

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

The transportation planning area includes the City of Brockton and fourteen towns: Abington, Avon, Bridgewater, East Bridgewater, Easton, Halifax, Hanson, Kingston, Pembroke, Plymouth, Plympton, Stoughton, West Bridgewater, and Whitman. The planning area also includes the community service areas of Brockton Area Transit and portions of the MBTA and GATRA service areas.

#### **3.1 General Description of the Planning Process**

The transportation planning process analyzes and presents the benefits and impacts of various transportation alternatives such as new highways, changes in the transit system, and movements of goods/freight, airports, waterways, bikeways, or auto free zones. This information is used by decision makers in the selection of preferred solutions to current and anticipated problems.

The Old Colony Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the transportation planning agency and was created under state and federal laws that require the formation of MPOs in urbanized areas with populations of more than 50,000 in order for surface transportation projects to be eligible for federal Highway Trust Fund dollars.

The Old Colony MPO is responsible for conducting a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process (3C) for all of the Old Colony Region. It must plan for the movement of both people and goods within the Region by all modes of travel, including highways, public transportation, bicycles, and foot. It also plans for the connections (such as airports, seaports, or bus, railroad, and pipeline terminals) linking these modes or tying the region to the rest of the world.

The Old Colony MPO sets priorities among surface transportation improvement projects within the Region for state or federal funding. In order for them to be eligible for federal funds, federal law requires that the MPO endorse a transportation improvement program identifying the projects to be implemented.

The State and the Old Colony MPO certify to the FHWA and the FTA that the “3C” Transportation Planning Process is addressing the major issues facing the area and is being developed in accordance with FTA/FHWA regulations governing the implementation of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), EPA regulations governing the implementation of the Clean Air Act of 1990 (CAAA), and fully incorporate the applicable requirements of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Approval of federally aided transportation projects is contingent on there being a State/Old Colony MPO certified “3C” Transportation Planning Process in place that refers to a planning process that is “Cooperative, Continuous, and Comprehensive.”

Every four years, the FTA and the FHWA make a “Certification Determination” for the transportation planning process in each urbanized area. In general, Certification means that the planning process “is being conducted in a cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive manner, and has resulted in plans and programs consistent with the comprehensively planned development of the area.”

The Old Colony MPO is responsible for carrying out the urban transportation planning process and for developing and endorsing the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and Public Participation Plan (PPP) for the region. Membership of the Old Colony MPO is as follows:

- The Secretary of the Executive Office of Transportation
- The Commissioner of the Massachusetts Highway Department
- The President of the Old Colony Planning Council
- The Administrator of the Brockton Area Transit Authority
- The Mayor of the City of Brockton
- The Chief Elected Official of Plymouth
- The Chief Elected Official from two (2) communities, other than Brockton or Plymouth, duly elected by the Old Colony Planning Council, to represent locally elected communities. No more, or less, than one representative from towns with populations of 12,000 or below (Avon, Halifax, Hanson, Kingston, Plympton, and West Bridgewater), and, no more, or less, than one representative from towns with populations over 12,000 (Abington, Bridgewater, East Bridgewater, Easton, Pembroke, Stoughton, and Whitman)

The Old Colony Planning Council at a full Council meeting elects the above cited locally elected community officials to the Old Colony MPO. The electoral process is the sole responsibility of the OCPC with full consideration to nominations recommended by the Old Colony Joint Transportation Committee (JTC). This process was approved by the Old Colony MPO in 2003 and is periodically reviewed. The term of office shall be two years. The OCPC and the JTC make every effort to provide for region-wide geographic balance of the communities represented on the Old Colony MPO.

The JTC Chairperson, and one representative each from both the FHWA and the FTA shall be considered ex-officio, non-voting members of the Old Colony MPO. Designees or alternates are typically limited to the persons who are directly responsible and accountable to the official Old Colony MPO member that they are representing.

The members of the Old Colony MPO recognize that transportation planning and programming must be conducted as an integral part of, and consistent with, the comprehensive planning and development process, and that the process must involve the fullest possible participation by state agencies, local governments, private institutions and other appropriate groups.

