

Draft Memorandum for the Record Project Selection Advisory Council Meeting

April 29, 2014 Meeting

12:30pm – 4:30pm, Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) Oliver Transit Center, 12 Olive St., Greenfield, MA

Richard Davey, Chair, Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

1. Introductions

Secretary Davey states introductions are not necessary at this point. Those members in attendance include David Mohler, Deputy Secretary of Policy and Executive Director of Office of Transportation Planning – MassDOT, Linda Dunleavy, Gubernatorial Appointment representing the planning agencies, and Franklin Regional Council of Governments, Jeff Mullan, Foley Hoag LLP, Steve Silveira, MLS Strategies, Frank DePaola, MassDOT Highway Administrator, John Pourbaix, Construction Industries of Massachusetts, Jim Lovejoy, Chairman of Board of Selectman, Town of Mt. Washington representing Mass. Municipal Association and Berkshire MPO

2. Discussion of DRAFT Criteria

Secretary Davey, acting Chairman of the council, opened up discussion to the council surrounding the draft criteria. The detail and requested changes the council made at the last meeting were added to this draft, including suggestions for possible metrics and/or measures for each goal area. The Secretary reminded the council the goal for this meeting is to present the suggested criteria to the public for feedback at the first public hearing meeting in Pittsfield on May 20th.

Sheri Warrington, Manager of MPO Activities Group, MassDOT – Office of Transportation Planning, walked through the changes that were made to the document upon request by the council members. This included more precise criteria definitions and possible metrics along with available data specific to each individual criteria area. At the end of the document there are discussion points from the last meeting that were addressed but not necessarily resolved and also other potential criterion points that the council might want to add to the draft.

Safety and Security

Jeff Mullan states three specific questions regarding the draft document. He asked how legal obligations are being considered and how they fit into the goal criteria. Second he wanted to know if we are identifying statutory metrics at federal and/or state level as opposed to the nice-to-have metrics that are listed. Lastly he states the criteria appear too specific in his opinion,

using a percentage point stated in one of the safety criteria as an example. Frank DePaola mentioned that the purpose of the criteria is to select projects that essential advance the desired goals of the council. Jeff replied that a goal is not a requirement however and does not read the same as legal obligations. Some of these goals are driven by policy such as GreenDOT but some are driven by legal statutory requirements.

Jim Lovejoy stated a concern regarding the Safety criteria. In rural communities, some accidents or issues sometimes go unreported, meaning there is a lack of data or insufficient amount of data regarding these scenarios. Jim asked if this is available data would be sufficient enough to drive accurate decision-making. The Secretary agreed and stated that in some urban communities this is also an issue. He said this could be an incentive to get those officers in those areas to report back data more effectively. He also made the point that regional-sensitivity is necessary to recognize as well, not just rural or urban sensitivity. The Secretary mentioned how it had previously been discussed to potentially use Chapter 90 funds or discretionary funds to improve data reporting. This is critical because the outcome of analyze is only as good as the quality of the data going into it. The Secretary said it seems the legislation is pushing the agency to be metric-driven. Frank added that if people understand that the data is being used to evaluate things such as safety that that should be an incentive to encourage them to report better data more often. David stated that right now we must work with the data we have, even though it might not be the best. He also mentioned that the magnitude of the problem area needs to be discussed, especially when discussing safety because here numbers matter even more along with severity. With that being said regional equity should always be considered but this is one area where the numbers and severity are critical. The Secretary added that he believes there are ways to weight appropriately that take into account both safety and usage.

Linda Dunleavy stated that we can influence how well the data is reported by showing people how it is used and the tangible reports that follow. People are encouraged when they see they aren't reporting for nothing. She liked how Delaware DOT framed their criteria for a weighting system; it wasn't too specific, unlike ours which appear too detailed and some even post-project oriented. John Pourbaix asked if we only rely on police data and if so why we don't use data from insurance companies. Rachel Bain, Assistant Secretary of Transportation, MassDOT Office of Performance Management and Innovation, commented that we could tap into the accident data that the Merit Rating Board collects however they also collect data from the police and tend to have the same issues with irregular reporting. John stated that insurance companies would also have the incident data from individuals reporting property claims.

