Task Force Meeting Summary
I-90 Allston Multimodal Project

DATE: April 16, 2025
HSH PROJECT NO.: 2021055.08
PANELISTS: Anthony DeDominicis (MBTA)
Beth Larkin (TY Lin)
David Andrews (BRR)
Jay Maddox (MBTA)
John Weston (MassDOT)
Laura Gilmore (MBTA)
Luisa Paiewonsky (MassDOT)
Mark Fobert (Tetra Tech)
Marty Milkovits (CTPS)
Mike Hall (Tetra Tech)
Rose McCarron (CTPS)
Susan Harrington (MassDOT)

Overview

On Wednesday, April 16, 2025, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) convened a hybrid (in-person and virtual) meeting of the I-90 Allston Multimodal Project Task Force. There were 122 virtual registrants. The meeting covered the following topics:

- Welcome/ Introductions
- Multimodal Local Street Network
  - CTPS Modeling Update
  - Street Layout
- Shoreline and Parkland
- Follow-Up
- Next Steps

Meeting Summary

Welcome and Introductions

- MassDOT Director of Megaprojects Delivery, Luisa Paiewonsky (Paiewonsky), welcomed virtual and in-person attendees to the meeting and reviewed the agenda.
- The Task Force meeting was facilitated by Beth Larkin (Larkin), of TYLin. She began with a brief safety minute and restated her role. As Task Force Facilitator her involvement is largely centered on the monthly Task Force meetings and to make sure that the task force continues to be actively engaged and that all voices are heard, acknowledged and considered throughout the project. Ultimately, the goal is to come to a mutual understanding, acceptance and support for the project as it gets advanced through the environmental approval process.
- Regarding the meeting agenda, based on Task Force feedback after the March Task Force meeting:
  - A General Update was sent to Task Force members in advance of this meeting so that there would be more time for discussion of meeting topics, and
  - Presentation and discussion regarding the Grand Junction Rail temporary outage will be part of a future Task Force meeting when there is more to discuss.

Multimodal Local Street Network

CTPS MODELING UPDATE

- **Rose McCarron (McCarron), CTPS,** project manager for the demand modeling work for the Allston Multimodal Project, discussed what the travel demand model is, its role in the development of the Allston project, and the results of the demand modeling effort.
- McCarron described how the current model, TDM23, was developed in 2023 by the Boston Region MPO for Destination 2050, a long-range transportation plan (LRTP).
- The models are updated every 4 years. TDM23 is a significant departure from the last model, TDM19, specifically, TDM23 utilizes:
  - 2050 horizon year (instead of 2040).
  - Updated transportation conditions and service plans (GLX, bus network design, etc.).
  - Most recent socioeconomic forecasts.
- Three scenarios were modeled:
  - Base year (2019): Existing conditions in 2019

  - No build (2050): Projects 2050 land use and transportation networks without the project and associated development.
  - Build (2050): Projected 2050 land use and transportation networks with the project and associated development.
    - Modeled for two different roadway configurations: 3L and 3 Bridge.
- Inputs included:
  - Roadway network
    - Travel lanes, roadway capacity, and anticipated free flow speed
  - Transit
    - No build: 30-minute headways on Framingham-Worcester Commuter Rail Line; Bus network redesign service plan.
    - Build: In addition, added service to West Station on the Framingham local; three new shuttles with connections between West Station and other key transit stops and employment centers; reroutes MBTA Route 64 to West Station.
    - Other inputs include transit routes, stops, frequency, schedule pattern, and fares.
  - Study area land use (estimates for household, population, and job growth):
    - Estimates robust growth in all three areas from no build to build model.
    - No build: Harvard's renovated athletic facilities; Enterprise Research Campus.
    - Build: In addition, proposed Allston Landing development.
- Outputs addressed:
  - Change in land use and daily trips
    - The number of households and jobs influence how many trips are generated, so the model estimates a large increase in travel activity by all modes between no build and build.
    - Estimated growth in auto trips happens at a slower rate than between base and no build.
    - The number of transit trips in the study area grow faster.
    - Walk trips grow at a faster rate than auto trips.
  - Study area mode share
    - Though the estimated number of auto trips increases with each scenario, the proportion of trips that are made by auto goes down, particularly between the base and no build models.