### **3.2 Functional Responsibilities of Participating Agencies and Groups**

#### **Local Representatives**

The local representatives (Brockton, Plymouth, and the locally elected communities) to the Old Colony MPO are responsible for articulating a local government perspective of regional transportation problems and issues, and the needs for the community or agency that they represent, and for the Region as a whole.

#### **Executive Office of Transportation (EOT)**

The Executive Office of Transportation (EOT), has the statutory responsibility, under Chapter 6A of the General Laws, to conduct comprehensive planning for and to coordinate the activities and programs of the state transportation agencies.

The EOT assists in organizing and conducting Old Colony MPO meetings, keeping records, and reporting major statewide and inter-regional policies and issues as they develop. The EOT is responsible for making appropriate planning funds available to the OCPC by contract to assist in the implementation of the required planning work program as defined in the approved UPWP. The EOT also provides the necessary data, technical support and staff support required to assist in fulfilling the transportation planning needs of the Old Colony Region and Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The EOT is responsible for making appropriate FTA transit planning funds available to the OCPC by contract to assist in the implementation of the required planning work program as defined in the approved UPWP.

#### **Massachusetts Highway Department (MassHighway)**

The Massachusetts Highway Department has the statutory responsibility under Chapter 16 of the General Laws for the construction, maintenance, and operation of state roads and bridges, and serves as the principal source of transportation planning in the Commonwealth. MassHighway is responsible for the continual preparation of comprehensive and coordinated transportation plans and programs.

#### **Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC)**

Established by Chapter 332 of the Acts of 1967, OCPC is the regional planning agency for the metropolitan Brockton area. The Council's planning jurisdiction includes the City of Brockton and the towns of Abington, Avon, Bridgewater, East Bridgewater, Easton, Hanson, Halifax, Kingston, Pembroke, Plymouth, Plympton, Stoughton, West Bridgewater and Whitman. The policy board is composed of one delegate and one alternate appointed by a vote of the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board of each member community. In the case of the City of Brockton, the Mayor appoints the delegate and alternate. The Council is authorized to prepare and revise comprehensive plans. OCPC is recognized by the MPO as the officially designated regional planning agency for the Old Colony MPO Region, having the statutory responsibility for comprehensive planning, including transportation planning. Currently, the Council's areas of major emphasis are economic development, transportation, safety and security, water quality, land use and housing, and elder service planning and ombudsman programs.

The OCPC is responsible for comprehensive regional planning and is the transportation-planning agency for the Old Colony MPO and Old Colony Region. The OCPC maintains qualified transportation planning staff, and is principally responsible for the maintenance of the transportation planning process and for the support and operation of the Joint Transportation Committee and Old Colony MPO.

#### **Brockton Area Transit Authority (BAT)**

The Brockton Area Transit Authority, under the provisions of Chapter 161B of the General Laws, has the statutory responsibility to provide mass transportation in the area constituting the authority, and to provide mass transportation service under contract in areas outside the authority.

BAT, in addition to its statutory responsibility for providing mass transportation, assists in obtaining and ensuring input and participation in multimodal transportation planning from local elected officials and the public. BAT actively and consistently participates in the 3C transportation planning and programming process and represents the region's concern for public transportation deficiencies and for solutions to transportation demands and needs.

### **3.3 Functions of the MPO**

The Old Colony MPO develops, reviews, and endorses annually the Unified Planning Work Program, the Transportation Improvement Program, and, the Public Participation Plan. Additionally, the Old Colony MPO develops, reviews, and endorses, at least every four years, a Regional Transportation Plan, with a

20-year horizon; as well as such transportation plans and other products that federal and state laws and regulations may from time to time require.

The Old Colony MPO is the forum for cooperative decision-making involving allocation of federal transportation funding by chief elected officials of general-purpose local governments, regional authorities and agencies, and state agencies in the Old Colony Region.

In the resolution of basic regional transportation policy, the Old Colony MPO seeks and considers the advice of all interested parties and the JTC. The Old Colony Planning Council Transportation Staff provides the JTC with information and analysis in the form of reports, briefings, and discussions concerning their plans, programs, and priorities so that they can carry out their functions in a timely fashion.