Jeff suggested a sub-category for safety that would allow weighting of the most dangerous intersections. This tackles safety from both a general-level while still taking into consideration the most dangerous areas. Frank added that this will essentially be a sorting tool when projects have to be cut. When it comes down to choosing between two competing projects this will enable a more detailed analysis of why one is the better choice. David stated that we assume that the Department does not make things less safe; we try to improve the safety of areas when they are identified. By having a very specific metric we can assign points to projects

which would then allow us to sort projects based on those points. Most likely Delaware's vague criteria definitions would say all of the projects are safety projects.

Secretary Davey said we need to be careful how much we prescribe within the criteria goal area; therefore we should remove the specific goals because they are a little too forward-thinking. This would address Jim's point of concern of the criteria putting less emphasis on the rural areas. The council should aim to keep the language at high-level and use this as a guiding framework for future decision-makers.

Two points were brought to the discussion by Jeff: first there had been no discussion as to whether there would be an initial screen for the projects and secondly there has been no mention of security within the Safety and Security criteria. David thought it would be best to only discuss safety because security is such a small point of discussion when deciding funding between projects. Frank mentioned how security is really integrated into Highway through ITS contracts and that there would rarely be a project identified purely as a "security" project. Secretary Davey said that it would be a good idea to ask Randy or Lorenzo to identify possible criteria for security. He mentioned that a potential project that comes to mind when thinking of security is the need to invest in the ALAR system. The Chief of IT would definitely say we could do more here whether it is improving cameras, parameter fences, etc. The Secretary was not ready to eliminate the security portion of the criteria just yet even though it does not currently appear effectively addressed in those five points listed under Safety and Security criteria. Steve Silveira suggested pulling security out and making it its own criteria area because it is fundamentally different from safety. Jim also suggested possibly making a "special circumstance" criterion for buildings or infrastructure that addresses certain security events or situations.

Sheri mentioned how this was similar to the discussion around E.J. related projects and how a project might not score well but we need to have a compelling process that considers that special circumstance. The Secretary said how we tend to be more reactionary on security. He was still hesitant to drop it from the criteria however and interested in finding a way to develop a compelling case criteria area. Jim said that it was important to not get bogged down with the specific details but rather consider certain circumstances that would make the final decision-making more accurate and transparent.

Linda said security would be a good area to discuss both primary and secondary evacuation routes but make sure to include a preamble that states this is not a competition for points. After Hurricane Irene hit, Franklin County re-evaluated the primary and secondary evacuation routes after witnessing how well they operated during an extreme weather event. John suggested that MassDOT take a closer look at security and report back to the council, since they are inherently working with it closely on a regular basis. The Secretary agreed. Secretary Davey and Sheri will speak with some people related to security and report back while also determining if it would be best to make security its own criteria category or create a special circumstance category. Secretary Davey believed a special circumstance category would be more effective.

Jeff suggested having the criteria language reference back to statutory language found in the legislation from Chapter 46. For example, "MassDOT's goal is as follows..." Sheri agreed.

Mobility and Accessibility

Linda said upon researching on her own time she found other states and regions to have split Mobility and Accessibility into two different criteria areas; however she said the criteria areas were Mobility and Livability. She wondered what made these two goal areas different from one another. The Secretary said the difference really depends on how the two are defined. After attending many conferences and meetings, Secretary Davey believes Massachusetts is leading the way in terms of using health as a conduit to healthy transportation outcomes. The goal area mobility traditionally has been defined as the efficient movement of goods and people, reducing congestion, etc., while mode shift is defined as the accommodation of bicycles and pedestrians, the reduction of GHG emissions, etc. Secretary Davey believes that everything is accounted for within the Mobility and Accessibility criteria it just might be accounted for differently.