    - Increases in transit and walk mode share, particularly between the base and no build models.
  - Transit ridership
    - Estimated 1200 daily boardings at West Station resulting from the 30-minute headway service.
    - Estimated 19,800 daily boardings on new shuttle routes.
  - Roadway volumes
    - Largest increase on I-90 between base and no build models.
    - Largest traffic increase is seen on the on- and off-ramps between the no build and build models.

STREET LAYOUT

- **Mike Hall (Hall), Tetra Tech**, described the post-processing of modeling results which are then used as a basis for concept design.
- **Matthew Petersen (Petersen), City of Boston** and co-chair of the Multimodal Local Street Network Working Group, described the City's role in providing operational flexibility, such as a willingness to accept things such as left turn restrictions and slightly longer queues during some times of day if that meant the roadway cross section could be reduced to reflect the overwhelming preferences heard from the working group. Petersen emphasized that there is still work to be done as this is still concept design and added that the City is pretty happy with the progress that was made by the Working Group.
- Hall continued by describing how the project team analyzed travel paths and desire lines to determine the corridors with the heaviest vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycling demands for each of the three interchange options (3L, 3L Modified and 3-Bridge). These were shared with the Multimodal Local Street Network Working Group (WG) to collect feedback that was used to refine interchange designs. Concept plan development focused on pedestrian and bicycle facilities, signal operations (to address pedestrian and bicycle safety), transit (including exclusive bus lanes and intersection/signal treatments), and roadways (starting with minimal roadway cross-sections, strategic use of left turn restriction and added lanes if needed to prevent gridlock or queueing onto the I-90 mainline).
- Hall presented concept plans for the multimodal local street network for each of the three interchange options.

3L INTERCHANGE OPTION

Eastbound (EB) ramp is elevated and connects to Seattle Drive and Cattle Drive. The westbound (WB) ramps connect to Stadium Way, Lincoln Street, and East Drive. This design significantly reduces the footprint of the interchange and distributes traffic more evenly across intersections.

3L MODIFIED INTERCHANGE OPTION

The difference with the 3L Interchange Option is the EB ramp system. The EB off-ramp splits into two separate sections: an elevated ramp that connects to Seattle Street at a T-type intersection, and an at-grade ramp that travels under Seattle Street and then elevates to intersect with Cattle Drive. The EB on-ramp access from Seattle Street is removed to eliminate conflicts between pedestrians and bicyclists traveling between West Station and Cambridge Street South and the EB ramp traffic.

3 BRIDGE INTERCHANGE OPTION

The EB ramp system passes underneath Seattle Street and then elevates to intersect with Cattle Drive, where drivers can connect onto East Drive via a third bridge structure. There is no WB ramp connection to East Drive. The West Connector provides a third connection point to the WB on-ramp system. Cattle Drive does not connect to the West Station bus concourse or West Station Way. This option eliminates all conflicts between the EB ramps and West Station-related activities (pedestrian, bicycle, buses, drop/off-pick-up).

- Hall described how the project team updated key locations based on the results of the analysis. The new intersections varied between each interchange model and improvements were achieved in terms of lane reductions at a number of locations. A few key examples presented included:
  - The intersection of Cambridge Street, North Harvard Street, and Cambridge Street South
  - The intersection of Cambridge Street South and Seattle Street Connector
  - The intersection of Cambridge Street South and Cattle Drive Connector
- **Chris Osgood (Osgood), City of Boston** added that they had heard over and over again that local roads should feel like local roads, that the roadway cross section should be minimized, and the local roads should be vibrant in nature and green in design. He stated that progress has been made towards this, but that there's still an opportunity for further alterations so that the local roads help reconnect Allston. The City is appreciative of the effort so far and remains a partner in thinking about operational changes that can continue to be made to allow the City to meet the expectations of the Task Force.

