



To:	Mike O'Dowd MassDOT Project Manager	Date:	November 14, 2019
From:	Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis Howard Stein Hudson	HSH Project No.:	2013061.14
Subject:	MassDOT Allston I-90 Framingham Public Information Meeting Meeting Notes of July 18, 2019		

Overview

On July 18th, 2019 a public information meeting was held in Framingham to introduce residents of the City and surrounding communities to the I-90 Allston Multimodal Project. The I-90 Allston Multimodal Project has been in development since 2014, but prior to meetings in Framingham and Worcester held during the summer of 2014, public involvement has been contained to Boston, where the project is located, and the adjoining communities of Brookline and Cambridge. However, with the project now engaged in the Federal environmental permitting process as outlined in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and directed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and potential impacts to I-90 and the Worcester Mainline becoming clearer as a result of MassDOT Secretary Stephanie Pollack's January 2019 decision regarding the area of the project known as "the throat," it was determined by the agency that the time had come to involve commuters from MetroWest and Central Massachusetts in the outreach process.

The meeting provided attendees with an overview of the project to date, discussed the selected approach for the throat, lowering I-90 and placing Soldiers' Field Road on a new viaduct, and construction period impacts to I-90 and the Worcester Mainline commuter rail. Audience reaction centered on concerns about construction period impacts, congestion on I-90, and the long-term benefit of the project for commuters traveling to and from Boston from the Worcester area. The project team underscored that efforts are being undertaken to stage construction in such a way that the impacts to the mainline of I-90 and the Worcester commuter rail line are minimal as possible.

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Detailed Meeting Minutes¹

Welcome & Opening Remarks

C: Michael O'Dowd, *MassDOT*: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you all for coming on such a warm night outside. I'm sure you all have other things you'd like to be doing. We do appreciate the opportunity for you to come out here so that we could share information related to the project with you. Just in case you're not sure why you are here, this meeting is for the Allston Multimodal Projects on I-90. The project is many miles east of here, but it will certainly going be felt by all of you that commute either on I-90 or on the commuter rail.

My name is Michael O'Dowd and I'm with MassDOT. I am here representing the Secretary of the DOT, Stephanie Pollack, and our highway administrator, Jonathan Gulliver. We do appreciate you coming out and we will look forward to getting all of your comments, questions, and concerns. To the extent that we possibly can, we will respond to them. If I can't respond to them tonight, I'll be certain to get back to you quickly.

I would like to thank Senator Spilka and Senator Brownsberger for joining us here this evening. I understand that Mayor Spicer would like to give some welcoming remarks.

C: Yvonne Spicer, *Mayor of Framingham*: Good evening and welcome to Framingham. I know there are a number of people from the surrounding communities that are here this evening. When we think about transportation and some of our challenges with transportation, it affects each and every one of us here in Framingham or in Boston or Worcester and every city in town in between. I know our State Senator has done her part to address some of these issues as well as some of our other legislators that are in the room who will be introduced very shortly. I just want to welcome you all to Framingham and hopefully we'll be able to have an engaging conversation

¹ Herein "C" stands for comment, "Q" for question and "A" for answer. For a list of attendees, please see Appendix 1. For copies of meeting flipcharts, please see Appendix 2.

and learn some information and also look at ways in which we can move our transportation system into the 21st century. Thank you for being here this evening.

C: Michael O'Dowd: Thank you very much, Mayor Spicer.

Presentation

C: Michael O'Dowd: I would like to start by introducing representatives of the project team. To my immediate left is Chris Calnan with TetraTech who is leading the design team. Continuing to the left and taking notes this evening is Jeff Dietrich with Howard Stein Hudson. To his right is Eric, the lead traffic engineer on the project and continuing right is my Mark Fobert who will be the lead on the environmental permitting and regulatory issues.

I would ask if you haven't signed in yet, please do so before we leave this evening. It is important for us to be able to have contact information for each and every one of you so that we have an ability to reach out and keep you informed of any of the future meetings and anything going on with the project.

There are about 30 slides in the presentation that Chris will be leading to this evening. I would ask that you hold your comments and questions until after the presentation. We'll be more than happy to stay here as long as it takes to respond to everyone if they have concerns. Thank you.

The Secretary and Highway Administrator both spoke to me about the project timeline this morning. They have received concerns, comments, and calls relative to when the project is going to get underway. We don't want there to be any misconceptions on the part of the public here in Framingham this evening that a month from now you're going to see construction starting in Allston. That is not the case. I would like that to happen but that will not be the case. We still have extensive amount of permitting and public outreach and engagement to do. This is undergoing a full environmental impact statement through the NEPA process. It will be an expediated one to the extent that we are doing it under the One Federal Decision through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). With that said, there are a number of consulting parties that will be joining us on the regulatory side of it, including the Coast Guard, the Army Corps of Engineers, the EPA, and a number of other federal agencies against state agencies as well.

There are two major public documents that will be going out whereby you be able to submit your comments on. MEPA which is under the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs requires that we do a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR). A Draft EIR or DEIR was

submitted and filed back in November of 2017. The FEIR we expect will be filed next year, probably around the Spring or Summer of 2020. We are using that timeframe right now. If you look at the timeline that's on the board, it gives you a better understanding of where the permit filings are over the course of the next 24 months. The One Federal Decision, that I just mentioned, under the EIS is made public through an FHWA Transportation Dashboard website. It is incumbent upon all the federal agencies to issue the permits and have a finding on the NEPA documentation within 24 months of a Notice of Intent being filed. We are anticipating that that notice of intent will be filed in October of this year. Therefore, the final decision on the NEPA would be by the end of 2021. Within 90 days after that would be federal permitting. With that said, in 2022 we will be in full procurement, design-build, and we would expect that you would see mobilization of the contracting team, design-build entity, or joint venture in 2023. It's a very sizeable contract as many of you have seen. We are in the range of about \$1.2 billion. That includes both the highway infrastructure, commuter rail infrastructure, layover infrastructure, and the West Station commuter rail station. There is a significant amount of effort that is underway including the design, permitting, regulatory work, and public outreach. We don't want to overlook the importance of being able to solicit comments, concerns, and criticisms. We take it all equally and try to impart that into the design and make it a better design as a result. Chris is going to kick off with the presentation and, as I mentioned, afterwards we will open up the floor for any comments or questions you have.

C: Chris Calnan, *Tetra Tech*: Good evening and welcome. Again, my name is Chris Calnan with Tetra Tech. Tonight the focus is to provide you with some background about the project, step through some of the alternatives, and talk a little bit about construction. Overall, I'd say the presentation will be 40 minutes or so. We'll try to go through it quick and get into the question and answer period. Our goal tonight when you leave here is that you'll have a much better understanding of the project and the timeframe that Mike just talked about.

Let's jump right in. Slide 4 shows the project area. As you can see, the area includes the former Beacon Park Yard. Cambridge street is on one side and Soldiers Field Road on the other. You can see the Charles river and the MBTA commuter rail line adjacent to the Boston University area. It is a substantial area. I think it is around 140 acres or so. It is a large parcel where the project encompasses.

Why are we building this project? We have a lot of issues to deal with out there. There are a lot of roadway deficiencies. The viaduct itself is structurally deficient. It is past its age at over 50 years old and requires a lot of maintenance. We've got geometry concerns for the highway. The left-hand exit that's out there would not be recommended on a project of today. There are traffic

safety concerns for motorists. We have high crash rates and delays at the ramps. Rail operations are certainly important as well. There will be a layover yard here for a midday layover to support the South Station Expansion Project and to address currently layover deficiencies. We're seeing the Worcester main line commuter rail is one of the fastest growing in the commuter rail system and needs expansion here as well. There are a lot of need components. When you boil that down and think about the purpose of the project, we are really trying to address these roadway deficiencies and safety concerns, improve mobility and multimodal connections, and provide additional park space and access to that much needed park land.

There is a lot of history on this project. We'll briefly take you through what we've been working on since 2014. Back then, we were working through a lot of different concepts. In Fall 2014, we filed what is called an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) with the MEPA office that first introduced the project publicly through that environmental process. After that, DOT commissioned a feasibility study by outside parties to look at some at-grade alternatives that would lower the viaduct. Later in 2016, the City of Boston did a placemaking study to look at what components might be included or not precluded in how the project advanced. We filed a Draft Environmental Impact Report in 2017, which was a major filing of a very large document and that was the last formal filing of the project. After that, there were many comments received. MassDOT commissioned an independent review team who came up with some other alternatives for the throat area, the tight area of the project between Boston University and the Charles River. This past January, the Secretary of Transportation identified what the preferred throat area alternative is and I'll show you that as well. Right now, we're doing refinements and advancing the documentation for the environmental filings that Mike mentioned.

Over the last five years, we have studied over 20 different alternatives, both on the highway side and the rail side. I want to take some time to present the latest alternative, alternative 3L. Hopefully, everybody got a handout when they came in which shows the concept. I'm not going to take a lot of time to go through all the major elements. I think you can see them. What you'll notice is in the yellow, it shows the realigned section of the turnpike on the southern side. You can see the area of Beacon Park Yards where we'd have West Station and the railway layover facilities. This the area to the east is what we referred to as "the throat," that tight area between Boston University and the Charles River where we are changing the infrastructure. You can see a series of north-south connecting streets from the highway that will connect to Cambridge Street and go across the river to Cambridge itself. There are a lot of different components there. Hopefully you can follow along as we go through the night and that it helps later with the question and answer period.