John asked a question about the necessity of having a criterion that considers the number of users per mode type, because right now this is not included in the current list. He asked if this needs to be considered when discussing the distribution of funds between the different mode types. Secretary Davey agreed that this need to be considered however he believes that some of the goal areas do state it explicitly. He wants to be careful to not weight the current heavily used mode too much because change is not encouraged that way. This is the idea that, "if we build it they will come..." - if we build more transit infrastructure or invest more funds into the current infrastructure users will be encouraged to shift to that mode type.

The Secretary believes it is less about the mode and more about how people want to efficiently travel. John said this makes sense in urban areas but not so much in rural or suburban areas because of the current infrastructure in place in those regions. It's good to have the goals but we need to question the idea of modal and geographic equity. The council cannot ignore the fact that 80% of users drive cars; this needs consideration. The Secretary believes that the 80/20 split is mainly due to where the funding has traditionally gone in the recent past. It becomes a self-serving statistic if we continue to weight based on today's 80/20 split between vehicles and transit. Frank mentioned the restricted nature of the funding, and how we can't apply FHWA funds to fix a MBTA bridge. With this in mind, discretionary funding is very limited.

John said he noticed as he was driving down the MA Pike how dilapidated it had become, making him realize how critical it is that we get our highways/interstates into a state of good repair. The Secretary did not think the Pike is entirely dilapidated but with that in mind need for funding and repair exists everywhere in the transportation sector. He believes the reason people mainly drive vehicles in Massachusetts is because that's where the policy has driven investment over the past 50 years or so which has inevitably given heavy weight to driving. Essentially what this council is attempting to do is to help create a pathway for future

policymakers to create more transportation choices for the public. The Secretary thinks other mobility choices need to be considered but that does not mean highway funds will be rejected or ignored. It is dangerous to choose or stick to a metric or percentage for the present just because it was the conclusion chosen prior to us.

Following that, Linda stated that she doesn't want more weight to be given automatically to bike and pedestrian projects, leaving bridge and road projects under prioritized. The Secretary disagreed saying what is most important is fixing the existing infrastructure; therefore in his opinion the Preservation goal area could potentially be highly weighted. This discussion really comes back to the issue of limited resources and funding. If and when more resources become available we can have the freedom to look beyond preservation projects to expansion projects and consider the options that exist. Presently there are serious choices to consider especially with the looming question of a gas tax.

Jeff believes that similar to when the Macintosh computer originally came out without a manual, these criteria could also benefit from a guidebook offering more detail on the suggested metrics. It would be helpful for MassDOT to deliver a statement to the council members articulating its objectives with respect to these criteria areas. There are essentially two levels of projects, state and MPO/local. Hearing up-front from the Department on how they prioritize these types of projects and what they base it on would be a great resource for the council when they are traveling on to the MPOs. Jeff also asked Rachel Bain if we can really measure the metrics we are asking for in relation to the criteria. Rachel said currently there is a huge reliance on the statewide model for tons of data sources. Right now it appears that many of these metrics would rely on post-build information gathered from projects which would make determining the data difficult.

Secretary Davey said none of the current listed metrics are beyond what we can handle or measure. What will need to happen is to tell the regions if you want a certain project to be considered you will need to report back to us the data related to these criteria, and you will need to report better than you do now - we will help you do this. All things considered job creation is really the best outcome any project could hope to yield. Certain data we will need to work through together in order to make these criteria useful and in the end this model will not perfect.

Jeff reiterated the importance of having the missing manual; it could really help to inform the council, the public/MPOs and the future decision makers who will implement it. Steve said most people looking at the current list of criteria would not really understand the document. Frank mentioned he thought we would only be showing the public the small paragraphs at the beginning of each criteria and not showing the metrics. The metrics would be listed in the manual where they would be better explained. Jeff disagreed by saying the metrics would be listed for the public while the guidebook would be on its way but not available at the public hearings. Steve agreed with Jeff saying that for valuable discussion to be had, the metrics should be available to the public to read.

