



## **MPO Meeting Minutes Draft Memorandum for the Record Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting**

**January 5, 2023, Meeting**

10:00 AM–11:40 AM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

David Mohler, Chair, representing Jamey Tesler, Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

### **Decisions**

- Approve National Highway System (NHS) Travel Reliability and Freight

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) agreed to the following:

- Approve work scope for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Database Update
- Approve work scope for the MBTA Count Program Support FFY 2023
- Approve work scope for the Evaluation of Proof-of-Payment Fare Inspection Strategies II

### **Meeting Agenda**

#### **1. Introductions**

See attendance on page 10.

#### **2. Chair's Report—*David Mohler, MassDOT***

There was none.

#### **3. Executive Director's Report—*Tegin Teich, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff***

T. Teich shared staffing updates with the board, including the hiring of Sam Taylor, Performance-Based Planning and Programming Manager, and Erin Maguire, Administrative Coordinator.

T. Teich stated that the Boston Region MPO has been recertified, subject to the resolution of one corrective action, which is updating the MPO's 2011 Organizational Structure MOU, specifically to add the process for sharing information to develop the annual list of obligated projects (in accordance with 23 CFR 450.314[a]) by September

30, 2023. T. Teich also mentioned that the final 2022 Federal Certification Review report will be shared with MPO members soon and that Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) staff will present the results at a future MPO board meeting.

T. Teich also stated that the *Destination 2050* Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Investment Programs workshop has been rescheduled for January 19, 2023.

T. Teich also shared recent public engagement updates. The quarterly Inner Core Committee Transportation group will meet on January 11, 2023, at 9:00 AM. The *Destination 2050* LRTP Transportation Vision and Priorities survey closes on January 20, 2023. The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) study ideas survey is also open and staff are accepting project ideas. MPO members are encouraged to share these surveys with their networks, especially delegates representing municipalities outside of the Inner Core.

#### **4. Public Comments**

There were none.

#### **5. Committee Chairs' Reports—*Brian Kane, Chair, Administration and Finance (A&F) Committee***

B. Kane stated that the A&F Committee met to discuss continuing work on the Operations Plan. The next A&F Committee meeting on January 19 will focus on quarterly budgetary oversight.

#### **6. Regional Transportation Advisory Council Report—*Lenard Diggins, Chair, Regional Transportation Advisory Council***

L. Diggins stated that the upcoming Advisory Council meeting will focus on local transit funding and coordination challenges. There will also be a *Destination 2050* Planning Framework Workshop led by Michelle Scott, MPO staff.

#### **7. Action Item: National Highway System (NHS) Travel Reliability and Freight Movement Performance Targets—*Michelle Scott, MPO Staff, and Derek Krevat, Massachusetts Department of Transportation***

*Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar*

1. [Travel Time Reliability Performance Targets \(PDF\)](#)
2. [Travel Time Reliability Performance Targets \(HTML\)](#)

M. Scott and D. Krevat presented performance metrics related to the travel reliability of passenger and freight movement. The United States Department of Transportation (US

DOT) requires performance monitoring on this topic within the National Highway System (NHS). States and MPOs are required to set two types of reliability performance measures: (1) the percent of person-miles that are reliable for the Interstate and non-Interstate NHS for all roadway users, and (2) the Truck Travel Time Reliability Index on Interstates for freight vehicles. Performance targets are proposed for the next federal performance period, extending from 2022 to 2025.

Travel time reliability is defined as the consistency or dependability of travel times from day to day or across different times of day. M. Scott noted that reliability and congestion are related concepts but added that a road can be reliably congested. Per federal requirements, states and MPOs measure travel time reliability as a percent of the person-miles traveled (for all vehicle types) on the Interstate System or non-Interstate NHS that are reliable. Increases in the values of these metrics are desirable, while decreases in Truck Travel Time Reliability Index values are desirable. Data for these performance measures come from the National Performance Management Research Data Set (NPMRDS) as well as other state and federal sources. Following a federally required target-setting process, the MPO must decide to support statewide targets for these reliability measures or set separate targets for the Boston region.

M. Scott stated that travel time reliability can be affected by factors such as severe weather, increased travel demand on roadways, the effectiveness of signal timing, construction, or other roadway incidents. She showed variations in travel times for a segment of Interstate 93 as an example of how travel times, and in turn travel time reliability, have changed on roadways during the COVID-19 pandemic.

D. Krevat explained that travel time reliability has been calculated to be a longer travel time (80<sup>th</sup> percentile) for a given roadway segment divided by the normal travel time (50<sup>th</sup> percentile) for that segment. A value below 1.5 is considered reliable, while above 1.5 is unreliable. Reliable person-miles account for travel times, vehicle volumes, estimated vehicle occupancies, and segment lengths. The share of reliable person-miles is calculated by dividing reliable person-miles by total person-miles on a given roadway network.