The Old Colony MPO appoints the committees it determines necessary to accomplish its business. Committees may consist of Old Colony MPO members, their designees, the JTC, and transportation providers as appropriate. The Old Colony MPO assigns duties to the committees, as warranted.

### **3.4 Operation of the Old Colony MPO**

The Old Colony MPO meets in the Region at least twice per year and usually more often as may be requested by any one of the Signatories.

The Secretary of EOT or Designee chairs the Old Colony MPO. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman shall chair the meeting. A Vice-Chairman of the Old Colony MPO is elected for a term of two years and shall be elected from among the non-state permanent members of the Old Colony MPO (City of Brockton, Town of Plymouth, Brockton Area Transit Authority, Old Colony Planning Council, and the two locally elected communities). The Old Colony MPO elects other officers as deemed necessary.

Votes of the Old Colony MPO, including those on all certification documents (i.e. TIP, UPWP, RTP, and PPP), Air Quality Conformity Determinations, and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act) are by a simple majority vote of those members present and voting, provided that one of the state agencies shall be included in the majority vote.

### **3.5 Transportation Advisory Group**

In order to accomplish the objectives of the 3C process, the Old Colony MPO established a committee known as the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) to serve as the Transportation Policy Advisory Group for the Old Colony Region, in accordance with earlier agreements. The Old Colony MPO periodically reviews the membership on the Joint Transportation Committee, to provide for a widely representative viewpoint, and to ensure a balanced consideration of transportation issues. Consistent with the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding, the Joint Transportation Committee adopts by-laws and other procedures as may be necessary to govern its operation. The functions of the JTC are:

- To advise the Old Colony MPO and OCPC on matters of policy affecting the conduct of the 3C transportation planning and programming process for the Region.

- To advise the Old Colony MPO and OCPC on such regional transportation documents as may from time to time be required by state or federal laws and regulations (RTP, TIP, UPWP, and PPP their related adjustments and amendments).
- To provide maximum public participation in the transportation planning and programming process by providing a forum to bring the Old Colony MPO together with other public agencies, elected and appointed officials of cities and towns, and citizens concerned with the transportation planning and programming process; thereby facilitating, wherever possible, the consistency of transportation plans and programs for the Old Colony Region with the policies, priorities, and plans of affected state and regional agencies, local communities, private groups, and individuals within the Old Colony Region.

The JTC includes representatives from each OCPC community, whom are appointed by the Board of Selectmen/Mayor in the community. Membership is open to any interested resident, representative from a transportation provider, or interested group. The JTC meets on the second Thursday of each month at the OCPC office.

The Old Colony MPO provides complete information, timely public notice, and full public access to decisions and documents. It supports early and continuing public involvement in the development and review of its plans and programs. It especially tries to seek out and consider the interests of people whose needs may be not be well served by the existing transportation system, such as low income and minority households and persons with limited personal mobility. To assist with this, OCPC maintains a Transportation Advisory Network (TAN). The TAN is a mailing list of individuals and organizations that have an interest in local transportation issues. The TAN provides a broad community resource for the formation and review of transportation plans, policies and strategies. This network provides key contact persons for outreach efforts, dissemination of information, and informal review and comment to ensure sensitivity to varied community needs, concerns, and interests.

### **3.6 The 3C Process**

The Old Colony MPO is responsible for conducting a cooperative, continuous, and comprehensive (3C) transportation planning process for all of the Old Colony Region. The 3C process is “a Cooperative, Continuous, and Comprehensive” transportation planning and programming process resulting in plans and programs consistent with the comprehensive planning objectives of the Old Colony Region.

The 3C process is cooperative, requiring effective coordination among public officials at all levels of government, and inviting the wide participation of all parties, public or private, at all stages of the process. A key objective of the process is to resolve transportation issues by providing a forum for the resolution of issues. At the same time, the process is not intended to operate, and cannot operate, to dilute the ultimate authority or responsibility of those state, regional, or local public officials or agencies who, pursuant to statute or under contract, develop, review, and/or implement transportation plans, programs, and projects.

The 3C process is continuous, affirming the need to plan for the short and long range, emphasizing the iterative character of the progression from systems planning to project planning and programming, to implementation and the necessity for re-evaluating data and plans.

