
To: Michael O'Dowd
Project Manager

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From: Nick Gross
Howard Stein Hudson

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Subject: MassDOT Highway Division
Allston I-90 Interchange Improvement Project
Task Force Meeting 23
Meeting Notes of April 28, 2016

Overview

On April 28, 2016 members of the Allston I-90 Interchange Improvement Project team and MassDOT staff associated with the job attended the 23rd task force meeting. The meeting took place at the Fiorentino Community Center located at 123 Antwerp Street, Allston. The task force is composed of local residents, business owners, transportation and green space advocates, as well as representatives of local, state, and federal governments.¹ The purpose of the task force is, through the application of its members' in-depth knowledge, to assist and advise MassDOT in determining a single preferred alternative to be selected by the Secretary of Transportation for documentation in a joint Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) document. All task force sessions are open to the public.

In contrast to previous task force sessions where a meeting agenda consisted of multiple topics, the meeting summarized herein served a single purpose: walking through the projects revised evaluation criteria matrix which included the Purpose and Need statement for the job. Prior to the meeting, MassDOT and the project team sent out the revised evaluation criteria matrix for review and asked for amendments from task force members interested in providing their comments ahead of time. A number of task force members were able to collaborate and provide a revised version of the evaluation criteria matrix which was used at the session summarized herein as a starting point.

The majority of task force members thanked the project team for their revisions to the evaluation criteria matrix indicating that it was a significant improvement over the 4/7/16 draft. Thereafter, the bulk of the meeting was spent fine tuning the wording of the Purpose and Need statement. It was clarified by Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) representative, Ken Miller, that the Purpose and Need and the evaluation criteria need not be associated with one another. For this reason it was agreed upon by the

¹ A listing of task force membership can be found at:

<http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/highway/HighlightedProjects/AllstonI90InterchangeImprovementProject/TaskForceMembers.aspx>

group that the Purpose and Need statement would be separated from the evaluation criteria in the next draft. It was also noted that the evaluation criteria typically doesn't have a "yes" or "no" answer associated with it and that it should not imply direction but rather relate to the objectives of the project.

While it was outlined that the evaluation criteria matrix would be used as a tool of information to help guide decisions later on, some task force members felt that the rating of positive, neutral, or negative was too simplified and would result in many of the alternatives receiving similar ratings when each alternative many differentiate itself with specific features. It was later noted that some of the items outlined in the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) certificate were not included in the evaluation criteria matrix such as the realignment of Soldiers Field Road (SFR) and anticipated future transit ridership.

Ongoing concerns such as how much MassDOT is refining all three of the alternatives, north-south vehicular and/or transit connections over Beacon Park Yard (BPY), and expansion of the parkland along the Charles River were raised by task force members. A discussion of the proposed rail maintenance facilities and lack of public process associated with the decision to use BPY as the location for them was also discussed at length. To a certain extent, it was agreed upon by the group that due to the anticipated development within the project area, "improving traffic flow" through the area was viable language to address air quality issues. A revised evaluation matrix will be produced and sent to the task force for final revisions before the filing of the draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) sometime in late fall, 2016.

Detailed Meeting Minutes²

C: Ed Ionata (EI): Hi everyone, we're going to get started now. The format this afternoon is going to be relatively loose. We're hoping for a collaborative effort from everyone. Our goal is to walk through the matrix, line-by-line, and receive peoples input on wording and what should be in or out. At our initial discussion we were asked by the task force to take a look at the overall structure of the matrix. We are lucky to have Ken Miller from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) with us again and I think it would be a good starting point to hear from Ken on his comments regarding the matrix structure.

C: Ken Miller (KM): Thanks Ed. It's important and makes most sense to separate the Purpose and Need from the rest of the criteria. The Purpose and Need and the criteria are really not the same and therefore shouldn't be associated with one another. My second comment relates to the language of the document. For example you have, "provides or allows a future Grand Junction Connection." Evaluation criteria doesn't typically have a yes or no answer. I think you are mixing up your function criteria and the functional requirements.

² Herein "C" stands for comment, "Q" for question and "A" for answer. For a list of attendees, please see Appendix 1. For copies of meeting flipcharts, please see Appendix 2.

If you had a Purpose and Need that states the need to improve safety then the criteria should outline what the effect on safety is. The criteria shouldn't imply a direction. It shouldn't say improve safety because there could be trade-offs. You should never have criteria that implies a direction of yes or no. I can see that the foundation of your matrix is to ensure that you didn't forget anything which I think is a worthwhile strategy. With that said, I think it would be most helpful to separate the Purpose and Need from the criteria. The criteria should relate to the objectives of the project.

C: EI: That was our intent with the bullets. Our goal was to define the criteria with the bullets listed below it.

C: KM: Some of your criteria seem like functional requirements. If it was a functional requirement, you wouldn't propose an alternative that didn't meet it. At the same time, some things you think are functional requirements maybe aren't. You'll need to decide what is truly a functional requirement. There is a difference between "wants" and "needs."

C: EI: Just so everyone knows, this exercise started with an effort to include all of the concerns that have been raised in the task force process.

