

News Release

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Team of Experts Delivers Performance Blueprint for Massachusetts Transportation Agencies

A major study released today by two leading business groups offers a blueprint to ensure the greatest possible return on additional investments in transportation that are required to enhance the state's economic competitiveness.

The report, which was prepared by a team of national transportation experts, was produced by the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation (MTF) in collaboration with the Massachusetts Business Roundtable (MBR) to underscore the link between new revenues and improved performance by the state's transportation agencies.

"As lawmakers consider proposals to fund the Massachusetts transportation system, they and the public alike correctly want to know that revenues going to transportation agencies are and will be well spent," according to the report, *Delivering on the Promise: Improving the Performance of Massachusetts Transportation Agencies*. With support from the Barr Foundation, MTF commissioned the University of Wisconsin-based State Smart Transportation Initiative (SSTI) to conduct a wide-ranging review of MassDOT's efforts to achieve reforms called for by the Transportation Reform Act of 2009 and to recommend further improvements.

The SSTI team, which included two former transportation secretaries from other states, reviewed extensive documents and heard from dozens of Massachusetts transportation officials, business leaders, and other stakeholders. The SSTI team found progress in MassDOT's implementation of certain reforms included in the 2009 legislation and recommended improvements in areas not yet fully implemented; other recommendations are based on best practices of transportation agencies in other states.

The report includes 14 recommendations, calling on MassDOT to establish clear policy and investment practices and put systems in place to ensure that projects are delivered on time; to continue to improve project delivery systems including implementing an agency-wide asset management system and a project information system; establishing performance measures that drive the agency's performance and are understandable to the public; and improving transparency and communication with the public.

“The state’s economic future requires additional investments in our transportation system,” said MTF President Michael J. Widmer. “Public and legislative support for more revenues depends on implementation of the recommendations in this report.”

The report notes that “even the most successful streamlining and other efficiencies will fall far short of generating sufficient savings to meet identified Massachusetts transportation needs.”

“The business community wants a transportation system that supports economic development and growth of the Commonwealth over the long term,” said MBR Executive Director JD Chesloff. “We support sound management principles, such as planning, accountability, and transparency, to achieve that goal. This report is an important contribution to the dialogue about the long term vision for transportation in the Commonwealth.”

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