D. Krevat reviewed previous data for travel time reliability measures beginning in 2017. Data for the Interstate system shows that the share of reliable person-miles decreased between 2017 and 2019, increased significantly during 2020 with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and began to decrease again in 2021 as travel demand began to return. Data for the non-Interstate NHS show gradual increases in reliable person-miles from 2017 and 2019, a significant increase between 2019 to 2020, and a decrease

between 2020 and 2021. The share of reliable person-miles on the Interstate and non-Interstate NHS is lower in the Boston region than for Massachusetts overall.

D. Krevat explained that Massachusetts targets for the share of reliable person-miles on the Interstate system for 2023 and 2025 are 74.0 percent and 76.0 percent, respectively. Massachusetts targets for non-Interstate NHS roadways for 2023 and 2025 are 85.0 percent and 87.0 percent. These targets account for uncertainty in future travel demand and patterns.

Freight reliability for the Interstate system is measured using the Truck Travel Time Reliability index, which is a ratio of longer truck travel time (95<sup>th</sup> percentile) divided by the normal truck travel time (50<sup>th</sup> percentile). These values decreased significantly between 2019 and 2020 (a desirable change) and then increased somewhat between 2020 and 2021. Performance targets for 2023 and 2025 are 1.80 and 1.75, respectively.

M. Scott presented example strategies that may help to improve travel time reliability. These include geometric improvements at intersections, bus/truck only lanes, mode shift, remote work, signal retiming, high occupancy toll lanes, intelligent transportation systems, and emergency response improvements.

Next steps for these targets include reflecting the metrics in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in April 2023 and incorporating information learned from these metrics in the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

### ***Discussion***

L. Diggins asked who is responsible for collecting these measurements. M. Scott stated that states and MPOs can access relevant data from the Regional Integrated Transportation Information System (RITIS). D. Krevat stated that there is a Performance Measures sub-committee that meets regularly to discuss these targets. D. Mohler stated that the proposed measures are federally set, with each state developing specific targets.

B. Kane said that the goal of the Boston Region MPO should be to decrease person-miles traveled by single-occupancy vehicles (SOVs). He observed that in 2020, when the person-miles decreased, reliability metrics shifted in their desirable direction, and he asked if the MPO should try to get individuals to travel less. D. Mohler stated that this is a policy discussion that should be had frequently but that person-miles traveled by single-occupancy vehicles is not inherently tied to reliability targets. B. Kane noted that this may be a broader question for the MPO's LRTP.

B. Kane asked which mechanisms can be used to incentivize municipalities to implement strategies to help reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips. E. Bourassa responded that should the performance targets not be met, the federal agencies must have an explanation: this in turn shapes the approaches used to set targets for these federal measures. He agreed that a discussion of how to encourage people to use non-SOV modes is relevant to the LRTP.

E. Bourassa asked if the reason that travel is projected to become less reliable can be attributed to a projected increase in vehicle-miles traveled (VMT). D. Krevat responded that it could be a result of the growth of the region and congestion in the area. D. Mohler stated that traffic has returned to pre-pandemic levels. D. Krevat stated that performance targets were chosen from mid-range reliability projections to account for uncertainty related to future travel trends.

Jim Fitzgerald, City of Boston, asked what the scope and frequency of this analysis is and how it will influence potential projects, noting that he did not want these measures to have an outsize influence on how the MPO selects projects that might help to achieve other goals. D. Mohler stated that these targets will be addressed in the TIP and LRTP and that the MPO should be reviewing the targets to determine if progress is being made. M. Scott stated that the TIP capacity management scoring accounts for the reliability of a road segment.

Steve Olanoff, Three Rivers Interlocal Council, asked for clarification on how “normal” travel time is defined and calculated in the metric. D. Krevat stated that “normal” refers to the median, or 50th percentile, travel time for a particular roadway segment.

B. Kane stated that these metrics are an opportunity to reduce single-occupancy VMT and that MPO staff should create scoring methods that will address reducing single-occupancy VMT, while also improving pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation options. M. Scott clarified that in the travel time reliability metric, all vehicle types are included in the calculation, including public transit vehicles. D. Krevat stated that there is another federally required performance metric related to non-SOV travel in the Boston region that has already been adopted. M. Scott stated that the MPO discussed these non-SOV-travel targets on October 20, 2022, and that the next time the MPO is likely to discuss these targets is in the summer or fall of 2024.

Ken Miller, FHWA, stated that the point of performance measures is to ensure that MPOs are making conscious decisions about which strategies are being employed. Miller stated that these measures only apply to Interstate and NHS roadways. Strategies to increase non-SOV travel can have undesirable impacts on travel time

reliability, so further nuance is needed in decision-making. He added that an MPO can set additional performance measures in addition to the federally required ones, should the MPO decide that they are valuable in decision-making.

L. Diggins asked what rationale was used to adopt the state's 2018 reliability performance targets and what costs would be associated with generating individual targets. M. Scott stated that the MPO is collaborating with MassDOT to support existing targets. To generate individual targets, MPO staff time would be required to determine desired projections and relevant targets.