C: Jessica Robertson (JR): Thank you for revising the matrix. The new draft is way better and a move in the right direction. If all we're rating is the grey rows and we can only say positive, neutral, or negative, I don't think it is very useful. If we proceed with that style of rating, most of the criteria for all of the alternatives is going to be the same. We need a way to distinguish between the alternatives and that needs to happen at the bullet level. For example, if all of the alternatives have a positive rating for pedestrian crossings but one of the alternatives is clearly better, that needs to be recognized.

C: KM: Agreed and I didn't mean to suggest anything other than that. Remember, this is just more information, it's not a decision. This information helps to guide a decision but it's not a black box.

C: EI: In the early days of producing these kinds of matrices, we had some discussion on weighting, ranking, and scoring the alternatives. It may become evident that minor shifts in alternatives tip the scores one way or another.

C: KM: I think it's good that this isn't attempting to rate criteria against each other. We may never agree on certain topics but that's okay. It's important to understand the different views.

C: EI: This has all been very informative. I still think it's worthwhile to go through each bullet to ensure we have a complete list.

Q: JR: Why isn't Mike here?

A: EI: Mike is on his way from Lowell. Jim Cerbone is here representing MassDOT.

C: Wendy Landman (WL): I'd like to echo what Jessica said about the matrix coming along way. It's certainly an improvement from the first draft. A number of advocates and folks on the task force worked on our own revised evaluation matrix and I have copies for everyone if they would like. We highlighted our amendments in track changes so you should be able to identify our edits in the document. My first comment is that there are a number of things in the MEPA certificate that aren't in the evaluation matrix.

Q: EI: Could you provide us with an example?

A: WL: One specific example is a request about future ridership which hits at additional connections. The task force has been asking about that and it's not clear that it is included in the matrix.

C: EI: That's a good comment and something we need to do in the DEIR. With that said, I think that concern is covered by items in the matrix.

C: JR: This could be considered part of the Purpose and Need and not just criteria.

C: WL: Another example is the mysterious of how and what happens with SFR along the Charles River. Impacts on the banks of the Charles River and the benefits to parkland are important. The matrix needs to better reflect the MEPA certification.

C: Meredith Avery (MA): I think we're all understanding how complex this is and how many different ways there are to compare the alternatives. As Ed mentioned, this is an effort to make sure we are capturing everything that could be a differentiator. Anything that the MEPA certification outlined will need to be included in the DEIR.

A: Mark Fobert (MF): There will be a chapter in the DEIR that identifies each comment that we received and where it came from.

C: EI: Thank you Meredith and Mark. At this point, let's assume that the Purpose and Need will get separated from the evaluation matrix. I still think it's worth going through the Purpose and Need because it essential guides the matrix.

Q: Harry Mattison (HM): I think a lot of the task force is still wondering how and when this document is going to be used?

A: EI: Right now there is a firm plan to produce a DEIR that describes and analyzes all of the three alternatives. In that document all three alternatives would become ownership of MassDOT. The language of the alternatives should not be ABC or AMP. Instead it should be MassDOT Alternative A, B, and C so that the language is neutral. Within the DEIR all of the alternatives will be brought up to

the same level of design detail, they will be described, and they will be analyzed. The DEIR will not have a preferred alternative. The intent is to get public comment on each of the alternatives. At this point there is not a Purpose and Need associated with the DEIR but we think it's a good idea to use a Purpose and Need in the document because at some point, there will be some kind of Federal review.

C: KM: For those less familiar, FHWA can't take action and MassDOT can't ask us to take action until funding is outlined. The project would need to be identified in Boston's Regional Long Range Transportation Plan.

C: Jim Cerbone (JC): FHWA will hold off on a review until funding for the project is identified. Once we get to a preferred alternative we will need a Purpose and Need statement for the NEPA process. Then we will submit a Class of Action. As an early indication we believe that this will be an Environmental Assessment (EA). The big take away here is that we cannot submit a Class of Action until we identify funding.

Q: HM: I've never heard of a Class of Action. Can you explain what that is?

A: JC: We need to have a preferred alternative in order to identify the Section 4(f) impacts and other impacts such as Environmental Justice zones. FHWA doesn't want to do the impact analysis. In the context of this project we won't have a preferred alternative until the MEPA process has concluded. At that time we can submit a Class of Action. The Class of Action will determine what kind of assessment we will need to do. That decision to identify the type of Class of Action will be up to FHWA.

C: KM: A Class of Action will propose what type of level of assessment is needed.

C: Tom Nally (TN): It would be very helpful to put all of this in writing. It's been unclear to us until now how this is all playing out. As we go through each bullet point we may discover the need to incorporate certain items into the Purpose and Need.

Q: WL: I am still confused as to where Section 4(f) and Section 106 get married.

A: JC: They get submitted in the EA. Someone asked at a previous taskforce meeting why Mass Historic has such a tight grip on this and it's because they won't consult with you. They won't comment on a MEPA document until we have a preferred alternative. Once we have a preferred alternative Mass Historic will comment if they believe it has an adverse effect or not.

C: Glen Berkowitz (GB): My understanding of Harry's question was how this is going to be used.

C: HM: Yes. My question was how and when this is going to be used.