DISCUSSION

- **Jessica Robertson (Robertson), Allston Community Representative** conveyed that the community considers Cambridge Street as it is today as "too big and scary," and emphasized that multiple people have died walking and riding bikes on Cambridge Street. She noted that Cambridge Street as shown on the image, does not appear to have any fewer

lanes than it has today, even though there are other proposed parallel streets. Roberston asked whether further improvements could be made on Cambridge Street. Hall replied that the project team worked hard to reduce the cross-section. This is a critical arterial that connects Allston, Brighton and Brookline with Cambridge and Somerville via the Charles River bridges, and because of this traffic demands on Cambridge Street are high. Cross-sections that are less than what has been proposed would result in gridlock throughout the street network and queues that spill onto the highway. The design is based on a data driven process and that the projected volumes on the road are what informs the design. He also described the role of Cambridge Street in the bigger network and how it is a vital artery that connects Allston, Brighton and Brookline with Cambridge and Somerville. Hall did reiterate that these are still concept level plans and that there's still time for changes, but that the design is still driven by projected volumes.

- Robertson asked what the inputs into the CTPS model were for the Beacon Yards build out. McCarron stated that there is about 2,600 spaces assumed for the Beacon Park Yard development and that the model was estimating that the number of vehicle trips could be supported by that amount of parking.
- Robertson suggested there be a model that has less parking, consistent with city climate change and budget goals that are geared towards providing less parking and more transit to disincentivize driving. McCarron noted that parking cost influenced demand also and that constrained parking would influence the model results. CTPS has done some sensitivity analysis on the parking and they did see that increasing the parking cost by about 150% would reduce the peak parking demand by about 45%. The proposed parking numbers were provided by the Beacon Park Yards (BPY) proposed development.
- Osgood suggested it would be a good idea to conduct a sensitivity analysis on how changing inputs affect parking demand (number of parking spaces or price of parking) affects the analysis to help understand policy choices and mobility options associated with the designs.
- **Bill Deignan (Deignan), City of Cambridge** reiterated the importance of re-looking at the parking assumptions, especially if they're affecting the design of the local street network.
- **Seth Gadbois (Gadbois), Conservation Law Foundation** questioned the CTPS daily study area trips by mode and asked how the general goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled has been factored into the design. Hall stated that they worked with the information from the model, did post processing, and worked to minimize the roadway network, while providing a level of operations that did not impact the highway. McCarron pointed out that, as shown on the Study Area Lane Use slide, there is a tremendous amount of land use being developed in the area and that is driving a lot of the growth and the travel demand model builds off the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). McCarron added that CTPS is

currently updating their LRTP and welcomed participation in the process that updates the vision for the future transportation landscape. The model will be updated in concert with the LRTP.

- Petersen pointed out that half of the trains will be stopping at West Station. This assumption is driven by the fact that today, there is a one-seat ride from Worcester to this area. In the future, there will be a two-seat ride with a transfer to Framingham. This means anyone who is further west is going to have a worse trip than they do today, which maybe explains why the estimate of 1,200 boardings at West Station is less than the 1,266 boardings that we see today at Boston Landing. This also helps explain the additional estimated car trips. The COB thinks the direction of planning about the rail should be towards a future where we future-proof for more trains stopping at West Station, and for more one-seat rides to West Station and to Kendall Square.
- Gadbois conveyed that there is still a lingering question about how the modeling fits into the design hourly volume of I-90 and how that is reflected in the throat area.
- **Stacy Thompson (Thompson), Livable Streets Alliance**, asked whether prior feedback provided by the Task Force was given to CTPS to improve the model. Input such as running more than 30-minute intervals of commuter rail services and increased bus service. Paiewonsky responded that MassDOT defers to the MBTA regarding service plans, but that she has not heard that the MBTA intends on increasing the service beyond the 30-minute intervals. Paiewonsky also reiterated that land uses are driving a lot of these trips that are causing concern.
- **Councilor Liz Breaden (Breadon), Boston City Council,** emphasized concerns about the transit projections. She noted that when Boston Landing opened, it matched its target for ridership in about a quarter of the time that was estimated. She added that if we improve our bus and high-frequency rail service, that takes away the needs for people to commute in cars on the highway. She also mentioned that in the immediate area in Allston and Brighton an inventory was done of the parking either in the process of being constructed of in the pipeline and that amounted to approx. 14,000 additional parking spaces, so there are a lot of other parking, apart from BPY that is going to drive traffic as well, emphasizing the need to put intentionality into thinking about transit.
- **Laura Gilmore (Gilmore), MBTA,** stated that from the MBTA's perspective, they want to see robust transit service to the area and at the next Task Force meeting, they will talk more about some of the transit infrastructure that supports the improvements that they want to make, as well as provide more detail about the projected service levels in the future. She also noted that in addition to the planned commuter rail service, what is built into the modelling is a fairly robust shuttle service, and that bus planning is flexible.

