



**Meeting  
Notes**

Attendees: Attached

Date/Time: August 12, 2008 2-4PM

Project No.: 10640

Place: CMRPC

Re: Worcester Regional Mobility Study -  
Technical Committee Meeting 1

Notes taken by: JTW

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AGENDA

- Introductions and Project Overview
  - Scope
  - Schedule
  - Draft Study Area
  - Draft Goals, Objectives, Evaluation Criteria
  - Draft Advisory Group Membership and Roles
  - Draft Public Participation Plan
- Open Forum -Discussion of Study Area Refinements
- Future Meeting Dates

INTRODUCTIONS AND PROJECT OVERVIEW

L. Adams (CMRPC) opened the meeting and gave an overview of the importance of this study for the entire region. D. Cooke (VHB) reviewed the agenda and noted that the focus of this meeting was to have the Technical Committee review the study framework (scope, schedule, goals, objectives, evaluation criteria, public participation plan), comment on the recommended makeup of the Advisory Group, and to refine the study area bounds.

D. Cooke reviewed the study tasks and 15-month schedule. Task 3 and 4 comprise the bulk of the work effort. Data collection is anticipated for September when schools are back in session. VHB will distribute a detailed schedule to the group. The study tasks are as follows:

- Task 1: Framework
- Task 2: Assess Existing & Future Conditions
- Task 3: Major Infrastructure Project Identification
- Task 4: Major Infrastructure Project Evaluation
- Task 5: Mobility Enhancement
- Task 6: Final Mobility Plan

The Study Area is a 6.5 mile radius circle centered on Lincoln Square in Worcester and includes Worcester, Auburn, Leicester, West Boylston, Boylston, Millbury, Paxton, Holden, Shrewsbury, and Grafton. A draft Study Area map was distributed. It is important to refine the study area and the specific corridors to study in detail.

J. Wanat (VHB) reviewed prior area studies that have been obtained and reviewed by VHB to ensure that the study makes full use of past efforts. A member of the Technical Committee suggested close coordination with the EOT's Statewide Freight Rail Study.

J. Wanat reviewed the draft goals, objectives, and evaluation criteria that were distributed at the meeting. The Technical Committee will review and provide comments to VHB/CMRPC. A member of the Technical Committee requested that an overarching goal statement be provided. VHB will work with CMRPC to develop an overall goal statement and distribute to the Technical Committee before the next meeting.

The Advisory Group membership and meeting guidance was discussed. A draft list of candidate Advisory Group members (listed by organization) was distributed for consideration.

D. Cooke and J. Mullin (Mullin Associates) reviewed the draft Public Participation Plan and study website under development. The study website is expected to be ready by the next Technical Committee meeting on August 26<sup>th</sup>. VHB will update the website regularly and post meeting notes, slides, and study reports.

#### OPEN FORUM -DISCUSSION OF STUDY AREA REFINEMENTS

The Study Area, and potential refinements were discussed with the following comments from the Technical Committee:

- Need to articulate the rationale for the 6.5 mile circle Study Area;
- Multimodal and public transit aspect of the study will be key, especially given recent rise in gas prices (MBTA ridership has increased by about 7 percent);
- The I-290/I-90 Interchange (Auburn) is critical and should be included in this study; a more efficient alignment of the roads could help improve flow;
- Route 9 through the region is an issue (congestion and lack of continuity to the west of Worcester); lacking mobility and system reliability leads to cut-through traffic on local and neighborhood streets;
- West and northwest quadrants of the Study Area are not well served by existing infrastructure, including the Worcester Regional Airport;
- East-west mobility through Worcester is inadequate; demand is there for improvements regardless of the Worcester Airport demands;
- North-south mobility along I-290 through Worcester is problematic due to the closely spaced on-and off-ramps;
- The study must set achievable expectations and strategically look at future growth areas; growth projections from all municipalities in the Study Area must be considered in addition to close interaction with on-going City/town planning efforts;
- There are many hidden resources throughout the Study Area that could benefit from improved access to the regional transportation system;

- Public transit lines have been rerouted away from critical roads such as Park Avenue (Route 9) due to congestion; a transit signal priority system should be considered; and
- Passenger Commuter Rail service enhancements (reliability and additional trains) are envisioned for the future, but must be balanced with the need for sustained freight rail service on already congested lines.

#### FUTURE MEETING DATES

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 PM. The next TC Meeting was set for August 26<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM at CMRPC. The first Advisory Group meeting is anticipated for September.

**Worcester Regional Mobility Study**  
**Technical Advisory Group Kick-Off**  
**August 12, 2008**  
**2:00 to 4:00 PM CMRPC**

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