Regarding key elements when we think about the interchange itself, we've got the replacement of the viaduct. As I said earlier, it's aging. It needs to be replaced and is structurally deficient. We've got some curvature issues to deal with and the geometry of the ramps. We want to address the left-hand exit situation and put in a more conventional interchange with right hand exits that you normally see. We've got to do a lot of traffic analysis for these new intersections. Another serious component of the project is realigning Soldiers Field Road. We'll have some illustrations of that that show Soldiers Field Road shifted further into the site and introduces a grade separation. There are some dramatic improvements that will be happening here.

Slide 10 shows an aerial photo of the throat area looking west. You can see the Charles River, Soldiers Field Road, the I-90 highway viaduct, and the rail underneath. A major challenge of the last several years has been to fit all those transportation elements into this tight area.

Slide 11 is an illustration that gives some indication of what we're looking at it for this throat area. The yellow shows I-90 which runs underneath. The red is where Soldiers Field Road which would come in and go over I-90. The rail component is shown in blue. fill.

Slide 12 shows a cross-section view looking inbound towards Boston which may be a better perspective. Generally speaking, what is on the ground today is going to become elevated and what is elevated today will go on the ground. You see the rail components, I-90 down below, Soldiers Field Road on top, and the Paul Dudley Path adjacent to all that.

So next we have a short video to show what is happening in that throat section.

(At this time an animated video was played that showed a flyover view of the throat area.)

Next up, we're going to talk a little bit about the rail and Mark Shamon will give a quick overview of that.

C: Mark Shamon, VHB: Thank you Chris. This project has a number of different rail and transit components. One of them is West Station, a new station on the Framingham/Worcester Commuter Rail line, in what was Beacon Park Yard. We're looking at creating a lot of flexibility in the station and with the rail lines so that the rail can go as it does today from points west into South Station and from South Station to points west. We're also providing additional flexibility for potential future urban rail service going over the Grand Junction Bridge that would go over into Cambridge and potentially up into Boston which would give us a North South connection that currently is lacking in the system. That is not part of this project but we're creating the infrastructure within Beacon Park Yards and in the rail system to be able to do that in the

future. Within Beacon Park Yards and West Station, we're looking at having a two or three platform configuration. We're looking at a couple of different configurations and are working with folks on the task force and at MassDOT to determine what we will do. At the very least, we're going to have two platforms, perhaps three. We're going to have at least two mainline tracks going all the way through into Boston and we're going to have two rail tracks that would go over the Grand Junction and potentially into Cambridge and over to North Station.

Slide 20 shows an older representation of what we are calling a bus concourse. You may have seen it in the DEIR. Effectively what this does is create a bus loop, an area where people above the rail line can connect to the buses. It also allows for pedestrians to get up and over the tracks and to the Charles River from the south either via a Malvern Street transitway or an independent bike and pedestrian ramp. The Malvern Street transit way is a relatively new component and is gaining some traction. It would allow for bus service to also make that North to South connection that we talked about with pedestrians. It would provide transit-only access. Once we get into the station, it provides for five bus berths for buses come in and get out, and also five layover births on the north side. It also provides opportunities for kiss and ride and ride. It truly is a multimodal station allowing for access for various types of transportation modes.

This commuter rail facility is somewhat of an outgrowth of the South Station expansion and an assessment of current needs. As you may know, with all of the riders coming into South station and the projection for additional riders, there is a great need to expand service to South station and therefore expand South station itself. The question becomes, what do you do with all the trains in the middle of the day? They're coming into South station and really can't get back out very effectively. we are looking at is creating some sort of layover yard within Beacon Park Yards to store trains in the middle of the day. It's about 3.5 to 4 rail miles to South Station from here. The trains would start coming in sometime in the morning, they would lay over here, and then when the commuter rail rush happens in the afternoon, they go back into the South station, pick up passengers and bring them back out to their home destinations. Whether it is the Worcester line, the Providence line, or Greenbush, all of the lines need some sort of layover. Right now, what we are looking at in this location is 4 layover tracks that would store eight trains during the middle of the day.

Another aspect of the South Station expansion project and the mitigation required for that, is a noise barrier along the south side of the railroad tracks in an area where the tracks run near people's homes in Allston.

Slide 21 shows one concept of the rail yard layout as it was shown in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). This concept shows three platforms on the South side and the four tracks that I spoke of: two that are dedicated to going to South station and two that would be dedicated as urban rail tracks going over the Grand Junction line. We have flexibility between these lines where trains can cross over and that's necessary because we also have, as I mentioned, the rail yard where our storage tracks would be in this particular concept. We'd have a small yard that goes with it. This would be staffed on a daily basis where they would do housekeeping on the trains in the middle of the day such as cleaning and janitorial services or if there are lights or windshields that need to be repaired or any routine maintenance necessary for any sort of moving vehicle. This would not be a heavy maintenance location, that would continue be done elsewhere but, this is an important provision.

There would be a power substation in the yard as well. This power substation would provide power within the yard so that we can use electricity to power the trains during the day and they don't have to idle. It's an opportunity to remove the idling and not have those greenhouse gases and all those other things that happen when a train is idling there. It would also keep the trains warm during the day and keep it warm for the people working in the trains to clean them out without having to keep the engines running. We also have some areas for flat storage and in this particular version, we have a driveway coming in from the north side get into the yard. Again, this is still all in flux. This is not exactly how it might be built, but it's a concept that it lays out the ideas of what we're looking at.

Above the rail yard is the West Station bus concourse. This graphic on Slide 22 is from the DEIR. As I mentioned before, the DEIR did not have the transit way in it. We have stair and elevator systems on each end that allow people to get down to the platform or up to the bus. In this particular concept, the platform on the south side allows people to basically walk up to the platform at grade and not have to climb at all. Even if they wanted to get onto another platform, they can use the elevator to get up and to get back down to the other side. That is one of the advantages of a concept like this. I mentioned before, we have five bus berths and that's with quick access to the stair and elevator systems. And we have the layover bus berths on the top here and then we have areas for the pickup and drop off.

Everything I've shown you thus far has been the DEIR and the public versions. Mike and Chris both mentioned that we've been doing some refinement. One of the refinements we're looking at in the rail yard area is what's being called the West Station Flip. I just got through showing you a concept where West Station was on the south side, adjacent to Boston university. In this Flip concept on Slide 23, we've put the station up to the north side and have the rail yard on the

south side. In this case, West Station would have two platforms with three tracks serving those two platforms. The northerly platform we're showing is a little bit shorter because that is what would be dedicated specifically to the Grand Junction service and those trains would be a lot shorter than the commuter rail trains. We're looking at maybe three train cars as opposed to the six to nine cars that we're looking at it for the commuter rail line. That's why that platform is a little bit shorter. We have four tracks and the eight platforms. We have a power substation that I spoke up before where we plug in the trains to get them power for the day. In the Flip, we're also showing express trains coming through. Many of you probably know that today only about 20% of the trains that actually come through the yard actually stop at stations like Boston Landing. A lot of them express through. With that in mind, we've created express tracks in this version that would allow trains to go straight through without having to stop. There would be an opportunity to stop, as I mentioned before, if needed so that the trains can get from one track to another. If a train does want or need to stop it at West Station on a scheduled basis, and they will, that opportunity is there for a commuter rail train to come and access either one of these two tracks to drop passengers off. It also gives the opportunity for cross platform transfers for people coming in from the West who want to jump onto an urban rail and get over to the north side. This idea is sort of the best of both worlds where people can make that transfer while also allowing trains that do not need to stop here to go right through. And the idea of this Flip overall, is also supporting the economic development being considered around the project area. There is a plan in the future to build up this area. The idea of putting the station here is somewhat forward thinking, if you will, in that we know there's going to be development more to the North than the South and we may need a station that serves the North side a little better and has the express tracks on the South.

Lastly, Slide 24 shows the bus concourse in the Flip version. You can see the Malvern Transit Way that I spoke of before. You can see this platform configuration is a little bit different than the one I showed you before. This is something that we're still considering. We would still have the layover births, the kiss and ride area, and the live bus berths closer to the stairs and elevator system so that people get off their train or get out of their cars or however they arrive, can get back and forth easily. MassDOT would build the Malvern transitway, the connections into the interchange system, and this bus loop in the concourse area, but it'd be left to a private developer to build anything off to the West.

With that, I will turn it back to Chris.

C: Chris Calnan: All right, let's move along.

The last of the key elements is the bicycle, pedestrians, and open space accommodations that the project could provide. Part of the realignment is to Soldiers Field Road. You can see this on Slide 26. It provides a tremendous amount of new open space and allows additional access to the river that will be kind of an underpass system. The cycle track on the north side of South Cambridge Street will be able to connect directly to that open space adjacent to the river without going over a bridge. We've got other improvements that Mark talked about such as the Malvern Street transitway. We're going to replace the Franklin street pedestrian bridge that exist today but does not meet accessibility requirements. That will also be part of the project going forward.

Let's jump into the construction side and what constructability might look like. As Mike talked to at the very beginning, we're a long way away from construction. All the work that we're doing now is trying to look at how we construct this the most efficient manner we can without having major disruptions and we're always trying to make improvements. I'll walk you through some of the highlights that we have so far.