- Larkin requested that anyone participating remotely who had a question that there wasn't time to ask to please write it in the meeting chat and that for anyone in the room to please write down any questions that there wasn't time to answer and to give to her at the end of the meeting so that they can be captured in the meeting notes.

Shoreline and Parkland

- **Mark Fobert (Fobert), Tetra Tech**, discussed how the design was developed during the Throat Area/Charles River Working Group meetings and highlighted the following regarding the riverbank:
- The river has State wetland resource areas, Land Under Water below elevation 0, Inland Bank between elevations 0 and 2, and Bordering Land Subject to Flooding (BLSF) located between elevation 2-3.5.
- Flood storage will be created on the park area between elevations 2 and 3.5. Any fill within BLSF in the throat will require mitigation.
- The riverbank itself is stable. There are no vegetated wetlands, jurisdictional for either state or Federal, located along the river, and most of it is false indigo bush, which is an invasive species.
  - There are about 15 stormwater outfalls that discharge into the river along the throat area, which is all untreated stormwater.
- Fobert then reviewed the at-grade throat area highway and rail cross-section reduction measures to date which allows the roadway infrastructure to be located outside of the river and the only fill in the river will be for parkland improvements. Approx. 37,000 SF of fill is required for park and/or shoreline improvements. There's also approx. 9,000 CY of dredging. From a navigation perspective, on the west end of the throat area there is an approximately 20-foot reduction in the navigable width of the river (from about 536' to 516') and on the east end of the throat area there is an approximately 30-foot reduction in the navigable width of the river (from 545' to 515').
- **Dave Andrews (Andrews), Brown, Richardson + Rowe,** discussed the shoreline plan through the throat area. He reviewed the option developed by A Better City that reflected a culmination of different ideas discussed as part of the Working Group. He then presented the plan of the preferred option for the throat area, developed subsequent to the Working Group meetings, which address the different opinions, ideas and contributions that came out of the Working Group meetings. The plan shows 1500 linear feet along the shoreline with a typical width of 40' consisting of a planted shoreline, a separated pedestrian and bicycle path and a landscaped buffer at the edge of Soldiers Field Road. Andrews pointed out that there is a short segment at the west end of the throat area that requires a retaining wall at the

transition to the parkland, with no wall in the river. He also noted that the eastern end of the throat area merges into a shared path before going under the Grand Junction and BU Bridges.

PARKLAND

- Andrews first discussed two different park options that had been previously presented. Each had a central or circle lawn that was intended to gather the different transportation modes and create a central viewing spot. There were some secondary lawn areas and above ground storage for stormwater. Concerns regarding conflicts of bike paths and pedestrians were not resolved well in these plans and could be improved upon to create a more comprehensive, cohesive park design that also simplified maintenance.
- Andrews then presented plans of the Parkland preferred option. Andrews highlighted the central lawn with shade structures and river's edge walk, the bicycle and pedestrian paths separated intersections, and a variety of viewing and accessible seating areas. He noted that at the bend in the river the grades were kept higher to provide long distance views of the river. He also described that a 14' wide bicycle path would be maintained with an, 8' wide tree lined pedestrian path, widened to 10' at the central lawn area, along the rivers edge.

