



Freight Advisory Committee Meeting #3: Summary

April 24, 2017, 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, 60 Congress Street, Springfield

Purpose

The third meeting of the Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) was held to review the conversation from the second FAC meeting, discuss the goals, objectives, and strategies for the Freight Plan, and conduct a group exercise to discuss the draft strategies in more detail. The presentation can be downloaded from the Freight Plan website: www.mass.gov/massdot/FreightPlan

Freight Advisory Committee Attendees

Name of FAC member	Organization	Present	Sent Designee
Tom Tinlin, Chair	Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Highway Division		
Ed Anthes-Washburn	Port of New Bedford	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Chris Atwood	Unistress Corp.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Joe Barr	City of Cambridge	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Pierre Bernier	Maritime International	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Matthew Burwell	Legal Sea Foods	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Joe Carter	SBA Global	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Tom Cosgrove	NFI Industries		
George Fournier	Cumberland Farms	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Charles Hunter	Genesee & Wyoming Railroad		
Colleen Kissane	Connecticut Department of Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mark Marasco	Maple Leaf Distribution Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Gary Roux	Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Lisa Wieland	Massport		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Brandon Wilcox	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)		
Kevin Young	Global Partners		

The following designees attended on behalf of an FAC member:

Name of Designee	Organization
Tim Brennan	MARPA
David Elder	Connecticut Department of Transportation
Laura Gilmore	Massport

MassDOT Attendees

Gabe Sherman, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (OTP).

Project Team Attendees

Nathan Higgins and John Kaliski, Cambridge Systematics (CS).

Regan Checchio and Sarah Paritsky, Regina Villa Associates (RVA).

Public Attendees

The following members of the public also attended: Jillian Bukhenik, Massachusetts Motor Transportation Association; CJ Hoss, City of Pittsfield; Zane Lumelsky, Trains in the Valley.org; Cara Radzins, Capitol Regional Council of Governors.

Welcome and Review

Gabe Sherman, MassDOT Project Manager, said Administrator Tinlin was unable to join due to a last-minute conflict and designated G. Sherman to chair the meeting on his behalf. G. Sherman thanked everyone for attending and led a round of introductions. G. Sherman reviewed the agenda, thanked the FAC members who participated in the online survey, and said CS will share the results. Mr. Sherman said the final FAC meeting will be in New Bedford in May. At this meeting, the project team will present elements of the Draft Freight Plan for everyone to review, and will refine the Plan based on comments received in June or July.

Revised Plausible Futures

John Kaliski, CS, said at the previous meeting, the project team discussed three plausible futures and five categories of drivers (urbanization, technology, knowledge, globalization), as well as the impacts of climate change. J. Kaliski said the first plausible future, Commonwealth Quo, assumes that current trends will continue and mildly accelerate. The Innovation Acceleration future was previously called “Economic Dream” but was renamed based on feedback from the FAC. J. Kaliski said in this scenario, all drivers accelerate significantly. The third scenario, White Picket Fences, assumes technology and globalization plateau, technology and knowledge evolve at a slower rate. He said the team has adapted this future in response to the conversation at the previous FAC meeting. He welcomed questions/feedback (there was none) and thanked the FAC for completing the online survey.

Vision and Goals

J. Kaliski said the Freight Plan is intended to serve the whole commonwealth including industry, the federal government, state agencies, and transportation system users. Input has been collected from the

FAC, public open houses (which immediately follow each FAC meeting), and stakeholder interviews. He summarized public feedback which includes:

- An emphasis on maintaining roads, bridges on trucking routes
- Ideas for how to relieve congestion (time-of-day of delivery or worker shifts)
- Desire to growing other modes to move freight (rail, water, air)
- Concern for impacts from an environmental perspective (conversion from diesel to electric, fuel efficiency)

J. Kaliski summarized the online survey results. He said the group felt the most likely scenario was Commonwealth Quo, with some possibility for the other two futures. He reviewed four strategies that scored well in the survey:

- Keep freight network in a state-of-good-repair
- Integrate freight into local planning
- Identify rural areas suitable for distribution and freight use
- Develop new truck stops and parking areas on primary truck routes

J. Kaliski said there were two solutions that ranked particularly low:

- Regulate CO2 emissions from freight vehicles (J. Kaliski said this strategy has been kept in as it meets a stated Federal goal and a State directive)
- Peak pricing on primary truck routes (J. Kaliski said this will not be included in the Freight Plan)

J. Kaliski summarized the goals of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, which outlines the federal government's guidance for freight plans. J. Kaliski reviewed MassDOT's five performance goals and said the team is looking to reflect each of them in this Plan. The team has also included goals from other Massachusetts agencies that have a stake in the freight system, including Massport and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), and the Massachusetts Municipal Association, representing cities and towns.

