
Office of Transportation Planning

Modal Planning Update

September 11, 2017

Today's Presentation

- Discuss the schedule for the Rail Plan, the Freight Plan, the Bicycle Plan, the Pedestrian Plan and Focus 40
- Summarize the reasons for, the public engagement activities of, and the current status and next steps of the Rail Plan and the Freight Plan

Modal planning

- The Office of Transportation Planning conducts modal planning activities in collaboration with our clients throughout MassDOT and the MBTA
- Each plan identifies transportation needs through public outreach, asset management, research, trend analyses, professional judgment, etc.
- The public process for each plan is tailored to the issues involved and stakeholder interest
- All modal plans inform the development of the Capital Investment Plan and support the project development process across MassDOT and the MBTA

Board Involvement

- Over the next three months, we will be presenting on our modal plans:
 - September – Rail Plan and Freight Plan
 - October – Bicycle Plan and Pedestrian Plan
 - November – Focus 40
- Each plan will surface existing and future policy issues and provide context for Board review and input
- Each plan has a unique public process and the Board needs to be aware of and involved in the discussion
- Each plan will identify needs, the implementation of which will impact on the capital and operating budgets

- The last Statewide Rail Plan was adopted in 2010
- The Fast Act (2015) required states to file an updated Rail Plan at least every four years
- Rail Plans are no longer a requirement to receive federal funds; however consistency with the plan is one of the issues FRA looks to when awarding discretionary grants
- The Rail Plan is an FRA approved document and its scope and format is governed by federal rules and guidance

- Work began on the Statewide Rail Plan in August 2015 and the will be completed in January 2018
- There have been two rounds of public outreach
 - Summer/Fall 2016 - public meetings were held in Worcester, Springfield and Attleboro
 - Summer/Fall 2017 - solicited direct input from MPOs and have scheduled two focus groups with shippers
- The draft report will be released for public review and comment in November
- The final report will be submitted to the Federal Railroad Administration in January 2018

- Federal regulations and guidance establish the parameters
 - Role of rail in statewide transportation
 - Documentation of existing rail service
 - Proposed rail improvements and investments
 - Rail investment program – 4-year funded and 20-year vision
- The Rail and Transit Division has established six goals
 - Preserve and maintain the rail network
 - Promote economic growth
 - Ensure the safety and security of the network
 - Enhance environmental stewardship
 - Improve service and intermodal connectivity
 - Expand and modernize the system

- The draft plan is currently undergoing editing and revision by the Office of Transportation Planning, the Rail and Transit Division (our primary client), the MBTA and the Secretary's Office
- Included in this review is the identification and prioritization of long-term needs (tiering, not ranking). The four-year investment program will be taken directly from the CIP
- Over the next two months, we will be holding focus groups with shippers
- The draft report will be released in November final report will be submitted to the Federal Railroad Administration in January 2018

Freight Plan – Basics



- The last Statewide Freight Plan was adopted in 2010
- Federal regulations require an updated freight plan to be in place by December 2017
- The Fast Act created a formula freight program and a discretionary freight program
 - Inclusion in an approved Statewide Freight Plan is **a requirement to access formula funds**
 - Consistency with an approved Statewide Freight Plan is a consideration but not a requirement for discretionary federal funding programs (INFRA, TIGER, RRIF, TIFIA, etc.)
- The plan is an FHWA approved document and its scope and format are governed by federal rules and guidance

Freight Plan – Schedule



- Work began on the Statewide Freight Plan in August 2016 and will be completed in December 2017
- Public outreach was primarily targeted to the Freight Advisory Council
 - Four meetings – January 2017 in Worcester, March 2017 in Waltham, April 2017 in Springfield, and May 2017 in New Bedford
 - Additional outreach to the state’s MPOs throughout 2017
- The draft report will be released for public review and comment this month
- The final report will be submitted to the Federal Highway Administration in December

Freight Plan – Outline



- Federal regulations and guidance establish the parameters
 - Identify significant freight system trends, needs and issues
 - Describe policies, strategies and performance measures
 - Designate the state's portion of the National Multimodal Freight Network
 - List priority projects and funding
- In consultation with Freight Advisory Council, the Highway Division has established five guiding principles for the network
 - Be safe, secure and resilient
 - Maintain key freight assets in a state of good repair
 - Improve the state's economic competitiveness
 - Provide efficient and reliable mobility within the state and to the region
 - Support healthy and sustainable communities

Freight Plan – Status/Next Steps



- The draft plan has undergone final editing and revision by the Office of Transportation Planning, the Highway Division (our primary client), the Rail and Transit Division and the Secretary's Office
- The plan identifies three possible future scenarios and analyzes proposed policies, strategies and investments under each
 - policies (e.g., improvements to truck driver education and licensure)
 - operational improvements (e.g., permitting changes)
 - infrastructure investment (e.g., the I-90/I-495 bottleneck)
- The draft report will be released in September and the final report will be provided to the Federal Highway Administration in October
- We are finalizing a task order for a consultant to begin work in the first quarter of CY 2018 on identifying immediate strategies for possible funding and implementation (e.g., truck parking)

Questions or Comments?