- C: GB: I'd like to try to answer that and then the team can fill in if I missed anything. Ed sent a link to a FHWA document which outlined the importance of a Purpose and Need statement in an environmental document. "A project Purpose and Need drives the process for alternative consideration, in-depth analysis, and an ultimate selection." To answer Harry's question, it sounds like the Purpose and Need will be used in a major way as the foundation to analyze the entire review of the alternative.
- Q: HM: Who conducts that analysis? Who decides if it is positive, neutral, or negative?
- A: JC: I think that was what Ken was getting at. The decision of positive, neutral, or negative shouldn't be part of the criteria. MassDOT would ultimately do the scoring but we would pass the scoring matrix around for review.
- A: KM: There are a lot of different ways of doing this. Regarding the Purpose and Need, in an ideal world you would have established a Purpose and Need in a planning study. Then there would be an analysis to determine the objectives. The Purpose and Need is your objectives. The earlier you can do that, the better. I wouldn't get hung up on the Purpose and Need an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This is about the larger picture of what you are trying to accomplish.
- C: HM: Does something like this happen this summer? Does it happen in November? My understanding right now is that someone will go through each of the MassDOT Alternatives and ask is this the most optimized alternative. Then someone will say either positive, neutral, or negative. When is will that happen?
- A: EI: That can happen right now as part of the DEIR. This matrix is a tool for gather more input for in order to better inform the selection of a preferred alternative. That is how the Secretary wants to proceed. I don't know if we have a date to publish a DEIR; the target is at the end of the year.
- C: JC: We can establish information for the existing conditions but we cannot finalize any studies until the refinements are analyzed.
- C: EI: The best case scenario is that we would score the matrix sometime this fall. As it has been pointed out, the main differences are in the throat section. The ongoing work of the BRA and Harvard is common to all three alternatives. The establishment of streets, roadway networks, how many lanes, and the intersections is something that we can begin to analyze from a traffic perspective. It becomes an input for the air quality analysis. We'll be looking at volumes and speeds as well as noise.
- C: JC: Storm water is very challenging too. We will be considering climate change and the vulnerability associated with each alternative.
- Q: HM: Jim mentioned something about refinements to all of the alternatives. Is that true?

- A: JC: Yes. Most of the potential changes under discussion don't involve the throat section.
- A: EI: The street layout is generally where the BRA and Harvard wants it to be. There is an ongoing effort to optimize each of the alternatives by MassDOT.
- C: KM: You mentioned that there is not much you can do in the throat section. There may be some things that you thought were off limits or didn't consider that may be revisited. For example, could it be possible to turn Buick Street into a one-way in order to shift the I-90 alignment? Does the MBTA really need two tracks in the throat section? There may be items that you thought were untouchable that aren't.
- C: EI: That's a good point. For example, if the ABC Alternative scores negatively because it encroaches into the Charles River it is MassDOT's duty to maximize its competitiveness.
- C: KM: Exactly. You also mentioned that the streets are generally the same for all three alternatives. You may find that there are still objectives that you want to accomplish that change that such as the north-south connection.
- C: JC: We are still evaluating the connections to Commonwealth Avenue. We're still looking at designs for the pedestrian bridges. Our most recent focus has been on how to accommodate storm water for the at-grade alternatives.
- C: WL: I'm eager to dive into the Purpose and Need. So far we've identified that many issues are reflected in all the alternatives. They could easily be several alternatives for SFR and how much it shifts. Likewise there could be several alternatives for the north-south connection.
- Q: HM: When is the point where we bring all of this together? How do we make each of the three alternatives as competitive as possible? MassDOT isn't revising the design.
- A: JC: As I mentioned before, we are making minor refinements to each alternative. We have limits on constraints and we don't want to take private property.
- C: JR: We may need to take property for transportation purposes.
- C: KM: Maybe BU will change their mind.
- C: JR: The point is that many of the things that are baked into this list people are treating as deal breakers. We need to surface which items those are. Some may not remain deal breakers as the project evolves. Maybe it's converting Buick Street from a two-way to a one-way. Maybe we switch the "ask" of how much BU chips in for West Station.

- Q: HM: Is the response, “sorry you’re wrong” or “yes you’re right?”
- A: JC: As Ed said the Purpose and Need is only for the DEIR; we’re not in the NEPA process. We’re hopeful we can use this matrix as the framework for future preparations.
- A: EI: Correct. That was the intent. We don’t need a formal Purpose and Need for MEPA but we will eventually need one for NEPA. Once we get to the point of a Final EIR then we will have a selected preferred alternative.
- C: KM: The next best thing to do is to figure out what our objectives are.
- C: JR: Mike O’Dowd said we weren’t making more than tweaks to the alternatives and that is a concern for many people on the taskforce. We need to be working on all of these things. It would be a waste of time to put together a DEIR that doesn’t reflect our best ideas.
- C: EI: In a perfect world our DEIR would have all designs optimized to the same point and any negative scoring could be alleviated. MassDOT has been charged to alleviate negative of the ABC encroachment for example. Part of the answer to Harry’s question is that most of all of this should happen before the filing of the DEIR. If it doesn’t, we can expect pointed letters on the DEIR from all of you and others at higher levels.
- C: GB: It’s unclear to me what extent the MassDOT team is working to refine the two at-grade MassDOT Alternatives. I can’t tell based on this conversation. I can say that ABC is working to refine our alternative and I know Ari is working to refine his. ABC is refining our alternative based on what Ken Miller said about assumptions. At this point I think it would be useful to go through Wendy’s matrix as a group.
- C: EI: Agreed. Let’s move to a group edit.
- C: WL: A lot of people contributed to this revised matrix. Our refinements are in the way we state things. The originally matrix didn’t represent MassDOT in a way that Massachusetts has declared itself. The idea here is to replace a falling down viaduct, not to increase capacity on I-90. This matrix doesn’t represent the goals the State has outlined for mode shift or Vision Zero. That’s where we’re going to see the tradeoffs. We know there are going to be impacts to the Parkland next to the Paul Dudley White Path (PDWP) and we think that has to be included in the Purpose and Need. The taskforce has been talking about improving the quality of life and experience along the Charles River since the start of the project. One point of confusion is that the State is also considering multiple locations for commuter rail layover facilities. Is that true?
- A: Mark Shamon (MS): Right now the plan is to use the BPY and another site in order to make the 2035 plan work. That plan hasn’t been publicly released yet. It is still being developed internally.

