



Meeting Summary

Allston Multimodal Transportation Project

DATE: June 23, 2026 HSH PROJECT NO.: 2021055.08
 PANELIST: Beth Larkin (TY Lin); Susan Harrington (MassDOT); Luisa Paiewonsky (MassDOT);
 Makaela Niles (MassDOT OTP)

Overview

On Tuesday, June 23, 2026, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) convened a hybrid (in-person and virtual) meeting of the Allston Multimodal Transportation Project Task Force. There were 70 attendees (18 in-person and 52 virtual). The meeting agenda is below.

Agenda

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Meeting Summary

I. Welcome and Introductions

- **Beth Larkin (Larkin), TY Lin/Task Force Facilitator**, welcomed everyone to the meeting and began with a brief safety minute. Larkin reviewed the meeting agenda with meeting attendees and asked Task Force members and elected officials in the room and on-line to introduce themselves.
- **Marrisa Foti (Foti), MassDOT**, gave a brief overview of the functions of the hybrid meeting and how online participants can provide comments.
- **Luisa Paiewonsky (Paiewonsky), MassDOT**, began the meeting by congratulating **Susan Harrington (Harrington), MassDOT** for accepting the role of Design-Build Project Manager for the Cape Cod Bridges Program. Paiewonsky thanked Harrington for her years of service to the Allston Multimodal Transportation Project and wished her luck with her new assignment. Others thanked Susan for her contributions to the project as well.



- **Paiewonsky** also acknowledged and congratulated Harvard University for the grand opening of their Enterprise Research Campus in Allston.

II. Independent Consultant Selection Feedback

PRESENTATION

- **Paiewonsky** introduced **Makaela Niles (Niles)**, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (OTP) Project Manager for the Allston Independent Cost and Engineering Analysis to address the procurement and how Arcadis was the firm selected to lead the effort.
- **Niles** addressed the project background and purpose, 2025 Task Force input, Request for Responses, the selected team, scope of work, key takeaway, schedule and next steps.
 - Background and Purpose. Niles said that the Independent Cost and Engineering Analysis was initiated in response to the rescission of \$327 million in federal grants in July 2025. She stated that the goal of the analysis is to examine how to deliver the most transportation benefits with available resources.
 - 2025 Task Force Input. Niles noted that in 2025, the Task Force provided input on four focus areas: priorities, transportation goals/benefits, focus areas/scope input, and suggestions/recommendations. Niles said the input from the Task Force informed the Request for Responses (RFR) scope.
 - Request for Responses. The RFR outlined various needs for the analysis: reviewing and analyzing existing documents, evaluating the existing budget for alignment with the current scope, identifying risks and cost implications for the project components individually and combined, identifying and assessing alternatives within the current scope and budget, and reviewing schedule for potential phasing or sequencing.
 - Meet the Team. Niles stated that MassDOT selected Arcadis to lead the analysis and identified shared sub-consultant firms on the Arcadis team along with the team's areas of expertise. She noted that Arcadis publishes an annual International Construction Cost Report, which includes a comparative cost study of 100 global cities and provides insights into construction pricing factors.
 - Scope of Work. Niles stated that the work will have two overarching tasks. Task One will consist of a review of key project documentation and an examination of the budget, scope, and major costs, including a review of each major project element while looking at the impacts of factors such as inflation and escalation. Task Two will build on Task One and include an evaluation of potential scoping, design, and construction options, major project components, and opportunities for early action items.
 - Key Takeaways. Niles said this effort will examine how to deliver the most transportation benefits with the available resources, inform strategic decision-making by highlighting trade-offs, risks, and opportunities, and inform the path forward.
 - Schedule and Next Steps. Niles noted that Task One is expected to take place through the end of 2026, with Task Two anticipated to start in the winter and the process to be completed in the Spring.