During construction, we are going to need to reduce some of the travel lanes on the interstate. It will be similar what's been done in the past with construction in that area bringing eight lanes down to six. Soldiers Field Road would remain as a four-lane facility as it is today. The Worcester commuter rail line has two tracks through this area, and we do need to go down to a single-track operation for approximately a mile. The team is looking at how we could minimize that duration. The Grand Junction, the rail closure that goes over the river, we do need to close that down very early in the project and MassDOT and the state are looking for alternative sites for layovers on the south side of South Station to actually take over that operation because that's a line that goes to the Boston Engine Terminal where they do repairs for the trains. DOT is looking into that. And we have the Paul Dudley White Path adjacent to the rivers and we are trying to address that as well.

As Mike mentioned earlier, we're looking at around 8-10 years. We need to do much more detailed analysis to see how this project gets staged. Some of what we are looking will include a lot of temporary connections as we try to dismantle all the ramp structures and connect the new streets. We're going to have temporary bridges. We are looking at a temporary Soldiers Field Road and a path structure that goes out in the river. Slide 30 shows what our latest thinking for how that would work. As we get through this project, we need areas for the cranes, the workers, and so forth. We will be looking much deeper into that.

We've got to figure out how to stage the construction of the Grand Junction bridges over the interstate, over Soldiers Field Road, and over major utilities in the area. As Mike mentioned

earlier, when you take I-90 that is elevated today and drop it down or below grade, we're going to be impacting some very sizeable utilities and that is going to take some time. We will be assessing the temporary river impacts when we're looking at putting Soldiers Field Road over the river to help minimize the disruptions for the turnpike and the commuter rail. What we have concluded is that there just isn't sufficient room to take the viaduct down and build a new viaduct with all of the utilities that are there. We tried to do this without going into the river. It would require longer single-track outages of the commuter rail and we're just not able to minimize those impacts for I-90 and commuter rail users. What we are looking at now is a scenario where we actually put Soldiers Field Road temporarily into the Charles River. We are considering a temporary trestle that would support the four travel lanes and Paul Dudley White Path. We would shift the existing traffic onto that temporary trestle which would allow I-90 to shift into the area in the light blue temporarily when the viaduct comes down. There will be much more refinement, but this is our latest thinking to help minimize some of the impacts during construction.

Next Steps. We have certainly come a long way in five years, but we've got quite a bit of work still left to do. Right now, we're looking at refinements and the selection of a preferred alternative that would go into our environmental documentation. Ultimately, we'll get into some preliminary design. This will be a design-build procurement. DOT will put out an RFP, select the contractor, and they ultimately will do the final design and construction of the project.

To wrap it up, on Slide 33, we've got two environmental processes underway. There is the NEPA side where we will be filing a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement which kicks off the process with Federal Highway and describes the proposed scoping process, including any meetings and how the public can get involved. On the state side, we have MEPA. Our next filing with them will be a Notice of Project Change to introduce the elevated Soldiers Field Road Viaduct Option which was not included in previous MEPA filings. These are things we are working on in the next 6-12 months and we need to advance both.

We also want to mention that we have an upcoming public information meeting next month in Worcester. With that, I think with that we're going to kick it over to the question and answer.

C: Nate Cabral-Curtis, *Howard Stein Hudson*: Good evening, everyone. My name is Nathaniel Curtis with Howard Stein Hudson, I run the public engagement process for this project. In addition to Senator Spilka and Senator Brownsberger who were noted for being here earlier, I'd also like to recognize Representative Dykema, Representative Robinson, Representative Lewis, Mayor Spicer, who you heard from earlier, and Councilor George King and Councilor Adam

Steiner. I understand that Senator Spilka and Senator Brownsburg would like to make remarks. After that, I will ask if any other elected officials would like to speak. Then the first member of the audience who gets to speak will be the one toting the small squirming person and then we'll do hands. I have a four-year-old at home, so I totally get it.

Questions and Answers

C: State Senate President Karen Spilka: Good evening. I want to thank everybody for coming out. We have a standing-room-only crowd which shows how important this issue is to all of us in the Metro West. Thank you for being here tonight and thank you to all the folks that are here that I've worked with so hard on this for five years. I do also want to add to the Framingham elected officials that are here in addition to the two counselors that were noted. Counselor Giombetti is here as well. Thank you for being here.

Tonight, is what I hope will be the first night of an ongoing and close dialogue between the residents of Metro West and MassDOT on the impacts of this project, the I-90 Allston Multimodal Project on our region. We all recognize the major impacts this will have on our region.

I'm here wearing two hats. One is President of the Massachusetts State Senate and in that capacity, I've argued for a long time for investment in transportation and infrastructure improvements in all aspects of transportation and infrastructure in the entire state. We have to look at this as an entire state perspective. I recognize and I've stated that our transportation systems across our state simply are in crisis. We need to reach consensus on how to fix those systems across our state as well as how to pay for them. My preference is that we find a way to get more people on public transportation and out of their cars so that we can cut back on congestion and fight the rising threat of climate change. I have convened both the transportation working group in the Senate and a revenue working group in the Senate to come up with ideas and fixes for both the short term, because some of this needs to be fixed immediately, and the long term, because some will take longer as well as how we are going to pay for these fixes. I'm committed to working with stakeholders across the state, including MassDOT and the Baker Administration and all of you to address our ongoing transportation concerns.

The second hat I'm also wearing is that of a MetroWest resident and commuter. I am a Turnpike toll payer and a State Senator. For the Second Middlesex and Norfolk District, I am a voice for the constituents in my communities. With this hat on, I have a lot of questions about the upcoming project. Looking at the project, I see that there clearly when you look on a broad scale,

there are a lot of improvements in the transportation infrastructure. Clearly the viaduct needs to be fixed. There are many improvements and those videos were beautiful. It will be wonderful 8-10 years out, but I have to ask: what benefits will our Metro West region reap from this project? How and for how long will our commutes be impacted? What will the impact be on traffic and congestion on the Mass Pike? It already takes at least an hour and a half and sometimes two hours to get in and out. How will that be impacted? What will the impact be on our commuter rail service? If you are taking one track out, how will that be impacted? How will these impacts be compounded by the air rights projects over I-90 near the Prudential Center that are scheduled to begin this summer and will severely impact our congestion and traffic and commutes. Is it wise for these projects to be scheduled around the same time? I am not a traffic expert and I do not purport to be one, but these questions need to be answered. Can some of this work be phased in? And very importantly, what is the state's plan to mitigate the impacts on MetroWest?

The only mitigation that I saw in this presentation was the sound barrier at the Transit Way, which I think is great to have and I strongly urge that it stays part of the project. It concerns me that that is the only mitigation that has been specifically presented or mentioned thus far tonight. More specifically, some of the questions that I have to put out there for mitigation that needs to be looked at: what will be our toll discount while we deal with the inconvenience of this project? How many more commuter rail trains will you run to ensure we make it to work on time and home on time to have dinner with our families? How many buses are you going to put on the road to ensure employees can make it to and from work on time? How will you use technology? We are, I believe, at the center of technology. Massachusetts is known throughout the nation. How are we going to use the upcoming modern technology to make this project go smoothly? And most importantly, how much will it cost and who will pay for it?

I would like to know how much the private entities who are benefiting from this project will contribute. As someone whose pays tolls to sit in traffic for hours, I think I speak for everyone when I say that we are not willing to pay more to sit in traffic or wait in any trains longer. I am therefore strongly urging you to not build this project on the backs of our toll payers. I would also strongly urge you to use this project as an opportunity to use and implement bold and creative solutions that this state needs to solve our transportation travel challenges. This is a massive, massive project but there are other massive projects being planned such as a South Coast Rail and projects in the Western part of the state and elsewhere. Use this as an opportunity to use some bold and innovative and creative solutions to solve our transportation challenges. Let Massachusetts be first in the nation in this and use it as a way for us to set the stage for the other massive projects we're doing. We are number one in innovation and problem solving. We must demonstrate how we are going to use those qualities to keep our economy running and our

residents sane while this project is underway. I noticed that you've been working on this for five years. Use this same innovation and boldness and creativity and time that you've done for the engineering, design, permit requests, and environmental studies. Use it as much as you have to develop the mitigation. Take the time to figure it out and use the same dedication you have shown towards the engineering, design, and permits and everything else because that is what is so important to the MetroWest.

I would strongly urge you to take a look at what's happening with Route 9 because if people want to take an alternative route, the only way from here to get into Boston area is I-90, Storrow Drive, the train, and Route 9. Many residents will end up taking route nine and I believe traffic and congestion will dramatically increase there as well.

I look forward to hearing more. I don't know if you have answers to all of this right now, but these are some of the very big questions that I believe need to be answered. And I do believe that most of this mitigation needs to be in place prior to any construction so that the traffic can be smooth and the congestion can be cut back.

I look forward to hearing how this project will decrease congestion. There has never been much discussion about how to cut congestion on I-90. This is the time to do it. Be creative, be bold, be innovative. Thank you, to MassDOT and all of the consultants for coming to Framingham to share your plans and listen to the voices of all of our residents. I very much look forward to working very, very closely with you as this project moves forward. Thank you very much.

Q: Nate Cabral-Curtis: Would any other elected official like to come up and make any remarks?