Q: WL: How does that relate to the MassDOT plans on the South Coast Rail Project?

A: MS: I can't answer that.

C: JR: The issue with the South Station Expansion Project (SSX) is that it never had a public information meeting announcing the introduction or plans of a new rail facility into the Allston neighborhood. There was never a public discussion of the impacts associated with a new rail facility. The only time the Allston community has had a chance to comment on the rail yard is through this process. I understand the need for the rail yard however this neighborhood is being asked to bear a burden for the region. There needs to be more discussion on how to balance that burden.

C: MS: My understanding was that West Station was mitigation so that MassDOT could use the rail yard and build the layover facilities. This was something associated with the Patrick Administration in 2014.

C: JR: That's not our understanding. There has been a large public outcry for having the station there prior to that. If that's the tradeoff then there is a misunderstanding. I don't think a stop on the Worcester Line when the New Balance Center is not far away is good enough.

C: WL: There has to be a serious commitment to transit in order to facilitate mode shift in this area.

C: JR: All of the alternatives have impacts to parkland but it would be useful to determine the net result of impacts at the end.

C: EI: Ken, what do you think?

C: KM: I have some suggestions and a few questions. In particular I'm interested in improving the flow of traffic. You're putting down a couple million square feet of traffic. Even if you are encouraging mode shift there are going to be a lot more cars. That's the way it's going to be. If it was on a subway line maybe you could get away with it. We need to take into account traffic and that people want to get from the Turnpike to Cambridge and Somerville in their cars. People are always going to be driver cars. I don't have a problem with facilitating mode shift but the taskforce needs to recognize that there are always going to be cars.

C: Gerald Autler (GA): Once the BRA is further along with our placemaking study we will be able to play a more active role. Our goal isn't to design a roadway system internal to this area which will degrade conditions for other modes.

C: WL: We also prepared a diagram showing proposed future transit lines. A lot of the traffic from the Turnpike is heading to Kendall Square, the Longwood Medical Area (LMA), and Harvard Square. If

commuters could get off at West Station and get onto good transit to those locations it would make a huge difference. There is already an existing rail line that happens to go to Kendall Square which is amazing. No matter how large you design the interchange or abutting streets, cars won't have anywhere to go once they get beyond it.

- C: JR: In terms of the Purpose and Need, I think we all agree that the traffic congestion at River Street needs to be fixed. However to say that part of the Purpose and Need is to improve the flow of traffic is not aligning with any of our goals. It is problematic to have improved the flow of traffic in the Purpose and Need.
- C: KM: I wasn't suggesting that. There needs to be a recognition that people will continue to drive. The City of Cambridge has been very progressive about their approach to traffic but traffic is terrible in Cambridge. The point is, some portion of people will always drive. I'm not sure how to phrase it. I don't think "improve" is the right term but you also don't want gridlock.
- C: JC: Gridlock also doesn't support emergency vehicles, commercial trucking, or buses.
- C: Bill Deignan (BD): I'm not sure you need to say accommodate or improve traffic flow if reducing vehicular trips is part of the message. Ken Miller mentioned the importance of regional access. I think acknowledging that is also important.
- Q: GA: I have a clarifying question. Why was there a change to "Connect north and south Allston?"
- A: JR: The intent is for people to find alternative routes. The current situation with truck traffic heading south on Harvard Avenue is something we are trying to eliminate.
- C: HM: A lot of this relates to the disjunctions outside of the project area. I think it would be more relevant to think about the existing context of the Anderson and River Street Bridges. You could add 20 lanes to the Turnpike; traffic is still going to get stuck at those bridges.
- C: GA: If the intent is to suggest a need for vehicular connections in order to avoid Linden Street and Harvard Avenue, I think this bullet point could state that more.
- C: EI: Okay, I think we understand that we will need to word-smith something to flow with traffic.
- C: JR: That's not what we're saying.
- C: KM: That's what I am saying. There will be millions of new square feet of development here. We don't want traffic to be at a standstill.

