Creating the Interagency Working Group and Tackling Community Mobility Problems

Examples from Greater Boston

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Interagency Coordination and Tackling Mobility Challenges

Partners: Which agencies

Purpose: How and Why Forming this Working Group

Process: Helping to Solve First/Last Mile Mobility Challenges

Practice: Lessons Learned and Next Steps
MAPC – regional planning agency for greater Boston, promoting smart growth and regional collaboration
MPO – responsible for federally required transportation planning; staffed by Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS)

**Improving transportation in the Boston Region through technical analysis, collaborative planning, and community engagement.**

- **24 Members**
  - 8 Municipalities representing subregions (elected)
  - 2 Cities, at-large (elected)
  - 2 Towns, at-large (elected)
  - 2 City of Boston (permanent)
  - 5 Transportation agencies
    - Massachusetts Department of Transportation (3 seats)
    - Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
    - Massachusetts Port Authority
  - 2 Federal agencies (nonvoting)
    - Federal Transit Administration
    - Federal Highway Administration
  - 2 Advisory councils/boards
    - Regional Transportation Advisory Council
    - MBTA Advisory Board
  - 1 Metropolitan Area Planning Council

- *Community is in more than one subregion. Dover is in TRIC and SWAP. Milton and Needham are in ICC and TRIC.*
MassDOT -- Mobility Management and Transportation Coordination program, as part of Transit and Rail Division.
Interagency Coordination

Problem: First mile/last mile and “intraregion” trips not adequately served by current transit

MAPC, CTPS, MassDOT formed Community Mobility and First Mile/Last Mile Working Group in 2017

Question: How can our agencies better:

- Coordinate efforts, break down silos in funding, programs, practices
- Share best practices
- Develop funding programs for first/last mile and share mobility
- Assist municipalities in technical studies
- Meet the challenges of evolving mobility landscape
MAPC: Mobility Studies

Assist municipalities and subregions with determining transit gaps and needs

Develop pilots for community mobility and first/last mile solutions

Share best practices
MAPC and CTPS: Ride-Hail Impacts

Data Collection and Integration

2014: Initial studies funded in Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

2015-2017: Collaboration and communication with regional partners
   - Massport
   - MBTA
   - MA Department of Public Utilities

2017-2018: Fare Choices Study

2019: Ride-Hail Impact Study for Brockton Area Transit
MAPC and MassDOT: Ride-Hail Partnerships Best Practices

Forum held in 2018

Speakers included transit agencies, non-profits, higher education

Lessons on implementation, challenges, data

Continued joint research with MassDOT on how to ensure shared rides, equity considerations


Microtransit

Understanding Best Practices, Facilitation

2018: Interest in microtransit pilot in MAGIC subregion

MAPC-led Request for Information (RFI) from microtransit vendors

RFI Findings:
- Several options (software/dispatch to turnkey operations)
- Few rural pilots
- Few multi-jurisdictional pilots
- Operating costs
- Rapidly evolving marketplace

Next step: ride-hail partnerships, data collection
MPO: Technical Assistance

CTPS -- Community Transportation Technical Assistance (CTTA)

- Technical advice on local transportation concerns such as traffic ops, safety, bike/ped access, livability, parking
- Open to all 97 municipalities in the Boston MPO region
- Recent projects: Intersection studies in Swampscott; Danvers rail-trail crossing at major roadway
- [https://www.ctps.org/ctta](https://www.ctps.org/ctta)

CTPS -- Regional Transit Service Planning Technical Support (RTSP)

- Technical support to promote best practices and address issues related to bus route planning, ridership, cost-effectiveness, and other transit service characteristics
- Program open to RTAs, TMA, municipalities, MAPC subregions
- Recent projects: assistance with MetroWest RTA, CrossTown Connect
- [https://www.ctps.org/regional_transit](https://www.ctps.org/regional_transit)
MPO: Community Connections Program

Need identified in MPO’s Long Range Plan Regional Needs Assessment
- Suburban mobility
- First/Last mile connections to transit

Previous Challenges
- Sustainability of operations projects
- Requirements tied to MPO’s federal funding

Current Status
- Developing new funding application
- First round of funding to be programmed in FFY 2021
MPO Studies: Changing Trends and Planning for the Future

UPWP process and funding discrete planning studies
- Limited funds every Federal Fiscal Year
- Committee process to prioritize investments
- Studies achieve regional goals

Ongoing Study (FFY 2019): Future of the Curb
- Purpose = identify best practices in changing curb use policies
- What are impacts of the changes?
- What could be applicable to the Boston Region?
MassDOT: RideMatch

One stop for all transit options in Massachusetts

Collects data on unmet transit needs
New: MasDOT to award up to $4,580,000 of Federal and State funds to projects that will provide workforce transportation service

Eligible applicants include:
- Employers
- Transportation Management Associations (TMAs)
- Municipalities
- Non-profit organizations
- Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs)
Lessons Learned and Next Areas of Work

Lessons:
- Transportation marketplace is rapidly evolving
  *Don’t get left behind, or you’ll be playing catch up!*
- Be proactive in reaching out, coordinating, sharing ideas
- Coordination gets easier with practice
- Data collection, sharing, and analysis are critical

Next Phases:
- E-Scooters, expanded bike share
- First/last mile local projects
- Curbside management best practices
- Microtransit
- “Next-gen” ride-hailing data collection and analysis
- Policy development (e.g., promote shared rides)
“Emerging mobility services ...will not replace high-quality, fixed route transit as the most efficient means of moving people along dense urban corridors, and focusing on emerging mobility services is not a substitute for designing walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods or engaging in pedestrian- and transit-oriented planning.”

- Private Mobility, Public Interest (2016 Transit Center report)
Thank you!

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