J. Kaliski shared a draft vision statement for the Massachusetts freight system. He said it touches on key themes, including safety, state-of-good-repair, economic impacts, mobility, and sustainability. The team also developed guiding principles to implement the vision.

Feedback on Vision and Goals

G. Sherman welcomed input from the FAC members on the draft vision statement and guiding principles. He emphasized that this will help guide the structure of the Freight Plan.

- Joe Barr, City of Cambridge, said that the Freight Plan should capture the fact that the freight system needs to be planned and operated in context of overall transportation system, as there are many shared facilities. G. Sherman suggested the team refine the "experience of all customers" phrase to make it explicit.
- Ed Anthes-Washburn, Port of New Bedford, asked what will happen and what funding will be available after the Plan is released. G. Sherman said once the Plan is accepted by FHWA, MassDOT will be eligible to access approximately \$20 million in annual federal freight funding. The Plan will help MassDOT allocate the funds. E. Anthes-Washburn added that the US Maritime Administration (MARAD) is making an effort for maritime transportation staff to engage with state Departments of Transportation. He offered to provide a regional contact - Jeff Flumignan, MARAD's North Atlantic Gateway Director.

- Tim Brennan, MARPA, described an economic opportunity challenge, which is often the lack of people with talent. He said Massachusetts has a current initiative focused on workforce connections to labor and education.
- David Elder, Connecticut Department of Transportation, said Connecticut's draft Plan and goals/objectives mirror the Massachusetts vision and guiding principles. He said Connecticut added a goal for program and service delivery (to help deliver projects faster, foster collaboration, and facilitate public private partnerships). He offered to share this language with the project team.
- E. Anthes-Washburn commented that the private sector reacts to freight planning from a few decades ago. He offered the example of CSX moving from Allston to Worcester in response to congestion in the Boston area and development along I-495. E. Anthes-Washburn asked if the team is looking at the long-term effect of decisions on the freight system. J. Kaliski said yes, while considering the future and how current trends may change over time. The Plan will allow for flexibility to support different markets and industries.
- D. Elder said Chris Caplice, Executive Director for the MIT Center for Transportation & Logistics suggested that the public sector should have the ability to respond to private sector trends. J. Barr stressed the need for a balance and said that the public must understand the consequences of their decisions.

Strategy Recommendations

N. Higgins said the project team is synthesizing information into three types of strategies for implementing the vision and guiding principles: (1) infrastructure improvements, (2) operational innovations, and (3) policies and people.

N. Higgins said the team followed a qualitative Robust Decision Making process to divide the strategies into five categories:

1. Immediate strategies that address a current need and would work in any future
2. Robust strategies that will address high risk issues that are likely to appear in most futures
3. Shaping strategies that can be used to shape the future
4. Hedging strategies for high-risk issues that may take a long time to address
5. Deferred strategies for low-risk issues that may take a short time to address

N. Higgins said the project team used the survey results to sort strategies into the above categories. Those that received the most support were labeled as immediate strategies; those with some support but not considered top priority were considered robust strategies. The remaining strategies were then grouped into either shaping, hedging or deferred based on risk and whether they would respond to a particular future. He provided examples of immediate strategies: to keep the freight network assets in a state-of-good-repair, to require side guards on trucks to protect cyclists, and support professional development in the trucking profession. N. Higgins said an example of a robust strategy is to protect freight facilities from the potential impacts of climate change. He reviewed examples of hedging strategies (increasing freight capacity at airports other than Logan) and shaping strategies (building routing software for delivery vehicles). Finally, N. Higgins shared a list of deferred strategies that might not be necessary, such as building standardized package drops at homes for the delivery of small packages. Peak pricing on primary truck routes will be excluded from the Freight Plan based on FAC feedback.

N. Higgins asked the FAC if the strategies are properly categorized, if anything is missing, and if any strategy needs to be rephrased. There were no comments, so N. Higgins passed the presentation to G. Sherman to begin the group exercise.