- C: Galen Mook (GM): I think a lot of these bullet points could be combined. For example, avoid inducing vehicle trips is meant to imply to get to Commonwealth Avenue from the Turnpike. The fact that we are not planning for a north-south connection is problematic.
- C: EI: If this is written in a way that the perception is to reduce capacity it is going to be a political bomb shell.
- C: GM: It's not reducing capacity if you are adding an additional road and providing more access.
- C: JR: The Secretary has said many times that transportation isn't about moving cars, it's about moving people and connecting them to the places they need to go. If we took a step backwards and addressed this from the perspective of what we want rather than how we have to process cars it would be more effective.
- C: JC: There are two different items we are looking to accomplish with relating to traffic. We want to ensure that traffic is not producing harmful congestion in the Allston/Brighton area and we also need to ensure that traffic is being processed through the interchange. If we don't improve the flow of traffic from its existing condition we've failed as a DOT.
- C: JR: We've been pushing for mode shift for a while and it feels like we are accommodating the Turnpike entirely. There are multiple ways to accommodate future demand.
- C: WL: We are looking to replace, not increase regional traffic capacity through the interchange. We're not here to make a bigger interchange. We're here because there is a need to replace a piece of aging infrastructure. From a traffic standpoint this is a replacement project, not an improvement project. Mode shift and regional mass transit need to be on top.
- C: EI: It sounds like you implying that there are hidden implications for facilitating mode shift by reducing traffic capacity.
- C: WL: Right now it reads that we are improving traffic flow.
- C: Bill Conroy (BC): From the City of Boston's point of view the level of service (LOS) can't get any worse than what is out there today. It has to get better. We learned from the Central Artery that queues can't go back onto additional streets. We have to be careful in designing these streets so that dangerous situations are not produced. We should be looking at alternative options that divert traffic in a manner to accommodate all modes of transportation. The City of Boston is very supportive of Vision Zero and Complete Streets.
- C: KM: These are separate subjects. Maintaining capacity on the Turnpike is one item. Another is to ensure the problems on the Turnpike and the local traffic issues don't affect each other. We want to

allow folks to be able to get to where they want to go. You want to have a street system that accommodates a reasonable amount of flow. If you don't want to induce demand, don't build anything. You're allowing development which means people are going to come here. Trying to make it harder to drive typically shifts people but more often than not, they simply just reroute themselves and their travel time becomes longer. If you're pushing folks off the main roads they're going to end up in the neighborhoods.

C: WL: That's only true if other modes aren't available.

C: KM: Well there aren't many other options. Sometimes there are limits to how much you can do in a single project.

C: HM: I want to thank Bill Conroy for mentioning Vision Zero. Commissioner Fiandaca placed a lot of emphasis on welcoming Vision Zero in the Mayor's press conference. A lot of emphasis was placed on design changes to lower speeds and increase safety for pedestrian crossings. There are a lot of issues of pedestrian safety, street design, and anticipated design speeds relating to this project. The City Council just voted to lower speeds in the entire City to 20 mph. Car on Cambridge Street are traveling at 50 mph today. The Purpose and Need needs to be more consistent with the Vision Zero Policy. Cambridge Street should not just be a massive buffer of pavement between the Turnpike and the neighborhood. That's what the ramp system should do. It shouldn't be the responsibility of our neighborhood streets.

C: WL: If you look at the second bullet under traffic management, we have amended it so that the queuing should be on the ramps, not the streets. Maybe we'll have to have a massive set of frontage roads to hold the capacity. By the time the traffic hits the streets it should feel like a neighborhood streets, not the way Cambridge Street functions today.

C: KM: I don't think we're very far apart on this one. It sounds like everyone recognizes the need for people to still drive in this area.

C: GB: Agreed. To combine Wendy and Ken's statements; I don't think anyone is wrong. One way to combine the overlap would be to put this conversation into four bullet points. The first is to maintain traffic capacity on I-90 and SFR. The second is to improve traffic flow for the network of regional highways and interfaces of getting across the Charles River. It's not just future development we want to support; this interchange supports LMA, Cambridge, and Somerville. I agree with Ken, there are going to be more cars and trucks and we should do what we can to support that.

C: KM: Thank you Glen. I would be careful in the wording; that could read as making bigger roads. We need to have roads scaled to the neighborhood.

- C: GB: The third point would be to facilitate mode shift and the fourth point is to create a new robust transit facility called West Station. If you combine all four of those bullets there is a lot of overlap in the conversation we are having.
- C: GM: A fifth bullet could be connectivity to parkland.
- C: WL: That's already included. One of the big requirements of this project is the robust transit improvements. That's the place we've been struggling with. Unless that facility is built we can't manage the traffic the way we want to.
- C: GB: I could be wrong but I worry that some people's goals of this project are to choke traffic. I think we should be careful. We want to facilitate traffic flow as part of the objective of this project.
- C: HM: I don't know what that means Glen. North Harvard Street is one lane going north over the Anderson Bridge. No one is proposing to build a second bridge. I don't understand how we can improve the flow of people getting to Harvard Square with anything you do in this project besides an exclusive bus lane.
- C: KM: The word "improve" is not the correct word.
- C: EI: We'll take your comments, revise the draft, and send out another copy.
- C: GB: I want to touch on the connection Wendy brought up earlier; the north-south connection.
- C: JR: There is a difference between a human connection and an auto connection. An auto connection is one of the major pieces of the MassDOT plan that hasn't been incorporated. We're missing a transit connection.
- C: WL: The second bullet addresses that connection for pedestrians and bicycles.
- C: JR: This should be part of the Purpose and Need. We have been saying we want to reconnect the two halves of Allston. If at the end of the project we haven't made that connection then we've failed.
- C: KM: In terms of connection north and south Allston from a FHWA perspective, we agree connecting and reknitting neighborhoods is a great idea to overcome barriers. Does this connection mean for all modes? Are we talking about vehicles? From our point of view we think it would make sense to explore an auto connection.
- C: JR: The question is whether the connection is open to general vehicles or just transit. That's the only thing the community has mixed feelings about. I don't think there is a strong feeling one way or the other. We also haven't figured out an engineering solution. The Purpose and Need should include this

connection is a more conceptual way. If we don't manage to create a new auto connection more problems on the existing connections will take place.