C: State Representative Maria Robinson: Thank you so much, Senator. I think you've really articulated a lot of the concerns that many of us have had. I want to thank Representative Dykema who spearheaded the effort to ensure that this was not just a Boston-centric input process and more focused on MetroWest and Central Massachusetts. As a result of her advocacy, I and Dennis Giombetti are both sitting in on the once a month task force meetings that they're having around this. So, consider me sort of ground zero. Call, text, email, pigeon any thoughts that you might have on this because we're the ones at the table advocating for the MetroWest region. I just want to give my continued plug for express bus lanes on I-90 because I think that would be a really great thing for us to start dealing with congestion.

C: Representative Jack Patrick Lewis: Well, I also want to thank you for coming me here today.

I'm sure what you are going to hear from me now and from everyone over the next couple hours isn't news to you, but it's really hard to imagine this beautiful computer-generated future when it's hard to get to work on time. It's hard to come home and get there by dinner. I get emails nearly every day from constituents who no longer take the commuter rail because it's no longer cost-effective. It's no longer a guarantee. They can base their day better if they get on the highway. Through all these conversations, know that it is hard to imagine a brighter future when your reality is getting worse with every passing day. As you talk about plans that go 13 years out, it's hard to imagine oneself that far out. We can do math and guess where we might be in our lives, but there's a sizeable number of people who for 10 years of their prime working lives are going to be greatly inconvenienced only to then retire before they can enjoy the great computer-generated model that we've seen. And then for those of us who aren't going to be on the verge of retirement in 13 years, the idea of having to live with all of those inconveniences for 13 years for a project that's not guaranteed to be a comprehensive picture that you alluded to. It's not the North-South line. It has the potential to be so much more. I know you're going to hear it from folks, but it's just really hard to imagine this future. The Soviets used to talk about five-year plans because they were just far enough out that people couldn't truly fathom them. 13 years is a hard number to get one's mind around and it will be hard for you to convince the media and people in this room otherwise. I hope and I urge you do that today.

C: State Representative Carolyn Dykema: I'm going to be brief. Honestly, there are a lot of people who have come out today and I just want to underscore the circumstances within which we are talking tonight. I understand that the baseline here is not a good traffic situation that will be complicated by some construction. I think you'll agree the fact that we're this far out in this project and have a full room of people here tonight speaks about how much these impacts are going to have on the local communities. We're really at a tipping point here in MetroWest already with congestion. I think all of my colleagues in the legislature would agree that congestion is the number one issue that we hear about all the time. Not only is it the Mass Turnpike and all of the local roads, Route 9 and all the connector roads, but also the train. We like to think the commuter rail should be an option for those folks who don't want to sit in traffic and hopefully alleviate traffic, but unfortunately, I think we all know that the commuter rail has been subpar for years now and has been a concern and a challenge in and of itself. This project is impacting both I-90 and the commuter rail simultaneously for an extended period of time for a region for which a very large number of people commute into Boston and Cambridge to work. All those factors together underscore the importance of having continued dialogue with this region. I am very grateful to have our MetroWest representatives on the task force to be able to give our voice to this process continually and to keep our delegation updated on a regular basis as to what's going on in and the ability to advocate quickly. I want to underscore a couple of things in

terms of benefits. I think the Senator mentioned how important it is that for our region, for all of what we're going to have to live through for an extended period of time, we actually get some very real benefits out of this at the end of the day. One of those benefits, I think, is the Grand Junction rail connection. I want to better understand, and this is probably not the night to do it, but I just want to make sure that that connection is incredibly convenient and accessible for our residents however we have to do that. I think we should take a very, very careful look at that because I know a lot of our commuters do commute into Cambridge. The second thing worth noting, and I know it's come up before, is the addition of West Station. I know it is a great benefit for the community that it serves, the immediate neighborhood. For us in MetroWest, while it is a good thing for access to Cambridge, it adds time to our schedule. It's one more stop for folks coming from Ashland, Southborough, or Westborough. They have to stop and wait for a train commute that is already not only unreliable but already incredibly long. What I would ask, and what I think our delegation is going to insist on, is that with the addition of West Station, there have got to be upstream improvements to the commuter rail system to ensure that there is at worst, no increase in travel time for our commuter rail constituents. I think we could all advocate for significantly improved access to the commuter rail and travel times so that we can move some of the congestion off the pike and other roads onto a commuter rail which also has the environmental benefits that we all know. So again, thanks for coming out and I look forward to hearing from the public.

C: Nate Cabral-Curtis: That is all from the elected officials? Ok, I'm going to do what I promised I would do and then I'm going to take hands on. There are a lot of people in this room who are learning about this project for the first time so I will ask folks to try and keep your remarks and questions contained. We will be here as long as we need to.

Q: No Name Given: To put this into context: I am a commuter rail rider from Natick Center. I use it to get to work and pick up my daughter from daycare. My biggest concern is that the current proposal is disrupting both I-90 and the commuter rail and that's the primary mode to get to work for majority of people commuting to Boston. My concern is that it's going to have a negative impact on a lot of people. If you're going to impact I-90 like that, was there any consideration in terms of keeping two tracks on the commuter rail so that at least, as the highway is impacted, some of that can get offloaded and put onto the commuter rail?

A: Nate Cabral-Curtis: So yes, there absolutely was consideration of that and I may call on other members of the project team to give me a hand with this. I'm just going to click back through a few slides to where Chris showed Soldiers Field Road pushed out into the river. That was something that evolved out of the I-90 Allston task force, which was just alluded to. When we

originally looked at staging this, the thought was that there would be a fairly significant period of time where the Worcester main line would go down to a single track. That made a lot of people very upset because the perception was that we would drop down to one line in Framingham and be one track all the way to South Station. The actual drop would be through a short area of the project, but people didn't like that either. What we have right now is the idea of pushing Soldiers' Field Road out into the river and moving I 90 into roughly the same space occupied by Soldiers' Field Road today. That was driven by the need to establish a safe, functional work zone in the throat, but it gives us an opportunity to look at keeping a second track open longer. One of the other things Chris alluded to is the fact that there may be times both for the highway and the rail line where, because of the need to do construction safely, even with these improvements, we might still need to drop additional lanes at night or additional commuter tracks over the weekend to make everything work. Obviously, there's a lot of staging and construction effort that needs to be done, but I would say, the principle that we're trying to hold to is two tracks on the Worcester Mainline much as possible. It is definitely a consideration. We've made some substantial changes just between two task force meetings in April and May and June, which is a fair bit of effort for a project of this size. We're definitely thinking about it.

Q: No Name Given: In terms of like going down to a single track, how long are we talking?

A: Nate Cabral-Curtis: That is still unclear.

A: Mike O'Dowd: We're not far enough along in the investigation of the construction staging. The alternative that you see right now on the board is something that was only decided on as of January of this year. The secretary herself made the decision. I was looking at all of the public comments that we received in the DEIR from November of 17 as well as the report that was given to us by the independent review team. What you see now is as much effort and as much design and background on traffic, commuter rail, passengers, and as much information that we could gather them about them. That was the last six months and now we're going to start moving faster and placing more investigations into how can we construct this so that we're as efficient and as bold as the Senate President mentioned and try to get this through quickly and reduce the amount of impacts to the extent that we can to avoid impacts to the highway while we are also impacting commuter rail services. That's our goal. That's our challenge.

C: Jay Flynn: Hi, my name is Jay and I am representing TransitMatters. We have several concerns, some of which you've addressed. We should be hearing now – not a year from now – about more trains, more efficient trains or you'll get opposition from people who will benefit from the project but think it's going to impact them in the 10 year period. You should be doing

everything you can to drive people to rail: lower fares, more frequent service, instead of storing the trains at the rail yard, they should be moving between Boston and Worcester every day. Not just for 9-5 commuters but also people going to Longwood and Mass General at all hours. I used to bring my dad to Mass General every week for 2 years for chemo. That was a pain because rail service was not good enough during the daytime. People take rail for more than just work. The other major comment we have is those options that lead to a straighter, higher-speed passthrough are what we'd like to see. We're concerned that when you do the Flip, it'll lower the speeds. We're all in this together – not just people in Boston but all of us. You have to do it right.

C: Nate Cabral-Curtis: Those are good comments. We appreciate them.

C: Mike O'Dowd: I want to highlight the fact that we do understand what you have expressed. Express service is critical for commuters coming in from Metro West. It is important for us to look at how you can move people as quickly as possible along the commuter rail route.

One of the refinements we are looking at is the idea of a Flip. This secures the opportunity for the MBTA commuter rail to operate that express service. Any express trains coming in from Ashland, Framingham, and Worcester would have the ability to bypass West Station completely. You would go right down into Lansdowne and follow on into South Station and avoid having to divert throughout the station and lose valuable time for commuters in the morning or in the evening as well. The only trains that would be going through here are the local service trains. I recognize that many of the people that I work with at MassDOT share this ride with you every morning and every evening. It is as much a concern for them as it is for many folks sitting here this evening. One of the things that we're striving to do is to find ways to avoid any unneeded stop overs if it's at all possible.