- **Paiewonsky** added that during the time between the rescission of federal funding and the completion of the RFR, MassDOT was overseeing an orderly pause of environmental permitting. To close out the environmental permitting, MassDOT conducted an extensive coordination effort across multiple agencies. Additionally, the project team has continued modeling intercity rail service and finalizing the layover analysis in conjunction with the City of Boston.

DISCUSSION

- **Anthony D’Isidoro (D’Isidoro), Allston Civic Association**, asked how the project team will balance giving the consultants independence in forming their conclusions while still providing them with relevant information. **Paiewonsky** stated that MassDOT is not asking the consultant to start with a blank sheet of paper. Rather, MassDOT is providing all the baseline information prepared by the Tetra Tech team and asking the Arcadis team to tell MassDOT what they think. If Arcadis has different ideas, then MassDOT wants to hear them. **Niles** added that the Arcadis team will have all the information they need to be able to look at each of the project components and produce something that can inform decision-making.
- **Stacy Thompson (Thompson), Livable Streets Alliance**, asked for clarification regarding how available funds is defined. She asked if available funds only consider the funding currently available or if it accounts for the possibility of additional funding sources that could be identified along with later phases of the project. **Paiewonsky** responded that MassDOT is not asking Arcadis to identify additional funding sources as that is a function performed internally by state government. Arcadis will be looking at the currently available funding and helping to establish the priorities for what can be done within the existing funding and phasing of the project in anticipation of future funding. **Paiewonsky** added that MassDOT will continue to look for additional funding sources throughout the project.
- **Thompson** asked how transportation benefits, and specifically the word benefits, are defined. **Paiewonsky** noted that in evaluating project components, essential measures would include whether people need it, whether people would use it, and does it respond to an existing documented or future need.
- **Thompson** asked if MassDOT could share the project examples that Arcadis provided as part of the RFR process where they had done similar work. **Niles** answered that Arcadis is one of the global leaders in cost analyses, assessing cities across the globe for their annual international construction cost report.
- **Fred Salvucci (Salvucci)** asked if it is possible for early action that prioritizes rail on the south side and work on the river edge to advance now without waiting for the whole environmental process, considering the project is already being planned to be built in phases. **Paiewonsky** said that the first early action is the \$20 million Lincoln Street Noise Barriers project which is at 100% design and will break ground later in early 2027. The project team is awaiting results from the Independent Review before considering other early action items. **Salvucci** noted that the original intent of early action was to avoid the impact of inflation on



the project. Salvucci added that the City of Boston has identified the south side buffer path and West Station as early action items.

III. Lincoln Street Shared Use Path Coordination

PRESENTATION

- **Harrington** presented an overview of the coordination that is being done to support the future City of Boston Lincoln Street Shared Use Path. She discussed:
 - Lincoln Street Noise Barrier Project. Harrington stated that since design began for the Lincoln Street Noise Barriers, MassDOT has worked with the City of Boston to incorporate elements that would support a future shared use path, including moving the wall as close to I-90 as possible and adding retaining walls to support the grading for the future path. She added that MassDOT is committed to supporting a future path, but the path itself is not included in MassDOT's Lincoln Street Noise Barriers project.
 - Future Shared Use Path Requirements. Harrington stated that if MassDOT were to build a shared use path, this would require an independent design and approval process, which would include a Design Justification Workbook and a multi-month process of internal review. Harrington added that accessibility considerations, a lighting analysis, and a bicycle and pedestrian safety analysis would all be required for MassDOT to include a temporary bike path in the Lincoln Street Noise Barrier project. Additionally, there are potential curb realignments on both sides of Lincoln Street, parking impacts, and traffic calming considerations along Lincoln Street. Harrington noted that the shared use path requires substantial planning within the City of Boston owned roadway, and engineering beyond the scope of the noise barrier project.
 - Connections and Constraints. Harrington noted that further design work would be needed to ensure safe crossings, particularly at Market Street, Leo Birmingham Parkway, and Franklin Street.
 - Multiple Agencies and Jurisdictions Involved. Harrington stated that additional coordination between MassDOT, the City of Boston, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, adjacent property owners and stakeholders, utility owners, and community and advocacy groups would be needed to determine how the path would connect to existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. She noted that a significant portion of the pathway connection extends beyond MassDOT's noise barrier project limits and requires City-led coordination.
 - Recommended Next Steps. Harrington stated that the analyses, designs, permits, and coordination that would be required for MassDOT to build an interim path along the noise barrier would far exceed the scope and budget of the Lincoln Street Noise Barriers, which is already at 100% design. She noted that the Lincoln Street Noise Barriers project creates the opportunity for a future City of Boston shared use path and that delivering the shared use path requires a separate City-led project led through its own planning, design and implementation process.