The 3C process is comprehensive, including the effective integration of the various stages and levels of transportation planning and programming for the entire Old Colony Region, and examines all modes to assure a balanced planning and programming effort. There is a simultaneous analysis of various related

non-transportation elements, such as land use, economics, environmental resources, and population to assure consistency within a total comprehensive planning and programming process.

### **3.7 The Transportation Planning Process**

The transportation planning process has four basic elements; a Unified Planning Work Program, a Regional Transportation Plan, a Transportation Improvement Program, and a Public Participation Plan. Each of these elements is reviewed by the JTC, OCPC, and is endorsed by the Old Colony MPO.

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) identifies strategies employed by the MPO to provide complete information, timely public notice, and full access to key decisions to the public prior to the adoption or amendment of the plans and programs for which the MPO is responsible. This document supports the early and continuing involvement of the public in the MPO process, as required by federal law.

The PPP assists in shaping the present and future conditions of the transportation system through the participation of and guidance of local citizens and leaders. The PPP builds upon the 1994 PPP and continues the strong public presence in the MPO planning process.

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) describes and provides budgetary information for the transportation planning tasks and activities, which are to be conducted in the region during the coming year. The UPWP is a federally required certification document, which must be prepared and endorsed annually by the Old Colony MPO prior to the start of the planning program. The OCPC has the responsibility of preparing the UPWP. The planning activities are organized first by work element in a format that will allow efficient administration, management, and reporting.

The UPWP describes all the work to be accomplished by the Old Colony MPO. Each transportation planning activity is described as a procedure under specific work tasks. For each procedure, the anticipated accomplishment or product and the estimated work force resources needed are also given. For each work task, the total staffing requirements, task budget, and sources of funding are given. For convenience in management, similar work tasks are grouped into broad areas or elements as follows:

- Management and Support of the Planning Process and Certification Activities
- Data Collection and Analysis Activities
- Short Range and Long Range Transportation Planning Activities
- Other Transportation Technical Activities

The UPWP continues to expand on several major tasks that are specifically targeted to implement provisions of several pieces of federal legislations, such as the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)), the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is based on the principles of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21), and the requirements of Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

The RTP provides a document and a process that will meet the challenges of preserving and expanding the transportation system. Following the directives of the law, it includes goals, policies, analyses, and recommendations necessary to build and maintain an efficient, effective and affordable regional

transportation system. The intention of the RTP is to build on the current system, working to make it comprehensive and fully integrated.

The RTP addresses a twenty-year planning horizon and includes both short and long-range strategies/actions that lead to the development of an integrated intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods. Additionally, the Plan examines current and forecasted transportation and land use conditions and trends, and provides an overall framework for the future transportation system. Furthermore, the RTP draws upon the Statewide Transportation Plan and the MassHighway Project Development and Design Guide Book. The mission of the RTP is to provide a safe and efficient transportation system that promotes multimodalism (roads, transit, sidewalks, bicycles, etc.), supports projected growth, and addresses social, economic, and environmental impacts through effective planning/policy and local/regional coordination.

The short and long-range strategies/actions constitute the RTP. The long-range element addresses the long-range transportation needs of the region and identifies major changes in the transportation system and transportation policy. The long-range element establishes inter-regional and intra-regional transportation goals and objectives.

The short-range element addresses the transportation strategies/projects that will be implemented within a five-year timeframe. The purpose of the short-range element is to coordinate the different parts of a transportation system, such as highways, transit, freight, rail, and bikeways, to achieve maximum efficiency and productivity of the transportation system as a whole. Simply stated, the goal of the short-range element is to insure, through the promotion of management systems and low capital projects, that the region's transportation system is utilized and maintained fully before new facilities are added. The short-range element (five years) essentially comprises the TIP.

The transportation management systems provide a process that furnishes information on transportation system performance to decision makers for selecting and implementing cost effective strategies/actions to manage new and existing facilities so that congestion is alleviated and the mobility of persons and goods is enhanced.

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a listing of transportation projects proposed for implementation during the next five federal fiscal years. Projects listed in the TIP include those in the short-range element of the RTP. In the TIP, projects are classified under federal and non-federal funding categories and assigned a local priority. The TIP briefly describes each project as well as its projected costs and funding sources.

