenting the recommendations and further activities.

Mr. Dacey asked if the MBTA could provide an update on the study on the Red Line signals and switching. Ms. Rasmussen said she would follow up to see what MBTA staff will bring in terms of analysis to the next meeting.

**Public Comment**

Ms. Rasmussen then invited the public to share their comments.

Brad Bellows asked about the relationship between bus prioritization and service increases. He asked if there were data showing how these changes could increase travel time savings and therefore provide additional service. Ms. Bennett said the unconstrained model will take some of this into account. Mr. Hamwey said that part of the capacity gap analysis in Focus40 on the bus side will look at sections on bus lanes. He said he could bring some of that information to the next meeting even though it may not be specific to Kendall.

John Attanucci, MIT, said he believe an MBTA route from Sullivan Square to Lechmere and Kendall to Kenmore (identified as CT4) is a big winner. He also supported more service on the CT2. He said the liked the ideas on the table but they do not focus on areas to the west of Kendall. He added that MBTA Route 70 bus is important because of growth in Watertown.

The meeting adjourned at 6:56 PM.