



**Meeting
Notes**

Attendees: Attached

Date/Time: September 16, 2008 2-4PM

Project No.: 10640.00

Place: CMRPC

Re: Worcester Regional Mobility Study -
Technical Committee Meeting 3

Notes taken by: JTW

AGENDA

- Review meeting notes, website update
- Finalize study purpose statement, study area/focus areas
- Study Advisory Group
- Finalize goals, objectives, evaluation criteria
- Travel demand model discussion
- Next Steps

REVIEW NOTES FROM AUGUST 26TH TC MEETING, WEBSITE UPDATE

J. Wanat (VHB) opened the meeting, reviewed the agenda and noted that the focus of this meeting was to finalize the study framework (study area, goals, objectives, evaluation criteria) and the recommended makeup of the Advisory Group. The meeting will conclude with a discussion of the regional travel demand model that will be used to forecast traffic demands.

Notes from the August 26th TC Meeting were distributed to the group. Comments should be emailed to D. Cooke (VHB) or J. Wanat. The notes will be posted to the study website in advance of the next TC meeting. The slides from TC Meetings 1 and 2 have been posted to the website also, under "Study Documents". This is the section within the website where all notes, handouts, and reports will be kept. The overarching study goal statement has also been updated on the website (http://www.vhb.com/worcestermobility_draft/).

FINALIZE STUDY PURPOSE STATEMENT, STUDY AREA/FOCUS AREAS

The updated study purpose statement was reviewed (Improve the movement of people and goods through the urban core of Central Massachusetts). The study goal statements will be used to provide specificity. The revised study area boundary was presented, along with the methodology used for determining this boundary. The boundary was determined by overlaying maps of population, road networks (key including intersections), and potential project areas. The map of the focus areas should be revised into an "issues and opportunities" map to better illustrate where the study will

focus. It was suggested that a volume-to-capacity map showing issue areas quantitatively be prepared for the next meeting using the regional travel demand model. This will likely include other roads such as Cambridge Street and Park Avenue that are not already annotated on the focus area map.

STUDY ADVISORY GROUP

Since the last TC meeting, VHB has started to contact potential Advisory Group members. This effort will be complete in the next week. Many towns are interested in membership and requested additional time to identify the right person. For this reason, the Advisory Group meeting that was initially discussed for September 30th will have to be rescheduled to mid-October so that selected members will have enough advance notice. The advisory group membership is currently about 50 seats, 11 seats overlap with the Technical Committee, envisioned as follows:

- Representatives from the Towns in the Study Area (13 seats)
- Federal and State Transportation Agencies (7 seats)
- Business and Higher Education Interests (8 seats)
- Representatives from Legislative offices or designees (14 seats)
- Pedestrian and Bikeway (1 seat)
- Transit (2 seats)
- Community Groups (1 seat)
- Rail and Freight Interests (4 seats)
- Environmental Interests (1 seat)

The final number of Advisory Group members and names will be available for the next TC meeting.

FINALIZE GOALS, OBJECTIVES, EVALUATION CRITERIA

The draft goals, objectives, and criteria were reviewed. The following comments were made:

- Revise the 1st goal from "Improve overall mobility and traffic flow throughout the study area, including interstates, key arterials and significant local streets" to "Reduce congestion";
- Add a goal related to the development of an Operations and Maintenance Plan;
- Simplify the 2nd goal to "Improve safety";
- Revisit the evaluation criteria for the goals based on the model's capabilities, trying to keep the evaluation as quantitative as possible (qualitative criteria will still be considered).
- Simplify 3rd goal to "Improve transportation choice"
- Revise 4th goal from "Meet transportation goals while supporting economic development and that minimizing impacts to the environment and quality of life for area communities" to "Develop environmentally solutions"; mention schools, open space, anti-sprawl, smart growth under objectives;
- Revise 5th goal from "Develop a range of project-specific recommendations that can be implemented efficiently and that have long-term benefits to 2030" to "Develop a range of project-specific recommendations for priority areas that have long-term benefits";
- Simplify 8th goal to "Develop transportation strategies that support economic development"; and
- Eliminate the last goal "Identify and develop a minimum of two Group One Projects to the level of design development necessary to move these projects forward in the RTP/TIP" because this is a study task.

TRAVEL DEMAND MODEL DISCUSSION

Ed Bromage, CMRPC's travel demand modeler, provided an overview of the model's capabilities for this study:

- The road network is represented in the model as a series of links and nodes within traffic analysis zones (TAZs); this type of regional study is a good application of the model, given its regional basis;
- The model has a 2030 forecast year; the forecast is based on population and employment changes within each TAZ;
- The model can be used to provide congested streets (volume/capacity maps), vehicle-miles traveled, vehicle-hours traveled, speeds, turning conflicts, travel times, and mode share (auto, transit, walk/bike);
- Transit trips must begin and end in the model area to be included; thus changes in commuter rail ridership cannot be modeled;

CMRPC prepared maps showing changed in population and employment for each town in the study area. CMRPC will outreach with each town to validate the growth projection to 2030, make adjustments (if needed), and thus calibrate the forecast.

NEXT STEPS

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 PM. The next TC Meeting was proposed for October 14th from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM at CMRPC. The first Advisory Group meeting was proposed for October 16th from 2:00 to 4:00 PM.

After the TC meeting, a schedule conflict with October 16th resulted in a revised meeting schedule, as follows:

- The 4th TC meeting was rescheduled to Tuesday, October 7th from 10-12 PM at CMRPC (Union Station); and
- The 1st Advisory Group meeting was rescheduled to Tuesday, October 14th from 2:00 to 4:00 at CMRPC.

CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Meeting Sign In Form



DATE: 09/16/08 MEETING: WRMS TECHNICAL COMMITTEE - 3

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