- **Matthew Petersen (Petersen), City of Boston**, added that the City of Boston is actively coordinating the shared use path with MassDOT and Eversource. Petersen noted that Eversource has a 115-kilovolt transmission line proposed to run from the Electric Avenue substation, underground along Lincoln Street within vicinity of the proposed shared use path, to the Brighton substation at Franklin Street. Eversource is targeting 2027 as a start date for construction and the City of Boston is exploring whether the shared use path could be included as a mitigation effort for Eversource's work. This would involve an accelerated revision and review process to determine what the Boston Transportation Department could ask Eversource to construct.

DISCUSSION

- **D'Isidoro** stated that it would be helpful for the community if BTD could update the Lincoln Street Mobility Plan. It would also be valuable to produce a report that clearly outlines a short- and long-term vision for Lincoln Street. **Petersen** explained that the noise wall and Eversource projects are advancing on near-term timelines, making it difficult to produce a report before those projects advance. He emphasized that the City is coordinating with Eversource, MassDOT, and DCR to deliver a shared use path within the next few years, while internally evaluating design factors like drainage and traffic calming to ensure the plan is feasible and deliverable before engaging the community. Petersen added that the goal is to ultimately, in conjunction with the work that Eversource will be doing, either through Eversource implementation or the City, deliver a pathway within what is today MassDOT right-of-way, but in the future will be an extension of the City right-of-way. The City has also had discussions with DCR to understand the right-of-way to connect to Market Street.
- **D'Isidoro** asked if the extent of DCR's involvement are network connections at Market Street. **Petersen** confirmed that that was correct and that the City is already coordinating with DCR to make sure that a future path connection will allow you to go from Lincoln Street over to Leo Birmingham Parkway and the new path that DCR just completed.
- **D'Isidoro** suggested that the City maintain coordination with the two substantial development projects at 176 Lincoln Street and 83 Leo M. Birmingham Parkway. **Petersen** stated that he would reach out to the City of Boston Planning Department Project Managers regarding those projects.
- **Paiewonsky** added that construction of the noise barriers might help spur action and build momentum for the shared use path to move forward by others.
- **Thompson** commended MassDOT and the City of Boston for their continued extensive multi-agency outreach and coordination efforts on this project. She also offered suggestions for helping to get the word out about the noise barriers project moving forward and to be on the lookout in the fall for more information. **Paiewonsky** noted that they are doing something similar on the Cape Cod Bridge project, letting the community know about the work in progress on the new Sagamore Bridge. She also thanked Thompson for offering to help spread the word and that MassDOT could provide Thompson with any necessary project details.



- **Harrington** concluded the discussion by noting project takeaways, which reinforced that although the pathway is not sufficiently developed to be part of the noise barriers project, which is going out for construction this fall, MassDOT remains committed to engaging with the City of Boston and stakeholders on the shared use path coordination process.