Group Exercise

While worksheets were distributed, G. Sherman introduced the group exercise and explained that the FAC members can break into three groups to discuss a specific category of strategies. The members of the public were encouraged to hold a similar discussion. After 20 minutes, G. Sherman led a report-back for each FAC group to describe the major highlights of the conversation.

Group 1: Infrastructure Improvements

N. Higgins summarized the topics of his group's discussion about infrastructure improvements:

- Need for a clear definition of freight routes and the flexibility to change it over time.
- Need to emphasize the *improvement* of state-of-good-repair of assets.
- Consensus that truck parking is a very important issue to address; opportunities for private sector involvement to develop truck stops.
- Interest in relieving existing capacity, managing it better, and understanding the impact of passenger vehicles on freight capacity (there is a relationship between passenger and freight networks).
- Expansion of air freight – Bradley Airport is starting to get more international service. High value goods will still be shipped even if globalization plateaus.
- Short-sea shipping should be added to the list.
- J. Barr added that investments in mode shift can have benefits for freight. The Commonwealth can help reduce congestion by moving vehicle trips off the freight network.

Group 2: Operational Innovations

G. Sherman reviewed the topics covered during his group's discussion of operational improvements:

- Need for more real-time information and notifications on the road, in vehicles, or on smartphone applications, on regulations, parking, and traffic to create a seamless trip.
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) for rural and suburban roads should be recategorized from deferred strategies to immediate or robust strategies.
- D. Elder added that the deployment of connected truck vehicles is a strategy that will probably happen in the Midwest first, and therefore does not need to be considered an immediate strategy.
- Chris Atwood, Unistress Corp., said his company would like to be able to foresee construction hazards and lane closures before they go into effect. The Commonwealth should notify the trucking industry when traffic impacts are planned.

Group 3: Policies and People

J. Kaliski summarized some key discussion points from his group discussion about policies and people:

- Workforce development should include trucking and all modes, as well as being responsive to technology changes. There is now more demand for transportation technology and supply chain managers.
- Reductions in CO2 emissions support federal standards, but much will be accomplished by operational strategies.
- Local government should integrate freight and distribution into planning processes, but there should be different approaches for those that do and don't see freight as part of their mission.
- Imports/exports should also increase at Massachusetts rail and airports.
- Coordination with neighboring states should be recategorized as an immediate strategy, and partnering with all six New England states, not just Connecticut, would be best.

Proposed Freight Plan Outline

N. Higgins welcomed additional ideas on strategies and the proposed Freight Plan outline after the meeting via email. He provided an overview of the outline and noted that the project team would like input from the FAC on the following specific sections of the Plan:

- Chapter 1 – Vision and Guiding Principles
- Chapter 3 – Plausible futures
- Chapter 4 – Immediate strategies; Robust strategies; Hedge, Shape, and Defer strategies
- Chapter 5 – Implementation strategies by actor

Mark Marasco, Maple Leaf Distribution Services, asked what the word “actor” means. N. Higgins explained that actors can be other state departments of transportation, Massport, MPOs, and other agencies who have a range of responsibilities.

D. Elder asked if the team is looking at bottlenecks affecting the economics of freight in Massachusetts. N. Higgins said that is part of the existing conditions.

E. Anthes-Washburn asked if the team is looking at the cost of congestion. N. Higgins said this has not been done yet, but is a straightforward task for truck bottlenecks and could be incorporated.

Joe Carter, SBA Global, asked which agency is responsible for ITS. G. Sherman said FHWA supports different projects and MassDOT works with FHWA to develop those projects. The all electronic tolling system (AET) is a similar concept. Signs that include times to destinations as well as weigh-in-motion are examples of ITS. J. Kaliski said the federal government and industry are involved in standards, but the state takes the lead in employing ITS.

J. Barr asked if funding will be included in the Freight Plan. N. Higgins said this will be addressed in Chapter 5: Implementation. There are various potential funding resources available at state and federal level.

What's Next

At the FAC meeting on May 24 in New Bedford, the project team will present elements of the Draft Freight Plan with the revised list of strategies for feedback and discussion. G. Sherman encouraged FAC members to stick around for the public open house. G. Sherman thanked the FAC members for their participation and closed the meeting.