David said the end purpose of this is so people can see why their project was selected or not selected which would build transparency into the project selection process. It is a means to sort and distinguish between projects in order to make a more informed decision in the end. Frank added that this is not really an issue of lack of projects; the Department has a huge list of projects that go beyond the TIP. These selection criteria will help to prioritize that huge list of projects. The purpose is also to make the process more transparent, Jim added. It becomes a public relations issue – we need to make this a viable process that will be a data-driven method to achieve goals with the limited resources we have available. Jim said we do not want to make this overly complicated for the public because that would only hinder discussion at the public hearings. The Secretary agreed with David but added that it is mainly about transparency of the selection process. There is no shortage of preservation projects; if we ever find ourselves at a point where we are more resource-rich and can allow higher priority for expansion projects then we will have these criteria to help guide us in the decision-making process, when/if that point in time comes. This will hopefully alleviate the pressure felt when a project conceived 20 years ago arrives at the table and those behind it demand reasoning for why it was not chosen – this selection process provides that transparency.

David said a manual would be useful for the public and while simplicity is important the metrics do need to be published. Secretary Davey added that the general metrics and approaches the council agreed upon will be published. It was his understanding that the document was meant to be a public document distributed at the meetings to generate discussion. Jeff said they need to create a better name for the “missing manual.” Rachel commented how during her planning days there was never readily-available, good quality data. She doesn’t think there will be in the future either unless rules and guidelines are established for data collection at the MPO and local level. The Secretary said if a perfect method existed Massachusetts would have already adopted it however there isn’t one therefore data gaps are inevitable. This becomes a matter of working with what we do have available and making it better. In the Secretary’s opinion, the point of the council is to create criteria that will make it harder for people to make bad decisions in the future. And hopefully, one day when the state is resource-rich the criteria will be there to guide expansion projects. He does not want to become bogged-down in details but rather approach the criteria as guideposts for the future decision-makers.

Linda expressed concern for how specific the criteria appear and how rural areas will not score well if they remain this way. This will undoubtedly raise red flags with the rural communities, therefore the criteria areas should be simplified for the public meetings.

Economic Development

Secretary Davey moved onto the next criteria area, Economic Development, and began the discussion by stating this area was also too specific, the metrics too technical; the detailed language can go into the manual and should be removed from the public document.

Steve suggested that Private/Public Development should be mentioned in the Economic Development goal area. He reasoned it might be very difficult to derive numbers and figures

for economic development for any given project however with PPDU it could potentially be much easier to gather data pertaining to specific metrics. The Secretary agreed with Steve on this point. Jeff stated how respect for local planning, zoning, board of selectman, etc. should be mentioned in the economic development criteria. This would ensure consistency with local planning efforts and perhaps present an opportunity to talk about the Gateway Cities which have been very thematic for the Governor. This would show how we are working together as a commonwealth to better the state. Jeff also said it might be wise to consider MassWorks at this point in the discussion because they most likely have already developed metrics and methods to measure economic development for projects. Linda agreed by saying they do have criteria that would be helpful.

David said when discussing job creation, it's really about "lasting" jobs, vertical rather than horizontal creation. He is unsure how this would be measured for a project; however it is important to realize what exactly is creating the jobs because it might not be transportation related. There should be a burden not just on the government but also on the private company as well to create those jobs. In the past it seems the burden falls heavily on the public entity. Jim offered an example of a private project in the Berkshire County region that wanted public money to fund a road. The MPO did not agree to the funding and said the project needed to find other resources. It eventually did but locals developed a bad taste of the government's stance. Jim stated the council should be wary as they move forward with the economic development criteria because essentially it will be picking "winners and losers." Steve commented that 10,000 jobs cannot just be ignored, there needs to be a way to take this into account when weighting a project. Jeff agreed with David's point that vertical jobs should be the focus here when looking at an industry's development. David said at the beginning of the planning process assumptions are made based on what people are told but then the economy tanks and suddenly those projected jobs disappear. There needs to be way to determine if permanent job creation and development stemmed for a project or not. David believes MassWorks is a good starting place to see what has been done to-date in the state.