DISCUSSION

- **Kane Larin (Larin), Charles River Alliance of Boaters,** asked to hear more about the proposed dredging. Fobert described how the dredging would be done behind a proposed sheet pile wall and that in its final condition the sheet pile wall would be cut off at elevation 0. He added that the dredging will basically be done in the dry to keep the sediments from being disturbed and flowing into the river. Fobert added that there would be a silt boom in place while the sheet pile wall is installed**.**
- Larin commented that overall this design is a huge improvement from where the shoreline started. Larin also noted it was great to see vegetation along the river edge and the sheet pile wall below the low watermark affording a safer egress if you go in the water.
- Larin indicated some concern regarding infiltration since it isn't clear where the water would infiltrate, leading to concerns about water running into the river. Fobert responded that the shoreline between the path and river will flow into the river, but the runoff from the paths are sloped inward towards a drainage structure that runs down the middle between the two paths.
- **Fred Yalouris, Community Representative**, commented that the plan presented is such an improvement. He also asked to hear more about the outfalls into the river. Fobert responded that there are currently 12 outfalls in the throat section of the river and that right now the water collected in the catch basins that tie into the outfalls are not treated. He

stated the project will meet stormwater standards required to get the wetlands permit. Stormwater will be collected and some of it will be directed basins below the parkland and treated before discharging to the river. Existing outfalls will be combined resulting in a great reduction in the number of outfalls along this section of the river. Fobert added that the treatment will be similar to the work that is going at Magazine Beach on the Cambridge side of the river assume that project complied with state stormwater standards.

- **Brendan Kearney, WalkMassachusetts,** commented that this design is very responsive to feedback from the Working Group and that he especially liked the separated paths.
- **Max Rome (Rome), Charles River Watershed Association,** stressed the importance of the riparian corridor, the area around rivers, for the ecology and habitat within the river and that the first 35 to 200 feet of a river has a huge effect on organisms that can thrive and survive in the river. CRWA would like to see the project move towards an ecological parkland space, planning for functional meadows. Rome added that the river's edge should have a gradual transition from land to water that supports vegetation and that the proposed design is compatible with that, but not yet reflected in the design.
- Rome followed up with a question about what the mitigation requirements are for the impacted river corridor. Fobert responded that there would be improvements to the bank all along the river, and although the project will impact the throat area, what will be put back along the river is better than what is there today. Fobert added that there is an opportunity to soften the slope from a 1:1 or 1:2 slope to a 1:5 slope along the parkland to improve vegetation and create flood storage. Regarding fill in the river, Fobert noted that the Army Corps of Engineers, as part of the permitting process usually do a fee in lieu of mitigation on a project like this. MassDOT would pay into the in lieu fee program run by Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game (DFG)
- **David Loutzenheiser (Loutzenheiser), Metropolitan Area Planning Council,** asked if MassDOT can look at travel lane reductions of two to four lanes and what TDM measures could be done in terms of increased transit service to accommodate the lane reductions. Loutzenheiser added that a lane reduction would reduce project cost and avoid the need to fill along the reivers edge. Hall responded that the project team looked at this for the 2022 NPC and again with the new 2050 projections – the conclusions are the same. Any lane reduction on I-90s would result in multiple hours of congestion on I-90, beyond just during peak hours. The volumes would exceed the highway's capacity. Hall added that it's important to remember that this isn't just a convenience factor – congestion on the highway affects emergency vehicle response times as well and that this is the primary evacuation route from the city to areas west. Reducing lanes would permanently restrict the capacity of the highway to process vehicles out of the city should an evacuation order be issued. Lane

reductions on SFR would also result in multiple hours of congestion as well. Even looking at existing volumes, there would be 7 to 10 hours of congestion per day on SFR if the number of lanes were reduced