C: Mary Kate Feeney: Thank you. My name is Mary Kate Feeney. I'm a resident of Framingham. I've been a commuter in and out of Boston for almost 20 years now and I've seen it all. There's no such thing as rush hour anymore. I was in traffic at eight o'clock last night coming from Boston. We talked a lot about commuters. I'm a former member of the Patrick-Murray Administration, so I remember when this project was first announced, and I was very excited about it. It's going to be ready when I'm 50, so I'm not that excited about it. One of the things that I'm really concerned about is that this is going to choke our quality of life here in MetroWest. We talk a lot about commuters, which is very important. I commute in and out of Boston. What about businesses that are here? We can't access them. They can't access their clients or employees or resources that they depend on in Boston and Cambridge. I'm a small business owner. I have clients in the area. I'm actually thinking about moving out of Boston and coming somewhere else. I know I'm

not alone. This is also about students getting in and out of school. Then also, this is about our property values and property taxes. If no one wants to be here in Metro West, if no one wants to live here, businesses don't want to start here. Those could be devastating effects for us out here, so while commuting is very, very important, we also have to think about the people who are already living here as well and don't have to go into Boston as much depend on it in other ways. I want to echo what the Senate President said, and I do agree with her that this is a time and opportunity for bold ideas, this is where the commuter rail could be the commuter rail that we've always wanted. I had to chuckle to myself when I saw that there was a layover yard. As far as I'm concerned, you shouldn't have that many trains laying over. It should be running trains all the time consistently so that people can get to where they want to go.

We have a public transportation system that we deserve here on the Commonwealth for the 21st century. We have to have train service that runs all the time, is cost affordable, is effective, and efficient. This is the time. This is the chance for us to get people to use the train and have them know that that is the best way to get in. You've got to run more trains. You need more cars on the trains and connect people to bike shares and ride shares and all the other opportunities. This is where the future is. We are going to miss the opportunity if we don't take this chance to improve our commuter rail system. I have to say my heart sank when I saw that we'd be down for one track. I know you don't know how long that's going to be, but that is going to be devastating and that's going to ruin the commuter rail. No one is going to want to take it and we're going to miss the opportunity. I will say we will miss the train if that happens.

A: Nate Cabral-Curtis: The only response I'd make to that is that many of the project team dwell in MetroWest like you with offices there and downtown. Mark, do you want to say anything about the layover and utility?

C: Mark Shamon: Okay. There are a lot of issues in terms of what the capacity is. I think everyone would agree that trains running more of the time would be beneficial. I don't think there's anyone who doubts that, but you have to have the capacity to do that. If you think about the commuter system, and I know it's more than just commuters, but all these trains are coming into South Station, basically all at once. And there's only so much space at South Station, so they have to go someplace else to allow other trains to come in because we've got trains coming in all the time. There is just not enough capacity in the system as it stands right now to really operate those trains. Just on the Worcester line itself, we've got issues around the Newtons because trains have to jump tracks there. We've got issues on the West side of Route 128 where there's only two tracks and they're looking at an option to add a third track. We would add to some of that capacity. Out in Worcester, right now it's a one-track station, so we've got to expand that

station out there. There are a lot of other improvements that would have to be made, not only on the Worcester Line, but all the other lines that have a lot of our single tracking as well. The idea that we can just keep running trains on single tracks going back and forth all day under the current system just isn't a reality. Maybe, someday we get to your vision. I think for the time being until such time as all those other improvements are made, will require the system to have to have some layover.

C: Senator Spilka: It can be more frequent though. More trains could run in the middle of day and the late morning. I hate to intervene but there could be more. There could be more than there are now.

C: Mark Shamon: Understood. There are limitations. There could be improvements, but we can't have all the trains going in and out all the time. Not enough to eliminate layover. There is still a need to switch crews, perform housekeeping chores, and do the light repairs I mentioned earlier.

Q: Bill Lynch: Thank you. My name is Bill Lynch and I live here in Framingham. I am sure it is not easy for you to stand here for two hours and have daggers thrown at you. I have two questions. Before that, I do want to say that I feel like my intelligence was insulted a little while ago. This young lady in the back here asked you what you're going to do for us as far as the commuter rail goes. You said, "Well, we were going to cut you down to one track, but we made this improvement and now we're going to put you back to two tracks, almost". That's not helping us. You are taking something that's pretty bad, making it way worse, and then putting it back to pretty bad and saying, "That's what we're doing for you". That's not doing anything for us. That's my first comment.

My second comment is we're talking about a roadway that needs to handle cars 14 years from now and a hundred years from now. Did you guys think ahead as far as how much more traffic is going to be created? I'm looking at Storrow Drive and its four lanes now on both sides and it looks like it will be four lanes when you're done. 20 years from now, there's going to be X percent more traffic. Was there any way to figure that into your plan?

A: Mike O'Dowd: I will try to answer both of your questions, going back to the woman's question that you referred to. I don't want to minimize what I anticipate. It's going to take a lot of time and patience to be able to get through this. This is an extremely unique and difficult project where we have so many modes of transportation in one centralized location.

We've done major projects throughout the entire state. Nate and I and the project team here have been responsible for delivering a lot of them. This is a very confined area where we have a

whole lot of people and a lot of different uses going through this area. We're trying to find the balance. We don't want to penalize anybody. We recognize what the hardships are going to be and you're going to be suffering from it. We know that. We're trying to find the ways that we can possibly avoid those, and if we can't avoid it, we will minimize it as much as we possibly can.

One of the ways that was brought to our attention very early on is the idea of going to a single track. That was unacceptable and we forced ourselves to find a way where we can reduce or minimize the extent of time it would be. 8-10 years on a single track is unacceptable so we tried to find ways of reducing that which is how we came up with the idea of a temporary bridge over the Charles River, which we had begun to look at for the purposes of staging the job anyway. Over the course of the last month, we sat down with regulatory agencies as well as users of the Charles River and said, "This is what we're going to have to do because members of the public and commuters from MetroWest area are need to find ways to commute through". Users of the rivers said "You know what? Its fine, provided we can have a continued dialog with you about safety and how the river will operate while you're in it". We recognize there are going to be impacts to everybody across the board. If we can eliminate the need to go to single track, we'd love to. We also recognize the fact that it's nearly impossible for us to do that and still maintain all of the traffic.

To your comments relative to volumes, we've done a study on traffic back in 2015 and are currently doing another study to find how many people are using commuter rail to find out how many people are using the Commuter Rail, Soldiers Field Road, and the turnpike from this area. Over 200,000 people are going through this particular location on a daily basis. Significant numbers of people are going through here and we're trying to keep them all moving.

We are trying to find where that delicate balance is where one person isn't shouldering all that pain and another person isn't drawing all of the benefits is nearly impossible to do. That's why we will be working over the course of the next few years before we go out in construction to come up with an approach that we think we can minimize those impacts. It may be that the design/build team comes up with another idea and we will need to be prepared to listen and see whether that makes sense or doesn't make sense while keeping in mind all of the concerns that the public has brought to our attention, not only in the City of Boston, but also out here in MetroWest.

Q: Mary Connaughton: My name's Mary Connaughton and I am from Framingham. I certainly support a two-track guarantee throughout the process. I said that before. I have two questions. One is on the layover facility. When those trains go in and out of the layover, they will be on the

Worcester line. How could they not disrupt mid-day service? I would like you to consider another location for a layover facility than West Station. Secondly, since it's clear that the Soldiers' Field Road is going to be over the Charles River for 8-10 years, which is an enormous undertaking in and of itself, could it be that the Paul Dudley White Path remain in the river permanently and Soldiers Field Road and the Turnpike remains at grade, therefore shortening the amount of construction time and perhaps eliminating the need for any for single track at all? I know that there will be alternatives considered in the environmental impact study. Could that be an alternative considered?

A: Mike O'Dowd: You're right that other lines will be using the layover facility. I believe about 60% of all the traffic in the system is on the Worcester line. This is the heaviest-traveled line in the system for commuter rail. The demands for the layover yard are on this line. The layover yard created here, will help service other some of the other trains and lines, but the layover is primarily for this line.

Q: Mary Connaughton: I think we need to see the number of trains going through because I don't think it makes sense to have it there. I think that needs to be well understood by the people in Metro West. Additionally, right now the plan is to depress the Pike by about 6-ft which causes maintenance and snow issues which is harder and more costly to maintain. And we know that maintaining a viaduct for Soldiers Field Road is more costly than at-grade. I hope that an alternative is considered to keep it all at-grade. There will be less construction, lower costs, and a reduced need for single tracking.

A: Mike O'Dowd: Understood. When we investigated an all at-grade scenario, we looked at permanent impacts in the Charles River. The Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs and the Secretary of Transportation were both opposed to permanent fill. We've also discussed that with federal and state regulatory agencies to take their temperature as well. Their first question was whether it was temporary or permanent. Permanent impacts were a non-starter. None of the regulatory agencies were prepared to accept a permanent fill or placement of Soldiers' Field Road over of the River.

Q: Mary Connaughton: What about the bike path? I think that should be considered.

A: Michael O'Dowd: The Paul Dudley White Path over the river would be constituted as a fill as well. We can take a look. We to have to see whether or not there's any benefits to the constructability of the project. There may but there may not be.

Q: Tina Hein, *Holliston Select Board*: Hi my name is Tina Hein and I am on the Select Board of Holliston. I can envision a day where I can bike from Holliston to the Framingham Commuter Rail Station. I could envision getting off at West Station to go into Cambridge. Can you bike or ride me through how I would get off at West Station and get onto the Paul Dudley White Back Path?