Jim asked if the economic development criteria should be made into its own special case goal area. He said politically it would be nice to say all projects drive economic development but it does not seem to be the case for every project. Linda disagreed and said perhaps instead of making it its own category it should just be given less weight compared to preservation or mobility. John agreed with Linda and stated the council should seek current information from MassWorks. Jim stated that the point of the criteria is to ensure the public that what happened with Big Dig, won't happen again. Steve said at no point during the Big Dig process was there a comparison to the bridges across the state that needed funding as well. Jeff added that no one originally imagined how much it would end up costing upon completion. David continued by saying that really wasn't the whole story. The public should have been told the truth which was as the economic engine of New England, Boston, Massachusetts and we couldn't have afforded to not complete it.

Quality of Life

David moved the discussion to the Quality of Life criteria. Linda said that TAZ and level of employment be removed from the list in order to simplify the criteria for the public. Jeff added that we need to define Environmental Justice, Title VI, and Quality of Life because people will not know otherwise and most likely be confused as to whether this means the quality of their own personal lives or the lives of everyone in the state. Steve asked how these would be measured amongst projects. The definition for Environmental Justice and Title VI already exist but there really is no set definition for Quality of Life, therefore is it worthwhile to include it in the criteria area. The suggestion was made to drop Quality of Life down into the Health and Environment goal. Linda said she even considered the possibility of renaming it Social Equity or Environmental Justice and Accessibility. Sheri reiterated Rachel's point that the council needs to ensure these are well defined and very specific.

Jeff commented that he thinks equity needs to have its own goal area because regional equity is defined differently from general equity and fairness. He is unsure how this would be defined or measured. David asked if Jeff suggested adding fairness and equity to the E.J. goal. E.J. has as very narrow focus whereas equity and fairness tend to have broad definitions – this could cause confusion for the public. Sheri also stated that it can be either a benefit or burden to be an environmental justice community, meaning in the context of weighting for a project this could either gain a project points or take them away. She offered the Somerville green line extension project as an example of a burden to a community from an environmental perspective. Linda added that the appropriate language describing E.J. as either a “benefit or burden” needs to be included in the draft.

Jeff commented that regional equity should not be burden with other types of equity and fairness because they are inherently different things. David agreed and stated that regional equity needs to be separate.

Health and Environment

Secretary Davey concluded that conversation on equity and moved to discuss the Health and Environment criteria. Linda spoke first mentioning MARPA would like to explicitly state “climate change” and “GreenDOT” in the draft criteria. The Secretary added how this aligns with Jeff's previous comment regarding the need for MassDOT to deliver a statement explaining exactly what it is they expect from projects in regards to current policies and tasks, like GreenDOT for example.

Jeff added that the Health criteria should also include something about personal health and the impact on the planet. Jeff thought one of the main purposes of these criteria were to get people out of their cars and moving around in different ways. The council needs to state this explicitly in the first sentence. Jim brought up a question regarding bike lanes in rural areas where they don't seem to make sense. The Secretary commented that currently there is a system that takes Jim's point into consideration. If it is not logical to include bike lanes or sidewalks in a project the Secretary will confirm this and sign-off on it. There have been a handful of projects where the Secretary has done this.

Linda said that the same idea previously discussed regarding burden/benefit to a project in terms of E.J. should be considered for the Health criteria as well. The Secretary said he would also like to work-in Health Impact Assessments somewhere in this criteria area. Jeff stated that the Health and Environment criteria would be another great place that the proposed manual would be useful, in terms of listing data for things like storm water, etc. By having the information and data on these types of issues, people will be inspired to think of projects in a different light. The Secretary added to this by saying shining the light on projects allows for more transparency, arming us with facts for reasoning that go into the decision-making process.

Linda said under the Health and Environment criteria we should add resiliency impact of statewide assets under extreme weather conditions. Discussion lead the council to decide System Preservation is a better choice for housing climate adaptation and resiliency.

Regional Equity

Jim asked why the staff decided to break the regions down the way they did; he was not comfortable with these categories because they did not seem well-defined. Where would the 13 MPOs go? Would it make more sense to use MPO districts or Highway districts to outline the regions? Jim thought it would be wise to use regions that people generally understand and recognize. Sheri commented that these groupings were based on earlier WeMove Mass research; they are not currently in-use anywhere else within the agency. Jeff mentioned he would rather not create new regions but instead use already-defined regions with corresponding data. This way new data for new regions does not need to be collected.