- C: KM: As Harry pointed out, it could be a one-way trip. You could explore additional options.
- C: WL: In order for West Station to function as a true transit hub we need land use connections to allow people to walk and bicycle to the station without feeling like they are on a fly over ramp.
- C: WL: If it's going to be in the air we will need to construct platforms.
- C: GA: My feeling right now is that we are getting into too much detail. I agree that the Purpose and Need is where it's all going to happen. The conversation before was useful even though it felt like we were going in circles. Jessica said that we need to enhance access and I think that is a shared principle. We want to make sure people have access to open space, jobs, and local businesses. There will always be disagreements undoubtedly. Does the group think we've come to a basic understanding of where the Purpose and Needs statement needs to get to? I think we could probably move onto the rest of the matrix.
- C: EI: I think we want to go through the rest of the matrix and develop a revised Purpose and Need statement with some additional word smithing.
- C: GM: The second to last bullet in the Purpose and Need mentions integrating and maximizing urban development which implies to economic development. I don't think economic development is touched on later in the document. I'd like to see more of that discussed in relation to air rights.
- C: HM: I'd like to add, "maximizing the quality of urban development," as part of the decisions associated with the roadway network.
- C: EI: I'll take a crack at re-editing the Purpose and Need. Since there has been a large collaboration on editing the matrix we will go through it with an eye towards completeness and ensure we capture your concerns.
- C: HM: There are two bullets about improving air quality. I think we can look at this in a broader way. You can reduce congestion all you want but you're still going to have 100,000 cars on the Turnpike. Research has been coming out and the health risks associated with living near a highway are clearer.
- C: KM: You're not going to reduce congestion, that's just not going to happen.
- C: HM: Congestion is a serious health issue especially in an Environmental Justice community. MassDOT has an opportunity to be national leaders in the way this project addresses those health issues.

- C: GB: Harry, if you look on the first page, that is covered in the third bullet.
- C: HM: Yes but it's the third bullet.
- C: GB: It's also included in the second to last bullet. It may be useful to combine those two.
- C: HM: Yes, I think we should combine them.
- C: KM: The less redundancies the better.
- C: JC: Improving traffic flow also helps improve air quality.
- C: HM: Exactly, that's why we are looking for an exclusive bus lane. I think we recognized that we are not going to improve flow on the Turnpike.
- C: JC: We're hoping to by the removal of the toll booths.
- C: HM: That's not part of this project.
- C: JC: All of the items are an attempt to improve air quality. Our modeling shows an increase with new development and we are trying to accommodate that.
- C: HM: I'm not talking about carbon emissions. I'm talk about risks for people who living with 1500' of the Turnpike. I haven't seen any language on how this project will be improving the health for those people. It should be part of the Purpose and Need.
- C: JC: There is not Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) or Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidance on specific ways to mitigate.
- C: HM: I would guess there are a few smart people in the room who could figure it out.
- C: KM: Emissions will be reduced overtime by cleaner vehicles.
- C: JC: Emission standards and improving traffic flow are things we can factor into the project. Noise barriers are not designed to mitigate air pollution.
- C: GB: You could have a bullet that says evaluate alternatives. That would result in improving air quality. We only want to think of what could be. We had the same conversation 25 years ago. The benefit of putting I-93 in a tunnel then resulted in us building vent stacks high enough into the sky that it didn't affect the abutting area. The only debate was how to scrub the inside of the stacks.

- C: JR: That's an important point. Another point is in favor of decking over the yard to contain the emissions.
- C: KM: There are hundreds of miles in the region that live within 200 feet of the Turnpike. I think we need to be careful in trying to put so much in here; we need a viable solution.
- C: HM: There has to be some way to mitigate the fact and recognize that there is poison coming up from the Turnpike. To simply say we hope cars get cleaner in the future is not a mitigation solution.
- C: GM: I think we could incorporate Glen's of reducing the impacts on the quality of life.
- C: JC: It's part of the document. Harry, to address your point, we will look at an air quality analysis which considers greenhouse gases.
- Q: GM: We were told at the beginning of this project that it would incorporate open road tolling? Should that be considered as part of the Purpose and Need?
- A: EI: It's not part of this Purpose and Need. Open road tolling allows us to straighten the Turnpike.
- C: KM: These bullets are part of the Purpose and Need.
- A: EI: We'll going through and eliminate the redundancy bullets for the Purpose and Need.
- Q: GA: What would more traditional approaches be?
- A: EI: Vehicle miles traveled (VMT).
- C: JR: It's concerning to have that metric in there without pedestrian or bicycle safety.
- C: WL: Pedestrian LOS is typically wait times. If a signal is too long, it's a low LOS. We don't consider congestion with people.
- C: JR: It would be helpful to not have different modes in different sections. It would be useful to somehow capture the rational and irrational routing patterns.
- C: EI: VMT gets to that. People miles traveled and bicycle miles travel would be included.
- C: KM: Another option is a qualitative assessment of the origins and destination.
- C: JR: Yeah, then we could see the number of people entering and exiting the project area.