A: Michael O'Dowd: There are two connections to West Station for cyclists crossing over to Cambridge Street south. We're proposing a 25' path for non-motorized users to have direct access over to the expanded Paul Dudley White Path with separate pathways for bicyclists and pedestrians and avoiding any interruption at Soldiers Field Road.

C: Nate Cabral-Curtis: The plan is to have fully protected intersections up to MassDOT Complete Streets standards as well.

Q: Ann Tennite: Hi, my name is Ann Tennite from Framingham. While I am supportive of more people using the train, I live in this neighborhood and the bugaboo for years has been the at-grade crossing of the Commuter Rail line. Traffic currently backs up from Route 135 up all the way to Route 30 many times a day. When we're taking about closing the Turnpike and getting more people onto the train, we have to think about mitigation in Framingham downtown and what are we going to with the traffic from people travelling to the train station. Where are we supposed to park?

A: Michael O'Dowd: I know that's a struggle. People struggle to park already. One of the things I hear loud and clear is that the disruptions to the commuter rail will be unacceptable. One of the ideas we have been talking about to the Secretary and the General Manager of the MBTA is the possibility of providing all bilevel coaches in this run. Right now, we are running a mix of bilevel and single. We're looking at that. If that 9-car train had all bilevel coaches, that would be fantastic and would help us move as many people as possible. General Manager Poftak and his team are looking at what it would take to secure, purchase, and allocate coaches for that purpose.

Parking issues are not unique to Framingham. We face parking issues throughout the network and throughout the region – there's not enough parking. We encourage people to walk and bike to the stations if they can.

Q: Kathy McCarthy: Hi, my name is Kathy McCarthy, Framingham. I was a Dorchester resident before we got married 43 years ago and we chose Framingham. I've been coming back and forth on the Pike, even with the extra tolls, rather than Route 9 because of the flooding, traffic, etc. We

sat in this room and heard, when we thought we were going to have less tolls, there would actually be increases. We've heard the commuter rail would be better and it's worse. Whether it is business, social events, appointments, getting a flight to Logan, whatever, now it's going to be worse than ever. It's another Big Dig. I'm 67 now. In 13 years, I doubt I'll be driving. In all those years, many of the things we all enjoy or need to do, won't be possible. There's a lot going to be happening. Having commuter rail impacts at the same time construction is ludicrous. To have a temporary trestle is one thing but that disturbs the river both to install and take it out. Extra trains are well and good but we in Framingham have gridlock downtown with no reprieve of folks being able to get back and forth. Route 9 is flooded. The state has supposedly tried to fix it multiple times and they have another plan, but I doubt they'll fix it. We are paying more tolls than we should. We'll get less service on the commuter rail and the highway. It's unconscionable and foolish to do both at the same time if you're not going to have at-grade. It's not just problematic in the short-term – it's not like it will be a month here or certain times of day like the bridges. This is years out of people's lives where they might need to change jobs because they can't get home to take care of the people they love. I think you've got a long way to go to satisfy Metro West in any way shape or form. We all want better transportation. It has to be affordable and it has to be reliable. It is not either. It keeps going up in Framingham and the fact is that we don't believe that this will make it better. You have to sell us something better than "somewhere in the blue yonder it may be better after we do this for these people", on the backs of us. Thank you for coming. I am sorry I was reprimanding. This is a big problem for us and has big impacts and we don't see that the plan is doing anything for us.

A: Michael O'Dowd: This is the first time we're here and we will be back. At that time, I hope we'll be able to show you direct improvements as we progress through those.

Q: No Name Given: Thank you for coming. I'm wondering if you've done enough reimaging of the entire transportation grid in this area because everything goes into and out of Boston. Many of us are trying to go north and south and the transfer from one direction to another is sometimes impossible. What I saw today was an enlargement of existing bottlenecks. Where are the new bridges to get over to Cambridge? I might as well have a job trying to go from MetroWest to Boston because there's no time to get to work and get anything done. What will you do to get rid of these bottlenecks? Why not thinking about grid going across the whole area that allows people to go north, south, east, and west and not trip over each other's feet?

A: Michael O'Dowd: Chris touched in this. There are about 150,000 people on the turnpike every day. I believe here are between 15,000 to 18,000 on the commuter rail and about 75,000 on Soldiers Field Road. All of those routes convene here. That's why it's been such a challenge for

Eric Maki, our transportation engineer, to figure out how to process all these people and get them to points north like MIT and Kendall Square as well as the medical institutions in the Longwood area. That will be key here to service all those users. We want to redistribute them into this grid, so they aren't tripping over each other. We are trying to figure out what is the best way to serve those users and process them safely and efficiently through this area. It is not easy, and it is a struggle.

Q: No Name Given: What about roads that don't exist now? Why don't you send people where they want to go instead of sending them into Boston?

A: Michael O'Dowd: That is a great point. In 2015 we did a regional study of all Eastern Massachusetts that went all the way out to I-495 to try and identify traffic flows. We wanted to know, when we disrupt this area, what are the options available for people? The capacity isn't there to handle demand. As the Senate President said earlier, we need to find better ways to transport people. We're looking at everything within our ability at MassDOT but can't all be implemented over an 8-10 year period. As the Secretary has pointed out, the technology is there but it takes time to implement. We're looking, there are visions and plans, and we're trying to implement them. In the meantime, we have a viaduct out there now that 150,000 people are on that is deteriorating. The steel is deteriorating. You can see the patchwork on the deck. We have maintenance folks out there patching this continually. We are keeping it going as long as we can, but we need to act on it. We're trying to get through this project as quickly as possible while we plan many years out. We have to act on this because the viaduct is failing, and we can't withstand the consequences of a critical failure.

Q: Brian Kelly: Hi, I am Brian Kelly from Marlborough. I've been traveling through this area a while. With this layover station, do they have to go into South Station and back out? If not all of us have to get into the city, can there be a more robust option to terminate any trains at West Station instead of South? I would just take it to West Station and then take the Green Line. I take the Green Line all the time. Could you start part of the project earlier and put the rail in first? That would work out well for me.

A: Nate Cabral-Curtis: The folks designing this station have been careful about making the connection to the Green Line good.

Q: Caroline Leevy: Hi, my name is Caroline Leevy and I live in Framingham Center. I drive my husband to the train once per week and there's a lot of traffic. I don't mind driving my husband to the train but if there were a streetcar from Saxonville and people could get dropped off or ride their bicycles there and then take a streetcar, it would help. There used to be a streetcar on

Route 9. Could get some help with transportation that is aligned with the train? When could Worcester Station get a second platform? With an aging fleet of trains, what will the impact be on the train lifespan as we start running more service? Finally, what's your view on a millionaire's tax to help pay for this? I worked on a ballot question a few years ago, asking for a 4% above \$1m income and people were very supportive.

A: Michael O'Dowd: As an employee of transportation, I think the benefits of that were significant because they would have been used for education and transportation which are extremely important. That's, of course, my personal opinion. As far as utilization of the coaches, I know that the MBTA General Manager and the executive leadership are striving to replace a lot of the stock currently on the line. Many of those coaches are running well beyond what their service life was intended to be. I don't know what they do once they decommission them and if they can be utilized for anything else. That is well beyond my area of expertise. I'm a highway and bridge guy. Regarding better access to the station from the surrounding neighborhoods, I'll bring that back to our Secretary and Administration and say, "Here are their thoughts. Could we increase bus service from neighborhoods to stations so we can alleviate some of the traffic and parking issues during construction?"

Q: John Stenafi: Hi, John Stenafi from Framingham. First, I would like to thank Representative Dykema for your leadership. Madame President Spilka and Mary Kate outlined a good list of questions and impacts. I want to underscore thinking about bold, creative, and innovative ideas in advance. We have carshare lots in Framingham that are basically unused and non-existent. The bus line has been shut down. The use of technology and others for rideshare. This is not part of the dialogue.

A: Michael O'Dowd: It is part of the dialogue. Two weeks ago, I sat down with the Secretary to keep her apprised of what is going on with this project. Both she and the Highway Administrator are both favoring ways that we can increase usage of Park & Ride areas and provide bus services to those areas so we can avoid the need to bring people any closer than 128. If we can minimize vehicular traffic coming inside 128 by providing services necessary to transport people between transit and the Park & Ride lots, that's what we're striving to do. That's one of the things we're seriously looking at for this project as mitigation.

C: John Stenafi: Five words: bold, creative, innovative, in advance.

Q: Christopher Manero: Hello, my name Christopher Manero. This is my first meeting, I'm not sure exactly the etiquette of the meeting. It seemed like we have elected officials go up first and ask question and then the public asks questions, but their questions weren't actually answered.

Will they be answered in a group email or something? I don't understand why we repeat their questions again. It's not efficient.

A: Michael O'Dowd: I would like to get copies of those questions and I will provide responses to them. You can be sure they'll be addressed.

Q: Christopher Manero: A lot of times in this country, the infrastructure is really bad and upkeep is almost zero. The government would rather build something new and cut a ribbon but, I am hoping when you build half of something that isn't going to be used in the future, hopefully the contract includes upkeeping. When I have friends visit from Connecticut, they ask, "What is going on with the state?" They don't have grade crossings. It's either the trains going under the road or going over the road. We have intersections that people were talking about here, that cuts the flow and that also increases pollution because we're all standing idle and putting out gases. When you say you're going to flip things, are the lines still going to be crossing other transit ways? That is not efficient and not useful. When there will be slowdowns or closures in the rail system, is it for the building of something pending that will be something later that will be fruitful because having an impact on us for something of that nature doesn't seem logical. With the road over the river, it's not legal to push contaminated snow into the river.