The Secretary stated that under the new Transportation Bond Bill a new MPO reform group/council has been formed. They will be doing something similar to this council; therefore with this in mind the Secretary believes this council's objectives have better shot if "regional equity" is defined around existing MPO regions. New "regions" should not be created. Jim agrees that it is logical to define regions around MPO regions however he was concerned this would create confusion for the Highway Districts when trying to coordinate with MPO groups within their jurisdiction. David asked how regional equity is a criteria goal area and what it really means for the project selection process. He wanted to know how it would be determined if a project gets points for regional equity or not. He stated that this goal area be renamed by dropping the "regional" and just naming it "equity." Eventually the council needs to decide on a definition, whether it uses lane miles or population as a means of measurement. In the end, the definition will inevitably favor either rural or urban areas; this will have to be compensated for elsewhere in the process.

Jim expressed concern for the fact that currently there is no system that for determining regional equity in the state therefore the formula that assigns weight will need to give more money to the western portion of Massachusetts. If those regions hope to stay economically viable they simply need more funding. John added there needs to be a way to establish this equity; he suggested reviewing how revenue has contributed to regions (taxes). The Secretary

suggested each region gets a minimum amount of funding then the remainder of the money is distributed based upon the criteria goal areas. This would establish some sense of regional equity within the state. Linda agreed with David's previous comment and thought it best to move regional equity out of the document, and into the manual. She said this would allow protection for the projects in the rural areas by giving them the potential to score higher. The Secretary said there has to be a way to account for the negative equity as well. Steve asked how this would be measured. David commented that for highway spending when the per capita is broken down by lane miles small communities receive a small chunk of money. This does not come across as equal, however when it is derived this way it is equal. That's why highway districts are used because they divide the state into larger areas. The Secretary said the council needs to be provided with how regional equity has been measured and thought of in the past by the agency. This will help the council decide on how to define regional equity as either criterion, metric, guideline or all three. Jim reiterated how critical it is to show state transparency with state funds.

Jeff stated that not everything can be saved for the manual because it needs to be out for the public to see at the hearings. He thought it would be helpful to have a 5-year roll-up of distribution over the districts, not including transit, to show the public as well. He also expressed concern for the seasonal variation in certain parts of the state, for example the Berkshires and the Cape, and how this needs to be shown in the Equity criteria. The Secretary said they have definitely been tactical when it comes to the seasonal question. There is no secret formula right now that helps them address this issue. He stated that the question of regional equity and where it goes is an outstanding question for the council. Jim expressed a concern if the council does not show the public a firm, transparent way to deal with regional equity, then they will not be happy with the council. Secretary Davey said it is important to at least show the public that the council is grappling with how to determine regional equity. The council can create an inventoried list of items that tried to measure regional equity in the past and then get feedback from the public. John suggested that all sources of funding be shown to the public as well along with where the funding goes; this would speak to Jim's transparency point by giving people both the input and output of funding. Jim added to this saying that the council then needs to explain to the public that this is the process and the criteria that are used to determine project selection.

The Secretary suggested that rather than having a presentation, display boards with the CIPs to show the funding sources and allocations across the state. David said the problem with that it by displaying all of the information to the public they will want to talk about all funding when in reality the council is only in charge of capital funding, which will appear to be a very small part of the board. Public attendees would then have the possibility to go on tangents. The Secretary mentioned this was a good point. For the public hearings, there needs to be a marker to put out for the meeting to encourage discussion. For the moment, Secretary Davey is considering regional equity as both a principal and criteria; the council needs to outline a few ways that funds attempted to be distributed regionally in the past for the public to see.

System Preservation

Jeff said the first three bullets need to be cleaned-up because they are slightly confusing. John stated that the metrics appear bus-centric and somewhat redundant. The Secretary commented on this saying buses are the only way to currently compare across the 16 regions. Jeff suggested including Life Cycle Analysis in this section. The Secretary reminded the council that at the end of the day it is the council's objective to provide overall criteria guidelines that say here are the ways to think about establishing performance metrics. It is not the council's job to establish the metrics themselves.