- C: KM: a lot of that depends on which alternative we are addressing.
- C: WL: The quality of pedestrian and bicycle environment needs to be here. If pedestrian access to West Station is not convenient and safe then people aren't going to use the station.
- C: GA: Some of this will be addressed in the BRA placemaking output. We're not developing the metric but we are looking for the next steps. It has been made clear that a safe and convenient pedestrian environment is fundamental.
- C: WL: There is clear data on the impacts of transit relating to pedestrian volumes.
- C: KM: I don't think your categories work. Typically we're talking about mobility relating to safety and non-motorized users. Highways and street networks is not a criteria. Mobility is a criteria.
- Q: Guss Driessen (GD): Is the traffic management section talking about during or after the project?
- A: EI: In this category we are talking about after the project is built.
- C: KM: I'm not sure that "minimize design exceptions" is required. The criteria would be the number of design exceptions. Design exceptions are related to safety and how you evaluate safety. If there are five design exceptions but it's safer, there is nothing wrong with that.
- Q: WL: We were trying to be gentle here. Massachusetts is full of roads that don't meet standards. The issue is that if we deviate from the standard such as no breakdown lanes east or west, does it give us better opportunities to create better options along the Charles River?
- C: KM: There is a strong relation between safety and fewer design exceptions.
- C: WL: As we continue to develop the alternatives, it's going to be very important to look at and evaluate the tradeoffs.
- C: GB: This bullet point raises the elephant of the throat. The question of whether there will be breakdown lanes or not. There are routinely design exceptions to not provide breakdown lanes in a limited right-of-way especially in urban settings. I'm not sure "minimize" is the correct language. It sounds bias to give one alternative a better score.
- C: KM: I've never been involved in a study where design exceptions were part of the criteria. It doesn't mean FHWA has a vested interest in making sure our systems are safe. We want safe systems and if the safety benefits are outweighed with no shoulders then having no shoulders would be better. With that said, the shoulders are there for safety reasons so it would be difficult to argue that.

C: JR: Let's remove that bullet.

C: FS: We're talking about feet and yards. If you do all electronic tolling (AET) it's really dangerous with the existing alignment. One of the big safety improvements is the reconceptualization of the existing interchange. Everyone seems to be on the same page in terms of the big safety issue. Vertical curve matters. It's nice to have AET but if significant changes don't happen with the existing alignment it will be more dangerous. The FHWA Section 4(f) is not supposed to move into parkland which is a consequence of the breakdown lanes. I want to mention again the concern of vertical alignment.

C: EI: Thank you Fred. Next on the matrix is the surface street network.

C: WL: Part of this relates to the piece about queuing and street capacity. I want to argue that widening parkland should be part of the criteria.

C: JR: I think it would be useful to have a new section specifically for intersections. In terms of Wendy's point, I don't think "widened parkland" is the best way to phrase the objective. The Paul Dudley White Path (PDWP) is not just for recreational use, it's also a major commuting route. It's currently substandard for two-way bicycle traffic. There have been ideas that have been floated around that would solve that issue. The MassDOT 3K Alternative doesn't address that problem for half the length of the plan.

C: KM: Widen the parkland reads like an objective rather than part of the criteria.

C: JR: Having them as two separate criteria makes sense. There is the net impact on parkland and also what extent the bicycle and shared-use path facilities meet the safety standards.

C: KM: When you come up with your criteria you then come up with your measures of effectiveness (MOEs). This outlines how you make decisions.

C: EI: We'll take a crack at better aligning and formatting the matrix in a way that is reflective of what Ken mentioned.

Q: MS: What is wrong with maximizing flexibility?

C: KM: It may make sense to say how it relates to the operations of the yard.

C: JR: To Ken's point I think we need to rewrite this as a criteria and state what is flexibility.

A: KM: If it was criteria you would say flexibility of.

C: MS: I don't think there is much of a difference between "enables" and "does not preclude."

C: JR: There are clear examples of that difference relating to the air rights and ramps for parcels associated with the Big Dig.

C: MS: I don't think anyone things were going as far as the little bridge over SFR. Nothing is going further than that point.

Q: JR: Do we need two tracks in the throat section? I would argue we do.

A: MS: There is the potential to have one track. Earlier there was discussion of narrowing Buick Street to one lane. If we don't build a second Grand Junction track it would open up additional space.

C: Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis (NCC): I think "enable" is okay. The concern is not to come up with something you wouldn't do.

Q: KM: What does the question of Grand Junction access mean? Would you be operating two tracks beyond the limits of the project?

A: MS: No one has the answer to that question right now.

Q: KM: Is it possible that you could have one track of the Grand Junction for a short piece through the throat?

A: FS: I think we got past that issue a long time ago.