- Thompson clarified that the question being asked is whether MassDOT took additional step to determine how much more transit, or other mitigation measures that could be taken in order to accommodate a lane reduction. Paiewonsky responded that based on the traffic demand, current and future, MassDOT is not contemplating reducing lanes on an interstate highway that also serves as a major evacuation route. Artificially constraining a highway or any other infrastructure as a means of forcing congestion that would, in turn, force people to take transit is not the way we try to expand the choices available. Paiewonsky noted that this project we have a number of transit opportunities, but it isn't infrastructure that drives demand. Land use drives demand and trying to force infrastructure to squeeze itself down as a means of reducing demand typically just pushes that demand elsewhere instead of actually reducing it.
- Robertson stated that infrastructure also drives choices, highlighting if there's no highway, no one can drive on the highway and if people want to take a train but we don't have a train, then they can't take a train. She added that infrastructure does change your transportation choices and that design decisions we make do affect transportation choices. Paiewonsky reiterated that land use is the primary driver.
- Gadbois commented that emergencies could happen during the construction period when I-90 is six lanes. He added that he thinks this is going to be a bigger problem than the project team is anticipating, and a lot of it comes back to the lane issue. Although he did want to recognize the progress that had been made.
- Salvucci agreed that these designs have made a lot of progress and that that is really important. Salvucci also agreed that it's important to think about the condition during construction when the turnpike will be six lanes, not eight. He stated the need to consider this both in terms of the highway and the GJ closure. It's going to be difficult going from eight to six lanes during construction, so a decent rail option could encourage a mode shift. Also from a modelling perspective, if we want more people to travel via rail, we should have every train stop at West Station. Salvucci stressed that both the physical construction and the modeling have to look at the period during construction.
- In the interest of time, Larkin requested that anyone participating remotely who had a question that there wasn't time to ask to please write it in the meeting chat and that for anyone in the room to please write down any questions that there wasn't time to answer and to give to her at the end of the meeting so that they can be captured in the meeting notes.

Follow-Up

LAYOVER ANALYSIS

- **John Weston, MassDOT Rail and Transit** provided responses to questions asked during the last Task Force meeting and described how they can generally fall into two categories: questions about layover needs and questions about layover alternatives.
- Weston noted that the last time a layover analysis was done for the Boston area was in 2013 to support the South Station Expansion Project. Since then, there have been a lot of plans for growth. So, the question is, is there still a need for that same level of layover as in 2013?
- Weston summarized Layover needs as follows:
  - Amtrak's Southampton Yard Facility is made up of layover tracks, maintenance tracks, and maintenance facilities. Amtrak is currently making improvements to the maintenance facilities, which takes up some of the layover tracks. There will be 17 tracks when the work is done, a combination of layover tracks and maintenance tracks.
  - System balance of inner-core vs outlying locations.
  - As service expands to be more bi-directional, there will need to be a more even balance of layover track locations. Currently, 28% of layover space in the inner-core.
  - MBTA layover needs for "spares."
  - Currently, the MBTA has a 7% spare ratio. The industry average is usually in the 18%-20% range. These spare trains need to be stored somewhere.
  - Addressing existing layover deficits.
  - Currently, addressed by shuffling trains between stations with layover space, which isn't optimal.
  - Yard ownership/operations/maintenance.
  - Amtrak owns the Southampton facility.
  - BPY's facility will be owned by whoever operates and maintains the railroad there, which isn't the MBTA. It will likely be Keolis or Amtrak.
- Layover alternatives:
  - Weston stated that it's not feasible to use Springfield as a layover site.
  - There are security concerns with using South Station as a layover site. Also, a big concern for the MBTA is that trains are actually services at layover sites, it's not just parking. This isn't really feasible at South Station.
- **Anthony DeDominicis, Senior Director from MBTA Operations,** added that while MBTA and Amtrak trains do layover at South Station, it's suboptimal and unsustainable for a variety of reasons, including the need for the tracks to be clear for early morning trains and

limiting operational flexibility. Station platforms are also more open to the public which presents potential safety and security concerns. DeDominicis noted that stations are not designed to function as secure storage facilities, whereas layover facilities are design for overnight storage with electrical hookups, cleaning, waste disposal and access for maintenance crews.

