**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE**
**TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
**MEETING NOTES**

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**Date, Time & Place:** October 1, 2014, 5:30-7:30 PM
Cambridge Citywide Senior Center

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**Attendance**

Committee Members

Doug Manz, Susan Pacheco, Ritesh Warade, Katherine Rafferty, John Attanucci, Saul Tannenbaum, Kelley Brown, Charles Fineman, Simon Shapiro

City of Cambridge

Adam Shulman (Traffic, Parking and Transportation); Tegin Teich Bennett, John Bolduc, Jennifer Lawrence, and Cleo Stoughton (Community Development Department)

***Two*** *members of the public were present. Scott Hamwey from MassDOT was present.*

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**Presentation: Massachusetts climate change preparedness efforts**

*Liz Hanson, Policy Advisor for Climate Change Adaptation, Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs*

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts will be conducting a statewide, system-wide vulnerability assessment. Phase one of the assessment will determine which locations and assets are the most vulnerable. Phase two will look at those assets in more detail. The MBTA is engaged in this process. Simultaneously, the MBTA is addressing resiliency in other ways. For instance, the MBTA has received funding from the Federal Transit Administration to improve resiliency at two vital sites, Kenmore Square and the Charlestown Bus Depot, within the transit system. The Cambridge community can stay involved in climate change preparedness efforts by providing feedback to the MBTA and the state, and by participating in decision-making (via groups like the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council) about preparedness efforts. She also suggested taking part in planning and design process for specific infrastructure, such as Lechmere Station.

**Presentation: Cambridge Vulnerability Assessment**

*John Bolduc, Environmental Planner, Cambridge Community Development Department*

The City of Cambridge is conducting a vulnerability assessment to understand how climate change will impact the community. Climate change could bring higher temperatures, increased precipitation and flooding, sea level rise, and an increase in the frequency and severity of extreme weather events to Cambridge, all of which could have adverse effects on the transit system. More information about the vulnerability assessment can be found here: http://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Climate/climatechangeresilianceandadaptation.aspx.

**Discussion: Goal 7: Resiliency**

Goal: Ensure the transit system is resilient to the effects of climate change. Transit also plays a role in reducing transportation's contributions to climate change.

*Handouts:*

- *FTA: Flooded Bus Barns and Buckled Rails. http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/FTA_0001_-_Flooded_Bus_Barns_and_Buckled_Rails.pdf (Suggested sections: Executive Summary and Section 4: Strategies)*
- *MTA: MTA Adaptations to Climate Change: A Categorical Imperative. http://web.mta.info/sustainability/pdf/Jacob_et%20al_MTA_Adaptation_Final_0309.pdf*

Discussion:

- Because funding is limited, a balance must be struck between 1) ensuring the existing transit system is maintained and improved, in part to increase transit ridership and reduce vehicle miles traveled, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and helping to slow climate change and 2) adapting to the effects of climate change and planning for future impacts.

- Knowledge about future impacts will help the City and State improve resiliency incrementally; for example, by ensuring that new construction projects will be resilient in the future, and by incorporating adaptation strategies into routine maintenance and improvement projects.
- Much of the transit system is under the care of the MBTA. The city needs to both advocate for improvements by the MBTA and the State, *as well as* make improvements to assets that are under the City's control (e.g., drainage on streets where MBTA buses run).
- Projected impacts (e.g., increases in temperature and precipitation) will need to be overlaid with transit assets, including subway stations and tunnels and bus stops and garages. Potential City-driven mitigation efforts include:
    - Heat: Shade at bus stops and along streets and other amenities at stops. Increase sponsorship of shelters.
    - Flooding: Increased capacity of drainage systems. Pervious pavements and more green space to aid in stormwater storage. Redundant bus routes to ensure that buses can continue running during and after a weather event. Barriers to prevent stormwater from entering subway stations.
    - Extreme weather events: Emergency preparedness planning and coordination with nearby municipalities.

**Committee updates**

- The next committee meeting will discuss draft objectives for the Transit Strategic Plan.
- The December meeting will be a joint bike/pedestrian/transit committee social (Location TBD).
- Minutes from all previous meetings were approved.
- The committee briefly discussed regulation of private services like Bridj. The committee would be interested in an in-depth discussion of the topic at an upcoming meeting.

**Public Comment**

No time was given for additional public comments.

**Adjourned at 7:30pm**

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