C: KM: I'm thinking in terms of surface alternatives.

A: FS: MassDOT has stated their goals for tripling mode share for walking, bicycling, and transit. It would be against the stated policy of the Commonwealth to reduce the number of tracks for future transit use. The PDWP is already one of the highest traveled corridors for bicycles and pedestrians in the state.

C: JR: What we care about is future rapid transit service.

C: GB: I don't think it's useful to debate the Grand Junction tracks. The number of tracks in the throat affects the alternatives, we all know that. I don't think the language should be one or two tracks. I think it should be three or four tracks.

C: FS: You're not going to triple mode share for bikes, pedestrians, or transit users without doing something significant.

- C: EI: I noticed that you removed the Houghton Chemical bullet.
- C: WL: Instead of having it as an objective we believe it should be an evaluation criteria. The cost of maintaining that spur far exceeds the other benefits of the project.
- C: JR: We need to evaluate the cost and benefits of keeping and not keeping the Houghton rail spur active.
- C: KM: Some of these things can be evaluated without evaluating all of the alternatives.
- C: FS: It would be great to see language brought in directly relating to the transit facilities. The benefits to the Allston/Brighton rail operations are part of the regional community. If we're going to be told, sorry, all of the rail facilities are dedicated to commuter rail layover space and there is no room for future DMU; that issue should be on the table.
- C: MS: A lot has to do with accessibility as well.
- C: JR: Flexibility of rail uses, evaluating flexibility, storage for commuter rail, and future transit vehicles should all be on the table.
- Q: WL: Shouldn't there be an evaluation matrix for this?
- A: MS: It was part of the South Station Expansion Project.
- A: GA: There was a lot of space that was looked at.
- C: HM: The reasons why the MBTA failed to pursue South Station are well documented.
- C: FS: The rail yard in Somerville includes the expansion space and that's not on the table. Let's talk facts.
- Q: WL: Was there an evaluation of where an appropriate location for a loud facility could be in the region. Should it be located within 50' of these people's homes?
- A: MS: Some of that was addressed in the South Station Expansion Project.
- C: FS: I agree with the housing and noise perspective. The MBTA isn't trying to sprinkle there facilities all over the landscape. One is in Somerville and their master plan is to accommodate facilities further away from the neighborhood.

- C: HM: The more the MBTA is getting, the more the MBTA should give back. MassPort builds beautiful parks. To say a wheel truing station needs to be placed in Allston and you can't eliminate the noise or deadly toxins from the Turnpike is not acceptable.
- Q: JR: What is the net outcome of transit operational benefits versus burdens?
- Q: GM: Is that covered in the Purpose and Need?
- A: EI: A lot of that is covered in Section 4(f). We'll give you a heads up of the Section 4(f) analysis. The only other question relates to contaminated soils. The standard approach is to get the gist of understanding and make sure you are able to take out the toxins. If it is going to be used for a roadway it is less important compared to a residential property for example.
- C: FS: I want to underscore the need for extra caution. For the Red Line in Alewife, the presumption was that it was covered and now there have been a number of cancer cases. People do things that they believe are safe and this issue needs to be seriously looked at.
- A: JC: We have a very good matrix of 300 borings for the BPY.
- C: HM: There is a difference between opportunities and actual great places. In terms of open space, it's great to see SFR in the throat being expanded. I think that could be the first bullet.
- C: EI: Gerald, do you have anything more on that?
- A: GA: The landowners overarching goal is to inform infrastructure so that good options are not precluded. We are going to take the placemaking study and apply it to implementing the development of parcels. We are not producing a physical plan; we are showing an open space system.
- C: HM: I don't think this should all be put on the BRA.
- C: GA: It's a clear statement of rough magnitude of open space. In terms of functions, that's what we hope you will find in the placemaking study. We want to ensure crossing the roadways is safe and functional for non-motorized users.
- Q: JR: Can you take our rephrasing methods and apply them evenly to ensure the placemaking and open space ideas are included in the Purpose and Need.
- A: GA: That's where we hope the placemaking study comes out.

Next Steps

The next task force meeting is scheduled for May 19, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. at the Fiorentino Community Center located at 123 Antwerp Street, Allston. All task force meetings are open to the public.

Appendix 1: Meeting Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Gerald	Autler	Task Force Member
Joseph	Beggan	Task Force Member
Glen	Berkowitz	ABC Consultant
Greg	Boles	VHB
Nathaniel	Cabral-Curtis	Howard Stein Hudson
Chris	Calnan	TetraTech
James	Cerbone	MassDOT
Bill	Conroy	Boston Transportation Department
Deneen	Crosby	CSS
Bill	Deignan	Task Force Member
Guss	Driessen	Brookline Transportation Board
Mark	Fobert	TetraTech
Elliot	Friedman	Watertown Resident
Nick	Gross	Howard Stein Hudson
Ed	Ionata	TetraTech
Jim	Keller	TetraTech
Wendy	Landman	Task Force Member
Harry	Mattison	Task Force Member
Ken	Miller	FHWA
Galen	Mook	Task Force Member
Tom	Nally	Task Force Member
Mike	O'Dowd	MassDOT
Jessica	Robertson	Task Force Member
Fred	Salvucci	Brighton Resident
Mark	Shamon	VHB