- Due to the meeting ending at 8 o'clock, Larkin suggested that the remainder of the layover responses be provided to the Task Force in writing as a general update and that the MBTA portion of the presentation, which are the last slides of the presentation, be deferred to the next meeting.

FINAL COMMENTS

- Paiewonsky thanked everyone for their constructive engagement on the topics presented and emphasized that they heard loud and clear the desire for more transit alternatives, rail alternatives and reducing demand on the roads. And while there might not be agreement on what drives demand, whether it's the infrastructure itself or land use driven, the community has clearly communicated it desire for more transit service. Paiewonsky noted that rail and transit service also required the supporting infrastructure to make it all work. Paiewonsky added that what really drives demand to transit and rail is safe, reliable and frequent service and that the MBTA, MassDOT Rail and Transit, Amtrak and others are working hard to provide that.
- Paiewonsky relayed that, consistent with the plan outlined by Secretary Tibbetts-Nutt in her November 2024 memo, the draft environmental documents will include four layover tracks. However, consistent with the concept design shown at the March Task Force meeting, the draft environmental documents will describe how if MassDOT is able to find a location in Boston for two of the layover tracks, then only two layover tracks would be proposed in Beacon Park Yard. In addition, MassDOT is further committing to not building the layover tracks until certain thresholds are met. Paiewonsky added that MassDOT is continuing discussions with the City of Boston to see if there are other locations that might work for accommodating layover.
- Thompson commented that the majority of the Task Force would like to work with the MBTA and that they appreciate the MBTA being a part of these meetings. She shared that there is interest in taking about the transit that is needed, because it is the understanding of the majority of Task Force members that the transit that is currently modeled is not sufficient for the needs based on the land use.
- Robertson added that many Task Force members have a hard time believing the transit results that were presented, and requested to see the mode share that is assumed for all of the land uses that are projected in 2050 and how they compare to other similarly dense areas

that exist today, like Kendall Square and the Seaport. Robertson noted that the projected 2050 West Station ridership is going to be the same as the number of people that currently ride the train from Boston Landing. Marty Milkovits, Director of Policy and Planning with CTPS, responded that it is not just the mode share, but also what's behind the mode share that's important. Milkovits added that for the study area it's not just West Station, but also the shuttles which are incredibly frequent with 5-minute headways versus 30-minute intervals on the commuter rail. Milkovits noted that the model has more to say than just the output number and that there is an opportunity to leverage the model to help build an understanding of where the outputs are coming from.

Next Steps

- Larkin summarized follow up items: CTPS sensitivity analysis of the model relative to parking prices, how Cambridge Street functions within the overall street network, mode share for land uses, and layover responses in a written update.
- Larkin asked Task Force members to reach out to her directly with any feedback or input on future Task Force meeting topics.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS RECEIVED AT THE MEETING AND SUBSEQUENT RESPONSES

- **Sam Finston**: To what extent have the new transit options been evaluated? 30-minute commuter rail headway is a great improvement, but still not on par with key bus routes or rapid transit. The 64, 66, and 70 routes that pass nearby can already be unreliable. It's also not clear to me what form the shuttles will take, when they will begin service with relation to the rest of the project, and whether they are definitely or only maybe happening.

  I hope to see this project help the dire transit issues in Allston, where a large population is concentrated around the intersection of Harvard and Cambridge, which has a historic station and is inconveniently between Boston Landing and West station.

- One last question: Do we know for sure that rail passenger service will be activated into Cambridge via the grand junction ROW? Did this proposed service play a part in the models?
  - This project will provide infrastructure, designed as not to preclude future rail service on the Grand Junction line to a new West Station, although a proposed passenger service pattern is not modeled as part of this project's scope.
- **Bill Deignan**: Did Harvard supply the parking numbers?