As part of the TIP development, current and proposed projects are evaluated using Transportation Evaluation Criteria, and recommended to the Old Colony MPO for consideration and approval. The collective staffs evaluate candidate projects for the Old Colony MPO using the Transportation Evaluation Criteria of Condition, Mobility, Safety and Security, Community Effects and Support, Land Use and Economic Development, and Environmental Effects. After the evaluations, the results are provided to the Old Colony MPO for its review and approval. Once the Old Colony MPO has reviewed and approved the evaluations, the OCPC staff then uses the evaluation results, as well as readiness information, available funding, and other pertinent information to develop a Draft TIP. As part of the development process, the Draft TIP is reviewed by the JTC, the OCPC, and the MPO, and released for a 30-Day Public Review Period. After the 30-Day Public Review Period, the Final Draft TIP is sent to the Old Colony MPO for consideration and approval.

### **3.8 Coordination and Consultation and Public Participation**

Transportation planning is one component of the Comprehensive Planning Process that includes land use/growth management, housing, open space and recreation, economic development, historic preservation, and water quality. It is important that these potentially conflicting elements be consistent with one another in order to facilitate the efficient movement of people and goods in the region. The first step in obtaining consistency is the use of a common database, coordination, and consultation with appropriate agencies and groups. Each of the functional planning areas uses common land use, population and employment statistics, and forecasts.

#### Coordination and Public Participation

An underlying principle of the metropolitan planning process is public participation, coordination and consultation with appropriate agencies and groups. As such, a successful public participation model was developed and utilized. Legal advertisements are not a panacea for public participation. With that in mind, the staff engaged the public to the maximum extent possible. Various strategies were deployed, documented and evaluated. As all products associated with the RTP were developed, they were presented to the Old Colony JTC and Old Colony Old Colony MPO for their review, comment, and approval.

Development of public participation model. Staff utilized a diverse methodology for coordination, consultation, and engaging the public to maximum extent possible in the development of the RTP. The methodology is presented below.

- Old Colony MPO - The MPO provided oversight of the RTP development and has the responsibility of ultimately endorsing the final RTP. The MPO met multiple times during the RTP's development. Key products such as the Preliminary Draft, Draft, and Final Draft were provided to the MPO for review and comment.
- Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC) - The Old Colony Planning Council discussed the RTP updates and provided both planning and policy guidance at regularly scheduled Council meetings. Meetings took place typically during the last Wednesday of the month. As such, input and guidance occurred during the RTP's development
- Old Colony Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) - Functioning as the advisory group to the Old Colony MPO and Old Colony Planning Council, this group assisted with the identification of transportation deficiencies and provided regular input and review of RTP products. The Committee consists of superintendents and or directors of highway/ department of public works, town planners, engineers, etc. Meetings took place during the second Thursday of the month. As such, monthly input and guidance occurred.
- Transit Providers – Council staff solicited input regarding transit issues from the BAT, GATRA, MBTA, South Shore Community Action Council, as well as a private carrier (P&B).
- Coordination and consultation activities - Coordination and consultation activities took place with multiple agencies and groups. As such, these coordination and consultation activities took place with: Bridgewater State College, Brockton Area Transit Authority, Brockton 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cooperation, Cape Verdean Association of Brockton, Chief Elected Officials, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee, Conservation Commissions, Department of Environmental Protection, Departments of Public Works and Highway Departments, Environmental Protection Agency, Executive Office of Transportation (Planning and Environment), Latino Health Institute, Greater Attleboro Taunton Transit Authority, MassHighway District 5, MBTA, Metro South Chamber of Commerce, NAACP, Plymouth and Brockton (P&B), Plymouth Area Chamber of Commerce, Plymouth County Development Council Police Departments, and South Shore Community Action Council.