No one has said anything about transportation costs yet. If the train is more available maybe, you'll get more people. I'll go to a 24/7 store over one that isn't just to show appreciation for the extended hours. The same thing may happen with this system. Cost is part of why you don't get people. I went to a concert in Boston recently and mapped it out: it cost more to go through the transit system than driving even with paying for a parking garage. Why would you add time and pay more money? I would love to have just hung out and not have my foot on a pedal. If it was cost-effective, it would be better. Why aren't there solar panels on the top of the cars? They manufacture synthetic diamonds that carry electricity at high rates that could help with those engines. Sooner or later we'll have smart cars that may be moving without idiosyncrasies of humanity. I think that is it.

A: Michael O'Dowd: Those are all good comments. Thank you very much.

Q: Jane Todd: My name is Jane Todd and I live in Framingham. I used to commute into Boston, go to Riverside and take a bus. More buses and more parking at Riverside may alleviate some of the Pike traffic. I don't know if you are aware of all the apartments going in near Framingham Commuter Rail station.

A: Michael O'Dowd: I have not been here in a few years and when I saw all the new development today, my jaw dropped.

Q: Jane Todd: In this timeframe, you'll have many more people on the commuter rail so, it's imperative we improve that. My other comment is hours of construction. Will it be around the clock? Will there be downtime during winters because of snow and freezing weather?

A: Michael O'Dowd: We need to look at that. We will incentivize the contract to get through as quickly as possible, that means working longer hours – typically 16-hour shifts. That has been successful on many projects in last decade to minimize impacts in the peak hours. There's really no downtime anymore when it is 10pm or when we are doing meetings like this, the highway is still crowded. We know that's the case. Years ago, we could start 7pm and work until 5am. Peak hours are now running up until 10 or 11 at night. Our window of opportunity is compressed. We encourage them to work to avoid peak impacts.

C: Nate Cabral-Curtis: Right now, Mike and I are together on another project on the North Shore and they think that project is as big as this for you.

C: Michael O'Dowd: That project is the I-90 Allston Multimodal Project of the North Shore. It impacts the Governor directly because he lives up there and he was not a big fan of us closing down the Chelsea Viaduct either just like the Senate President here, but this is our opportunity to try and improve on the deficiencies that have been untouched over the last several decades.

Q: Joe Benoit: Thank you, gentleman. I'm a resident of Framingham from the private sector. We need to create value in the private sector. The first question I had coming in was how will it be paid? Senate President Spilka asked that and did a great job protecting MetroWest from toll increases. When we review projects in the private sector, we do not maintain the status quo. You indicate 150,000-200,000 people going through the project area. What is the target to push more people through that section? If you are just maintaining the status quo, I would just patch things together until you can push more things together. It should be part of an integrated plan to double the capacity and put 400,000 people through. Then, over time you can build something to push more people through. I don't know what you're proposing other than maintain the existing capacity.

A: Michael O'Dowd: The target us to ensure that the regional traffic model and growth planned over the next 20 years, looking at 2040 to anticipate needs for transportation, will be accommodated. We want this to work for people using the highway, using the commuter rail, cyclists, and pedestrians.

Q: Joe Benoit: I am a number guy. How many more people are we going to be able to push through when you are done?

A: Michael O'Dowd: I have those numbers, but I don't have them at the top of my head. The objective is to look 20 years from now and make sure that we will be able to process and accommodate the number of people that are going to be employed in the region, the number of people that are going to be living in the region and the number of people going to be commuting through this region. 20 years from now, we'll still be able to operate at a reasonable level of service. We are improving it to meet future demands.

A: Eric Maki: The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) has all of this information in Chapter 5 of the report.

C: Josh Ostroff: My name is Josh Ostroff and I live in Natick. My day job is I work for a transportation advocacy coalition called Transportation for Massachusetts (T4MA). I also serve on the Advisory Committee with Senator Brownsberger on a project called Rail Vision. Rail Vision is intended to provide a long-range plan for the MBTA. Later this year the board will look at seven different scenarios and provide a recommendation. That does not mean it is funded. They go into the billions of dollars but there is a question about the fleet. We could be looking at an electrified system. There needs to be an intersection of this planning project and that to help inform it. If there's a recommendation for a certain kind of propulsion system down the road, we need to be planning for that. I applaud Representative Robinson for suggesting dedicated bus lanes. We need to be moving more people in fewer vehicles on the same footprint of land. Thank you very much.

A: Michael O'Dowd: The results of Rail Vision are being shared with us regularly. Anything we build at West Station needs to be able to accommodate future electrification if that becomes a goal.

Q: Ron Feldman: I am Ron Feldman and I live in Framingham. Thank you for coming here. I am trying to envision what I'm getting out of this in 2032 when I'll be 87. You have done a great job showing what is going to be done with videos and maps. I am trying to move up a level to what we're going to be gaining. Yes, we have a viaduct structure that needs to be fixed. What are we gaining? It seems like we are just moving things around. What are we getting for all this?

A: Michael O'Dowd: Many things. Transportation is being improved. The viaduct is our top priority. We design things for a 75-year lifespan, and this viaduct is going up on 60. If we invested significant amounts of money into it, we could keep it going for another 10, but it is

money that would be lost. We would be throwing good money for no purpose. Throughput and capacity will be greater by straightening out. It will be safer. Two locations in the project area are some of the worst in the state in terms of safety. We've had deaths, unfortunately, just in the duration of this project on I-90 and on Cambridge Street. It is incumbent on us as engineers to avoid harm. New transit here – not just at West Station which will address the needs of the local community, but the express track we are proposing means that express trains from Worcester and Framingham can move quicker and safer. There is a high-speed track here which is why MassDOT adamant that it moves through quickly. We are trying improving headways. We are exploring how to move more people in a shorter amount of time with bilevel coaches. There are a number of public interest benefits and transportation-specific interests being served with this project.

Q: Ron Feldman: So, that exit up in Allston that is a mess now, will be better?

C: Michael O'Dowd: Much. Right now, that intersection is one of the 10 worst areas for crashes in the state. We'll be able to improve the geometry and move more people with coordinated signals.

C: Eric Maki: All of the traffic is all bundled up in one spot right now and we are going to split everything up. That will reduce delays and increase throughput.

Q: Chuckie Tallot: My name is Chuckie Tallot from Westborough. I don't take the Pike in as much as I used to. I saw the Grand Junction Line – isn't that a little one-lane train that crosses under the Boston University bridge?

A: Michael O'Dowd: That is a single-track operation now, but it used to be a double track. It services MBTA and also produce markets in the Chelsea area. Those produce markets take in a lot of produce that comes in from various parts of the country through Western Massachusetts.² The primary purpose of the line right now is for the MBTA to service their locomotives and coaches over at the Boston Engine Terminal in Somerville. They use that on a daily basis. One of the Rail Vision study's hopes is that that could have passenger service between West Station over to Kendall and ultimately, over to North Station. That's a vision for the future. What we're doing here is anticipate it could happen and ensure that the track and infrastructure components are in place for that to happen later.

Q: Chuckie Tallot: That's another rail 'throat' there. There's no space there.

² The New England Produce Center handles all fruits and vegetables consumed in New England which are not locally produced in the New England states. It also handles significant volumes of meat and fish.

A: Michael O'Dowd: We have that struggle throughout the Commonwealth. The idea would be to doubletrack over the Grand Junction Line bridge in the future.

Q: Chuckie Tallot: It took us 8 years to get to the moon 50 years ago. This is Massachusetts, your chances of getting there in 10 years are zero. You have to assume 15 years of construction. That's too big for people's attention span. You should make it go a lot faster or break it into different segments. That's construction in Massachusetts – not your fault.

A: Michael O'Dowd: We have had a good track record over the last 10 years. That is a challenge for us, and we believe we can deliver on that challenge.

Q: Alex Carlock: Hi, my name is Alex Carlock and I am here from Framingham. I am curious. Why isn't there a direct interchange from I-90 to Soldiers Field Road? It looks like you have to get off highway and take side-roads to make that connection.

A: Michael O'Dowd: We evaluated at least 26 different variations and we tried to find a direct connection. After one iteration after another and screening all of those alternatives, the direct connection fell out. There was an attempt to make that happen.

C: Nate Cabral-Curtis: I'd add that connections are more direct than they are today. Today you want to go to SFR you go through spaghetti – now it'll be much simpler.

Q: Alex Carlock: That leads to my next question. Right now, going to Cambridge, the traffic backs up and sometimes it almost reaches highway. I am assuming with the new set up, the hope and desire is that traffic will be off the Pike and allow higher volumes on the Pike.

A: Michael O'Dowd: We still acknowledge that Memorial Drive and Cambridge Street will still be a problem. We can get you across the bridge faster but there is only so much we can do once you hit the boundaries of Cambridge.

Q: Alex Carlock: It has always evident to me that Cambridge doesn't want more and faster cars getting into there. As long as the cars are getting off the highway, that is good. I see that a lot of interchanges, like Newton Corner, where the interchanges back up and the traffic stops the highway.

A: Nate Cabral-Curtis: Eric has spent substantial time ensuring that the tailing queue from the interchange back onto the highway is not going to be there. The other thing I'd say is that right now everyone comes off the ramp and is coming to one overwhelmed signal. The idea here is that it breaks up traffic into manageable bites.