  - Response: Please see CTPS response to 'Parking Sensitivity' included with the I-90 Allston Multimodal Project Task Force Meeting General Update dated May 15, 2025.

- **Ethan Rosman**: Why do we design models to avoid gridlock and backup on the highway? We have gridlock all over Allston already. As a current Allston resident, local gridlock is the reason I walk and cycle to my destinations during commuting hours. Backup onto I-90 at the Newton and Allston exits are the reason I cycle and ride the commuter train to work in Natick. Please include induced demand in your models. There will always be traffic.
- Response: The roadway networks were developed to accommodate the projected future traffic demands and minimize gridlock conditions in order to prevent traffic from "cutting-through" local neighborhood streets in an attempt to circumvent traffic congestion. The CTPS modeling forecasts included traffic growth at a regional level as well as traffic increases associated with the anticipated development within the local Allston study area.
- **Christine Liu**: Echoing sentiments of Councilor Breadon, Stacy, Jessica, Seth, Matthew, etc. We challenge the project team to be aspirational in the outcome of this project. Build for the future we want to see. The Long-Range Transportation Plan should incorporate future targets/goals of other MA climate and resilience goals, e.g. decreasing carbon emissions, increasing biodiversity, modal shift, etc. The Charles River Conservancy is always open for discussion on ways to incorporate these factors into the model. We are also very interested in understanding how to better incentivize modal shift to encourage transit ridership and prioritize the safety of cyclists and pedestrians on streets. Thank you.

  Thank you for the updated parkland design considerations. To reiterate and support the comments by Max Rome / CRWA, how we consider and protect the riparian corridor is important not only for meeting the state's biodiversity and climate goals, but overall sustainability and health of the native wildlife and vegetation (plus clean water and air for humans, too). The Charles River Conservancy invites the design team to consult with us and other environmental advocates on updated parkland design progress and decisions to ensure we mitigate risks to river health. Thank you.

- **John Allen**: The improvement to the path along the river is great, but there was a lot of discussion years ago about a People's Pike -- a truly separate path with grade separations, extending from the Charles River to Lincoln Street. The current plan includes bikeways in sidewalk space, requiring separate signal phases at intersections, making for lots of delay and risk of signal noncompliance, also unsuitable for the higher speeds of e-bikes. Bicyclists crossing intersections opposite the direction of traffic have a crash rate about 5 times as high as those with traffic. Why not have combined bus-bike lanes and some streets designated as slow streets with mixed traffic?

- Response: Separated bicycle facilities will be provided on all streets within the proposed network, including a two-way bicycle facility along the north side of Cambridge Street South between Cambridge Street/North Harvard Street and the Charles River Reservation, which will be separated from the sidewalks. Exclusive bicycle phases will be provided at the signals along Cambridge Street South to avoid bicycle/vehicular conflicts at the street crossings. Separate crossing zones for bicyclists will also be provided at these crossings to avoid conflicts with pedestrians. Along the Seattle Street corridor, separated bicycle facilities will be in both directions in addition to the exclusive bus lanes.
- **Sam Finston**: How can I stay updated on future task force meetings and project updates? I found out about this meeting today by chance in an article.
  - MassDOT will be hosting monthly Task Force meetings which will be posted to the MassDOT Events page
- A community member suggested reducing the number of proposed travel lanes on I-90 to three lanes in each direction and then working backwards to see what would need to be done to make it work as opposed to saying it is not possible to make three lanes in each direction work. What would it take to make is possible to go to three lanes in each direction.
- Response: The analysis for potentially reducing the number of lanes on I-90 that was conducted for the 2022 NPC was updated with the latest CTPS volume forecasts, and the results/conclusions did not change from the NPC analysis. If the number of lanes were reduced there would be unacceptable impacts for I-90 users. See response to David Loutzenheiser's comment for more details.