- Visualization Techniques - Visualization techniques such as maps, posters, flyers, computer simulations, and multi-media presentations were integrated across the multitude of RTP activities. Such techniques aim to simply and convey sometimes-complex information.
- Transportation Advisory Network (TAN) - The TAN consists of over 200 members. Members include chief elected officials, legislators, planning boards, EOT, MassHighway, FHWA, FTA, transit providers, minority groups, town clerks, and transportation officials. The objective was to provide continuing outreach to a wide network. Council staff provided announcements of product availability, upcoming events and meetings associated with the RTP to the TAN.
- A RTP Survey – A survey was developed and distributed to the Transportation Advisory Network, posted on the Old Colony Planning Council Website, and provided and multiple workshops and information sessions.
- Media Outlets and places of public convenience - Staff utilized multiple media outlets and places of public convenience to solicit public comment, advertise meetings, advertise RTP products, and solicit public comment. The media outlets and places of public convenience consisted of newspaper legal advertisements, websites (Old Colony Planning Council, the Brockton Area Transit, the Old Colony Memorial, and various communities), town and city halls, radio station spots (1460 AM WXBR and 95.9 WATD), the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Plymouth County Transportation Breakfast, local cable access during multiple stages of RTP development (all communities with cable access), press releases, kiosks, and public information booths/ tables (Westgate Mall in Brockton, Independence Mall in Kingston, and BAT Intermodal Transportation Centre), public information workshops (Plymouth and Brockton) to solicit public comments. The regional mall outreach sessions were conducted during the Saturdays and Sundays during the mall business hours. Informational flyers were posted in most of the supermarkets in the region (Spanish and English).
- Draft RTP - Copies of the Draft RTP will be available in libraries and City/Town halls and on the OCPC website so residents from member communities will have ample opportunity to review the Draft RTP prior to attending the public information workshops. Copies of the Draft RTP shall be provided upon request.
- 30-Day Public Review Period - During the public review period for the Draft RTP, copies were available and their availability were advertised using multiple media outlets and the TAN. During the period, public meetings were held and the Council staff shall was available to discuss the Draft RTP with the public upon request.

### **3.9 Environmental Justice**

Environmental Justice is an important part of the planning process and is considered in all phases of planning. A truly integrated and effective planning process actively considers and promotes environmental justice within projects and groups of projects, across the total plan, and in policy decisions. All reasonably foreseeable adverse social, economic, and environmental effects on minority populations and low-income populations must be identified and addressed. There are three fundamental Environmental Justice principles:

- To avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations.
- To ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process.
- To prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority populations and low-income populations.

Public involvement is an integral part of transportation planning and project development decision-making. The DOT Order (5610.2) on Environmental Justice directs the provision for minority populations and low-income populations greater access to information on, and opportunities for public participation in matters that may impact human health and the environment.

Effective public involvement in the planning process and the project-development process can alert State and local agencies about environmental justice concerns so that they do not result in surprises during the project-development stage. Continuous interaction between community members and transportation professionals is critical to successfully identify and resolve potential Environmental Justice concerns.

The staff has public-involvement procedures established that provide for consideration of Environmental Justice. These procedures provide an inclusive, representative, and equal opportunity for two-way communication resulting in appropriate action that reflects this public involvement. Environmental Justice is considered in all aspects of planning and project decision-making, including the design of both the public-involvement plan and the proposed facility.

Environmental Justice analysis asks whether a proposed action or plan causes disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority populations and low-income populations, and whether these populations are denied benefits. A framework of analysis that can determine how a proposed action or plan could differentially impact different populations is important. As such, an analysis of benefits and burdens is utilized. In addition, computer mapping of Environmental Justice Areas along with past, present and future projects funded through the transportation improvement program, available transit services and their associated walking times, commuter parking facilities, pavement conditions, high crash locations, areas of congestion is utilized to measure the distribution of funding (to ensure geographic equity), to determine priorities areas of need/ and or concern.

### Benefits and Burdens

Examples of the Benefits considered during the development of this RTP were:

- Mobility
- Accessibility
- Infrastructure condition
- Environment
- Reliability
- Safety
- Security
- Load factors
- Efficiency
- Consultation with riders in improving bus services to the transit-dependent

Examples of the Burdens considered during the development of this RTP were:

- Air, noise, and water pollution and soil contamination.
- Destruction or disruption of community cohesion or a community's economic vitality.
- Destruction or disruption of the availability of public and private facilities and services.
- Adverse employment effects.
- Displacement of persons, businesses, farms, or nonprofit organizations.