IV. Boston Layover Study Follow Up

DISCUSSION

- **Harrington** stated that at the last Task Force meeting, MassDOT received several questions pertaining to the South Station Expansion Layover Analysis completed in 2013. MassDOT has located the analysis and has a list of sites being looked at and coordinated with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA). MassDOT plans to review this list with the City of Boston before providing to the Task Force. The list will provide additional context and insight, even though the information is not new to the Task Force.
- **Paiewonsky** added that MassDOT has continued coordinating with the City of Boston on layover space. While technical details remain complex, MassDOT, the MBTA, and the City have made progress and will continue working through this with a smaller working group. She added that there is a lot of goodwill and shared vision between MassDOT, the City and colleagues at the MBTA. **Petersen** added that the City continues to coordinate with MassDOT on a regular basis, working through the details to reach resolution.
- **Larkin** reiterated that follow-up information would be sent to the Task Force.
- **Thompson** asked whether after being provided the follow-up information there was any consideration for having a separate layover specific discussion for those on the Task Force who are interested in discussing in greater detail, so as not to take up future Task Force meeting time. **Paiewonsky** said that the project team is open to this suggestion.
- **Salvucci** said he understands that there are separate agendas for long-term adequate storage for regional rail service compared to immediate needs to relocate train storage out of Allston. Salvucci added that the 2013 South Station Expansion Study did not consider Widett Circle, which has since become available as a layover location. Salvucci raised concerns about how costs are being evaluated. He said that the costs of long-term storage needs could be significant and shouldn't be considered within the cost estimates of this project. Salvucci argued that conflating the costs of future rail storage with the Allston Multimodal Transportation Project would complicate environmental permitting and add unnecessary costs to the project. He asked that those distinctions be kept in mind. **Petersen** responded that the current phase of work is focused on a geometric and technical feasibility assessment that includes the Frontage Road site near Widett Circle. Widett Circle is intended to be used as a layover site to suit near-term layover needs, and other layover sites must be considered. Petersen also clarified that there are plans for more rail service now than were contemplated at the time of the 2013 South Station Expansion and that the City supports the Commonwealth's vision for a more robust program of rail service. Petersen added that the technical work being done now to establish what locations are feasible, will form the foundation for a successive round of discussions and negotiations at a future date.



involving actual real estate. Petersen expects that discussions involving exact timelines of facilities coming online will happen during subsequent discussions/negotiations.

- **Salvucci** mentioned an article in the Boston Globe about Congressman Lynch expressing optimism that the USPS facility adjacent to South Station may be purchased to support expansion of South Station and that he assumes that has not been included in the layover discussion. **Paiewonsky** stated that the Boston Layover Study is currently focused around the Frontage Road area and that the team is currently looking at what's available now. She added that MassDOT is aware of the story Salvucci referenced and that if the USPS property becomes available, that would be considered.
- **D'Isidoro** asked if the project team could share an update on the Cambridge Street Bridge Preservation Project. He noted that it seemed like the work has been a little uneven – sometimes there is more activity than at other times. **Harrington** noted that once the project is under construction, it is completely handled through the District 6 Office. She added that the Cambridge Street Preservation work is being done in parallel with the work on the I-90 viaduct and that crews are moving back and forth between the two bridges and are also working at night. Harrington also stated that there are no notable changes in the project schedule. Harrington conveyed that there may be an opportunity for District 6 to come to the July Task Force Open House.
- **D'Isidoro** noted that congestion in the area over the past couple of months has gotten pretty intense, and it isn't limited to traditional rush hour times. He referenced times when traffic is reduced to one lane. **Harrington** noted that the District Office has some additional traffic restrictions in place and that there is a large influx in visitors to the City right now with the ongoing World Cup. **Petersen** added that he anticipates congestion is going to be high for a little while longer. However, he said he will flag for the Boston Traffic Management Center the Cambridge St – Harvard St. – Franklin St. intersection since that's the principal driver of congestion over the Cambridge Street Bridge and ask that they pay closer attention to it. **D'Isidoro** raised the impact Linden Street will have on that project. **Petersen** noted that BTM has a keen interest in Linden Street and that it is under active discussion with the City's permitting section.
- **Galen Mook (Mook), MassBike**, emphasized the importance of having MassDOT District 6 representation at a future meeting as there are topics on the agenda that pertain to the community. He also asked for clarification regarding jurisdiction for the maintenance of the flexible bollards along Cambridge Street. He stressed the importance of clarifying responsibilities for maintenance tasks such as snow and ice removal and lighting repairs. **Paiewonsky** responded that she thinks it is a great idea to have the District at the Open House and that they would be invited to participate. She added that they would follow up with the District on the flex posts to get that straightened out.