Jeff said by having LCA in this goal area, it would essentially allow them to invest money now to save money down the road over the long-term. Steve said that is important to encourage everyone to collect the relevant, necessary data which would enable decisions to be made based on fact in the future. The Secretary said this would give folks the path to funding sources they need and if they choose not to follow it that's their choice but no one can complain. He hopes the legacy of the council will be one that encourages asset and performance management. Currently the formulas being used are not based on asset condition and ultimately that is what should be talked about. This is an issue presently because the agency does not really know the conditions of their assets (not including bridges).

Jim asked if asset inventorying is something that needs to be pushed with this council with regards to the criteria. He said currently towns are having a hard time with asset inventory. The Secretary said this could be a part of the preamble in the report itself by stating we need better data. The agency will help sometimes and other times it will be more carrot-and-stick approach for data collection.

John said that Preservation should be expanded to include rail and signals, not just buses. The Secretary agreed and said that point is really getting to the state-of-good repair question. Secretary Davey also liked the idea of including LCA into the Preservation criteria.

The discussion moved onto the topic of weighting projects. Linda explained that she looked to Delaware as a great example for what has been done. She compared it to what her MPO region has done as far as measuring. She thought it was interesting that her region is the only region that uses cost effectiveness as a measurement for a project. Sheri asked if percentages should be included on the draft criteria document for the first public hearing meeting. Secretary Davey said in regards to the System Preservation question the public's expectations need to be set in order to generate useful, focused discussion. He recommended taking out the percentages from each criteria area. He also suggested having each council member fill-out the spreadsheet that Linda created, and then send it to Sheri. Sheri can then compile a complete list of suggestions in order for the council to have a private discussion.

Jeff suggested since it really is a small piece of the funding pie, the council should give an introduction to the criteria either in this document or in a separate document that explains the state plan to people in terms of funding, legal commitments, etc. Jim stated the importance of making sure it is transparent no matter what because in the past he has heard complaint from people that it is not transparent enough. He understands that in the end it is about making

hard decisions, but people need to know this and see the process in which the decisions are made. The Secretary stated that the council is not starting from scratch with this process, that the public need to understand this so they are not misled into thinking about funding for new expansion projects but rather keep in mind that preservation projects are at the top of the priority list. The council can do this by explaining what this process is and what it is not in general terms for the public to understand. Secretary Davey said if you can show the public transparency in the decision-making process they become willing to invest more in the needed areas.

3. Public Hearings

The first public hearing meeting has been rescheduled for May 20th in Pittsfield. The council needs to be there at 5:30pm; the public meeting will be held from 5:30 to 7pm. This meeting is happening right after the MPO meeting, allowing MPO members to attend if desired. The Secretary does not want this meeting to turn into a CIP meeting with the MPOs. The following documents need to be ready for the first public hearing meeting: the Preliminary Observations and the Draft Criteria Summary. Following the public hearing on the 20th the council will decide if it's appropriate to have a council meeting thereafter at 7pm.

Secretary Davey said it is not expected that all council members be present to attend all of the public hearing meetings; he would be happy if at least 3 or 4 members were at each meeting.

After the 20th, the next MPO meeting is in Merrimack Valley on June 25th and the next public hearing meeting is on June 23rd. Sheri asked if these meetings are scheduled too close to one another and if the public hearing should once again piggyback the MPO meeting on the 25th. The Secretary said the next public hearing should be on June 25th. He also said to go ahead and send the Haverhill MPO materials in advance of the meeting and tell them to be prepared for discussion. Jim stated that the meeting would be more productive and generate better discussion if there was no PowerPoint presentation presented. The Secretary agreed and said they would see how the first public hearing goes in terms of time for public discussion/comment. It was decided that council members should send a list of the meetings that they will be able to tentatively attend to Sheri. Finally, it was also decided to hold one of the Boston public meetings at the State House on July 17th and broadcast it to the staff. Even if only staff members attend, the council can say they attempted to interact with legislators during the summer session.