C: Bill Rabkin: Hi, my name is Bill Rabkin and I live here in Framingham. Thanks for all the work and presentation. I really appreciated the animated clips that give us a vision of the future. You're replacing a 4-lane Soldiers Field Road at-grade with a 4-lane Soldiers Field Road viaduct. And a six-lane Turnpike with a six-lane Turnpike. What's the percentage increase in vehicle capacity that we will see in 2023?

Q: Michael O'Dowd: Eric, do you have the numbers at the top of your head?

C: Eric Maki: It's not as straightforward as that. Development will disperse trips around the area and we're looking at that. We're also making efficiencies and safety improvements to the highway. You can't simply add lanes in the middle of a system and not add them everywhere else. We have to manage everything together. The whole model we have of Eastern Massachusetts looks at job growth and population changes in every town out to 2040.

C: Nate Cabral-Curtis: The only thing I'll add is the Turnpike will be 6 lanes during construction. It will be back to 8 lanes in final condition. There is only so much land and we are forced to make the efficiencies within the constraints.

Q: Dennis Giombetti: Who is responsible for mitigation plan?

A: Michael O'Dowd: MassDOT.

Q: Dennis Giombetti: Is there a budget for mitigation?

A: Michael O'Dowd: We haven't established it yet because it will depend on conversations that are still ongoing. The construction budget is estimated at around \$1.2 billion.

Q: Dennis Giombetti: As a resident of MetroWest, I am a little disappointed there hasn't been more thought yet for mitigation. The design work and construction process has been advanced and looked at many times knowing that a major population will be impacted by this project no matter what you do and how it is designed. There is not a distinct strategy for what will occur. Is the strategy to move people off the Pike onto the commuter rail? What's the overall strategy? What's the mitigation potential? The irony of this is you move all the freight and trucks off the road and into Worcester and now you add trucks back onto the road to get stuff into the city. There is so much truck traffic on the Pike, way more than in years past. Are there any thoughts of restricting truck traffic during certain periods of time to allow commuters in? My bigger question is we need a thoughtful mitigation approach and it can't wait until a year or 6 months before construction. We have to think about it now.

A: Michael O'Dowd: We have talked about that internally as well as with the elected officials. That is a discussion they really want to jumpstart. On all major projects throughout the Commonwealth, we need to find a way to mitigate the construction impacts with the construction means and methods before we look at packages or benefits to adjacent communities. We need to find ways to construct this in the most effective way possible so that we can continue to move all of the people that are currently using it and the commuter. If we can't do that, then we need to mitigate it and find alternative routes and means for them to get through.

Q: Dennis Giombetti: That mitigation will be costly and time-consuming. For example, if you want to increase the number of trains. We all know getting engines is a long process and takes several years. If that's part of potential solution, we need to think of it now. That is my concern. You need to start thinking of it now.

A: Michael O'Dowd: We are thinking of it. Conversations are being had with the General Manager of the MBTA and the Secretary of Transportation to identify how we can increase the volume of coaches that are running through so that we can have them available and ready before we have the greatest impacts which will probably be in Year 2 of construction which will probably be sometime in 2025. We have a little bit of time to think about that.

Q: Caroline Leavy: Have you thought about an app to help people carpool and entice them with tax breaks or less tolls or off-peak cheaper tolls? When I go to ballet on Saturday morning it takes 30 minutes. It should only take that much time all the time. When I am in Boston, I have to leave by 2pm or it will take forever to get home.

A: Michael O'Dowd: In the past, in Springfield, for instance, on I-91, we just did a major rehabilitation of the viaduct through downtown Springfield. One of the reasons we have Nate and his team is to reach out to the major employers to encourage them to offer teleworking as an option and so that their employees know about rideshare or Park and Ride opportunities. We try to encourage them to help alleviate their employees' stress and congestion. It worked extremely well on I-91. We had about 70,000-80,000 people using that each day and we dropped it 15-20% in volumes because we approached a lot of the major employers and they found ways to help. We did it in Chelsea and did wide outreach on the North Shore and we'll do the same thing here. We're just starting out. We'll be back. In the meantime, we'll have a better understanding of local concerns and how to address. And if there are apps, I'm sure Nate can find them.

C: Nate Cabral-Curtis: With the Chelsea Viaduct, we spoke to employers like Fidelity and Fenway Park. One of the great things about here rather than Boston is there are a lot of office parks, which are captive fishbowls. It is easy for us to get in there and distribute materials.

C: No Name Given: I had a similar question to someone else's about capacity. Why not widen the roads? Obviously, with the huge bottle neck, each end is still only a certain number of lanes. Unless there is a longer-range plan to increase lanes all the way through the Prudential Tunnel into downtown Boston, it doesn't make much sense to add an extra lane. When you removed the toll on the pike, there were places where the total numbers of lanes were reduced. I was worried about that. It's been fine and it hasn't been as negative as I thought because by removing the tolls, you removed bottlenecks along the way. A 2-lane Pike in certain sections has mostly been fine because it's straight through-section. I think by straightening things out, this will help increase the capacity without adding lanes.

A: Michael O'Dowd: That's our hope. Initially it will be painful but as time progresses, it'll find a balance. It did during Commonwealth Avenue reconstruction. The first month or so hurt but it settled out and the worst leveled off after the first few months and the time-delays getting from Framingham into Boston weren't as significant as expected.

Q: Kathy McCarthy: I don't know if this was videoed but there was frustration in the room and I share that because people ask question but they don't get feedback. I know you tried but still. So, people don't realize that they are heard because we don't see in Metro West a benefit in this project. The frustration is you saying that the benefits will be coming up later when we're taking the hit and have been for years. We've been taking the tolls. When we first came out to Framingham, we both had a car but now every kid in the neighborhood has a car. Things have changed. Businesses have moved out and will move out further. It will continue to expand. The problem in Massachusetts that I see is that it's not maintained throughout so therefore things like bridges don't get the investment they need so that we can keep it. Hopefully, as we are moving forward, we can have a solution to the downtown trains that stop everything in their tracks. That should be part of the mitigation. It won't be cheap, but it should be part of the solution. On Route 9, you need to stop flooding. We should have synchronized lights which we don't have. One accident or flood on Route 9 and traffic goes everywhere. You're just moving the traffic somewhere else and saying that we will have less traffic, but you're just transferring it elsewhere. People in the suburbs seem to want to drive. They do a cost analysis and time analysis. That mentality has expanded over the years. Thank you all for coming and for taking your time and the beautiful graphics but even just to get off the Pike to go to Mass General, there might be different options, but you'll still have all these stops along the way. This doesn't seem to be an improvement on the roads and the bridges because you're not maintaining it. Keep that in mind. Maybe when you go to the other places, you can video tape it. Maybe send a message to the people who signed up for the email with a bullet list of frequently asked questions.

A: Nate Cabral-Curtis: What you've signed up for tonight is MassDOT's GovDelivery system. Jeff Dietrich has been working hard on the minutes and he has access to the system for this job. Emails will come from us with the blessing of Mike and Dan Fielding. The next thing you'll see from us will likely be a reminder notification for the Worcester meeting in about two weeks.

We have done FAQ documents before and we can take a look at the materials to make sure those questions are answered. The fact sheet tries to hit on some of those questions.

Thank you all for coming. Have a wonderful night.

Next Steps

The project team will host another public information meeting in Worcester on August 14, 2019 introduce residents of the City and surrounding communities to the I-90 Allston Multimodal Project.

The NEPA Scoping Document for the I-90 Multimodal Project is currently in progress and is expected to be made available to the public later this fall. A public comment period will follow publication of the document.

Appendix 1: Meeting Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Dale		
Mahmood	Akhatar	
Jonjy	Amath	
Glen	Berkowitz	A Better City
Joe	Beroit	
Fenna	Beverly	
Jorge	Briones	MBTA/Task Force
Charles	Butal	
Esther	Byun	
Michael	Cannon	
Ed	Carr	
John	Coutinho	
James	Culhane	
Mary Kate	Feeney	
Bob	Feldman	
Michael	Ferriero	
Dan	Fielding	
Sue	Fieldman	
Erica	Frank	
Brinsley	Fuller	
Dennis	Giombetti	
Yolonda	Greaves	
Beth	Greezy	
Ben	Gustafson	
Audrey	Hall	
Tina	Hein	
Walter	Heller	

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Krishma	Johnson	
Alexander	Labowitz	
Ryan	Labrese	
Ed	Landsudy	
Laurie	Lee	
Janet	Leombruno	
Samuel	Ley	
Bill	Lynch	
Tom	Mahoney	
Christopher	Manero	
Kathie	McCarthy	
Brian	McPherson	
Ken	Miller	
Mike	O'Dowd	MassDOT
Mark	Olson	
Josh	Ostroff	
A.	Pearl	
David	Perry	MBTA
William	Rabkin	
Dan	Rao	
Tad	Read	BPDA
Susan	Reilly	
Leah	Robins	
Ball	Scully	
Mark	Shamon	Consultant Team
John	Stefanini	
Adam	Steiner	
Crisa	Thompson	
Katelyn	Thompson	
Jayne	Todd	

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Bradlee	VanBrunt	
Kevin	Walsh	Stantec
Morgan	Wilson	