V. July 22 Task Force Open House

- **Larkin** said that the plan for the July Task Force meeting would be an in-person Open House meeting at the Josephine Fiorentino Community Center focused on local Allston topics of interest to the Task Force as well as the community. Larkin added that representatives from the project team and the City of Boston will be there, and invitations will be extended to MassDOT District 6 and Harvard University. She noted that MassDOT had extended an invitation to Eversource and that they expressed some interest in participating. She asked the Task Force what other organizations they would be interested in seeing represented at the Open House. **Harrington** added that while Eversource was amenable to potentially participating, they have not made a firm commitment to being there.
- **Petersen** stated that he would reach out to the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services for Allston-Brighton.
- **Mook** suggested inviting the Allston Brighton Collaborative, elected officials on the Task Force to address policy, DCR, the Federal Highway Administration, the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, and Boston's Metropolitan Planning Organization.
- **D'Isidoro** suggested that the MBTA participate. **Laura Gilmore (Gilmore), MBTA**, mentioned that the MBTA is currently preparing a long-range plan (Focus 2050) and are engaging public outreach and are planning for the future of regional rail. She asked what topics would be of interest for the Open House. **Larkin** suggested any topic that relates to rail transportation in Allston, as well as Framingham/Worcester Line improvements.
- **Thompson** stressed that it is important to communicate the intent of the Open House with its participants. As an example, she the community would likely be interested in knowing more about the MBTA's Low Income Fare Program and Better Bus Program.
- **Larkin** suggested that topics related to regional rail could be presented at a meeting located in Worcester at the invitation of Peter Dunn, City of Worcester. **Salvucci** suggested it would be good to have an update on grade crossings in Framingham and better timetables as a topic for a regional rail discussion in Worcester. **Gilmore** agreed that those are good future meeting topics.

VI. Allston-Brighton Open Streets Day

- **Larkin** noted that Allston-Brighton Open Streets Day would be an opportunity for joint MassDOT and Task Force outreach in relation to the project.
- **D'Isidoro** noted that this is a heavily attended event and emphasized the importance of the event as an opportunity to get the community engaged. He added that it's important to think now about who to invite to be there. **Paiewonsky** stated MassDOT's support and that MassDOT/MBTA would be represented at the event. **Petersen** said he would coordinate to set up adjacent tables for MassDOT/MBTA and BTB at the event. **D'Isidoro** added that the Mayor will be there.
- **Thompson** suggested the project team consider making the table fun and engaging rather than just having people sit behind a table with flyers. **Paiewonsky** agreed.



- **Seth Gadbois (Gadbois), Conservation Law Foundation**, said he is looking forward to seeing more on the Independent Consultant Review. He also suggested scheduled walks and guided tours of nearby major projects could be a fun and engaging way to get people involved.

VII. Looking Ahead

- Proposed Upcoming Task Force meeting dates:
 - July 22, 2026
 - No August Meeting
 - September Date TBD
- The Task Force meeting location for July is the Fiorentino Center. The location for the September meeting is TBD. The goal is also to hold a Task Force meeting in Worcester before the end of the year. There was also the suggestion of potentially holding a Task Force meeting in the Framingham area as well.
- Potential topics at upcoming meetings:
 - Planned and ongoing projects within project area
 - MBTA service modernization plan
 - Worcester Regional Research Bureau (WRRB) Report presentation
 - Independent Consultant Review