- Increased traffic congestion, isolation, exclusion, or separation of minority or low-income individuals within a given community or from the broader community.
- The denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of, benefits of programs, policies, or activities.

From the examination of benefits and burdens, it is the determination that no projects implemented as a result of the RTP will result in adverse impacts to the Environmental Justice Areas in the Old Colony region.

### **3.10 Eight Planning Factors of SAFETEA-LU Comparison with RTP Goals**

#### **Planning Factor 1: Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency**

**2007 RTP Goal: Provide a transportation system that supports the economic vitality of the region and enables global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.** The transportation network is a critical component to sustaining a thriving economy and fostering new economic growth and development in the region. Employees and customers must be able to easily come and go between their homes, work, and shopping trips; and commerce and industry must be able to efficiently ship and receive goods as well. As such, promoting smart growth, transit oriented development, expansion of transit, and improving freight connections are all supporting efforts of this goal.

#### **Planning Factor 2: Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users**

**2007 RTP Goal: Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.** It is essential that users of the transportation system are confident that their trip will be a safe one. Safety can be enhanced through careful attention to project design for construction of new facilities and improvements to the existing system, adequate and maintained signage and pavement markings, implementation of traffic calming measures, and public education. Operational safety can be enhanced through timely and effective maintenance of the system.

#### **Planning Factor 3: Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and Non-motorized users**

**2007 RTP Goal: Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.** Strategies and programs focus on identifying high profile and/or vulnerable critical components of the regional transportation infrastructure, and develop strategies to enhance security and protect system, working with transit providers on enhancing security and providing site hardening, developing continuity of operations plans, identifying vulnerable populations, and incorporating enhanced surveillance equipment. Other activities include working with the MBTA, as well as host communities to MBTA Commuter Rail stations, to increase security at these stations, including platforms, walkways, and parking lots.

#### **Planning Factor 4: Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight**

**2007 RTP Goal: Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to all people and freight.** It is important that existing and new transportation facilities are made community-sensitive, reducing not only environmental pollutants but the aesthetic impact as well. All users and communities should be

treated fairly in the provision of transportation services, and should not be inequitably burdened by transportation project impacts.

**Planning Factor 5: Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve quality of life**

**2007 RTP Goal: Promote a transportation system that protects and enhances the environment; promotes energy conservation, and improves the quality of life in the region.** Clean air and water are important components of a healthy environment. Society's reliance on single-occupant vehicles results in increased congestion and in turn increased vehicle emissions into the air, and runoff into our water supply. This transportation plan recognizes the importance of reducing reliance on single-occupant vehicles and promoting alternative fuel use vehicles to improve long-term air quality, to reduce energy consumption, and to protect our natural resources.

**Planning Factor 6: Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight**

**2007 RTP Goal: Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between a well-balanced network of modes, for people and freight.** Through its Regional Transportation Plan, the MPO promotes a multimodal and comprehensive approach to transportation in the Region. A balanced variety of transportation modes throughout the regional network should be interconnected, and connections need to be safe, secure, and efficient to best compliment connecting modes.

**Planning Factor 7: Promote efficient system management and operation**

**2007 RTP Goal: Emphasize the preservation and modernization of the existing transportation system.** Efforts and strategies include working with transit providers to maintain existing levels of service while also supporting expansion of service to meet projected needs, working with the state and communities to ensure that repairs and improvements are made to roads and bridges throughout the region in order to provide for a safe, efficient and adequate transportation network for the movement of people and goods, maintaining and enhancing PMS and CMP to improve decision-making and establishing priorities in the TIP development process, working with railroad companies to preserve existing rail freight service and promote extension of this service.

**Planning Factor 8: Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system**

**2007 RTP Goal: Emphasize the preservation and modernization of the existing transportation system.** Efforts and strategies include working transit providers to maintain existing levels of service while also supporting expansion of service to meet projected needs, working with the state and communities to ensure that repairs and improvements are made to roads and bridges throughout the region in order to provide for a safe, efficient and adequate transportation network for the movement of people and goods, maintaining and enhancing PMS and CMS to improve decision-making and establishing priorities in the TIP development process, and working with railroad companies to preserve existing rail freight service and promote extension of this service.