Ilana Strauss asked how induced demand will impact reliability measures. M. Scott stated that demand can be a contributing factor to fluctuations in reliability. The share of reliable person-miles measure includes all types of vehicles, which makes it complicated to distinguish the reliability of single-occupancy vehicles from transit vehicles, but the MPO could attempt to examine the reliability of different vehicle types to the extent that data allow.

Ali Kleyman, MBTA, stated that the impact of adopting the proposed targets is not immediately evident. D. Mohler stated that the proposed targets will not directly impact MPO projects and activities. A bigger question is if the MPO wants to distinguish itself from state-level decisions about these performance targets.

E. Bourassa stated the reliability performance measure is overly academic. S. Olanoff stated that other measures besides these reliability metrics provide more helpful guidance to MPO decisions.

#### ***Vote***

A motion to approve the proposed performance targets for NHS travel reliability and freight movement was made by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins) and seconded by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (E. Bourassa). The MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane) and the Town of Brookline (Heather Hamilton) voted no. The motion carried.

### **8. Action Item: Work Scope, *Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Database Update—Casey Cooper, MPO Staff, Principal Transportation Planner***

#### ***Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar***

1. [Bicycle Pedestrian Count Database Work Program \(PDF\)](#)
2. [Bicycle Pedestrian Count Database Work Program \(HTML\)](#)

C. Cooper stated that the Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Database contains information from the years 1974 to 2022. Proposed updates in the work scope presented would improve the accessibility of the data and evaluate current field practices used to obtain bicycle and pedestrian data. The work scope tasks also include reviewing the current web application and a public survey focused on learning which components of the application are perceived as valuable to users and any other desired features. MPO staff will compare the application to those of other planning entities and will employ features deemed useful, comprehensible, aesthetic, and implementable. MPO staff will also update current counting practices to match MassDOT's recommendations and tailor practices and target areas to best meet the needs of the Boston region.

**Vote**

A motion to approve the work scope for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Database Update was made by the MBTA Advisory Council (B. Kane) and seconded by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins). The motion carried.

**9. Action Item: Work Scope, MBTA Count Program Support FFY 2023—  
Roger Roy, MPO Staff, Field Data Collection Supervisor**

***Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar***

1. [MBTA Count Program Support FFY 2023 \(PDF\)](#)
2. [MBTA Count Program Support FFY 2023 \(HTML\)](#)

R. Roy presented the MBTA Count Program Support work scope to be completed in FFY 2023 using MassDOT-Directed Planning (PL) funds with a budget of \$65,000. MPO staff assists the MBTA with collecting field data to supplement nonexistent or insufficient automated data-collection methods.

The work scope has been discussed with the MBTA and has been narrowed down to four tasks. The first task is to initiate the collection of passenger counts on the recently opened Green Line Extension. The second task is to collect ridership data on the commuter rail system as needed. The third task is to collect ridership data on the Mattapan Line, where there is relatively less interaction with fareboxes. The fourth and final task is to collect ridership data on MBTA transit services during scheduled service diversions for maintenance and other events.

R. Roy stated that the work scope does not include a task for analysis of the collected data. R. Roy also stated that staff is ready to begin this work immediately and the work will not interfere with existing MPO work tasks.

***Discussion***

B. Kane clarified that this work scope only involves data collection. The MBTA will use the data as it deems appropriate.

***Vote***

A motion to approve the work scope for MBTA Count Program Support FFY 2023 was made by the MBTA (A. Kleyman) and seconded by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins). The motion carried.

**10. Action Item: Work Scope, *Evaluation of Proof-of-Payment Fare Inspection Strategies II*—Emily Domanico, MPO Staff, Associate Transportation Planner**

***Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar***

1. [Evaluation of Proof of Payment Fare Inspection Strategies II \(PDF\)](#)
2. [Evaluation of Proof of Payment Fare Inspection Strategies II \(HTML\)](#)

E. Domanico stated that the proposed work scope for the Evaluation of Proof-of-Payment Fare Inspection Strategies II is estimated to cost \$75,015 and will be completed over nine months. The study is funded through MassDOT-directed planning (PL) funds and will not impair other MPO work.

Under its Fare Transformation Program, the MBTA is planning to implement a new generation of Automated Fare Collection (AFC) technology. A proof-of-payment system will be implemented at the same time as the AFC system, allowing riders to board at any door on surface vehicles, lightweight vehicles, and buses. Teams of fare inspectors will randomly validate that riders have paid the proper fare. Failure to present proof of payment can result in a warning or citation. E. Domanico stated that the fare inspection program should be regionally equitable, while also producing a sufficient deterrent effect.

The MBTA requests that CTPS produce an updated version of the previous *Evaluation of Proof-of-Payment Fare Inspection Strategies* study from 2020. The MBTA requested guidance with determining the most efficient and equitable strategy for deploying personnel. The analysis will be completed using 2024 ridership projections and current thinking regarding inspection policies and procedures.

Tasks for this work scope include collaborating with the MBTA to determine appropriate updates to the existing analysis. MPO staff will coordinate with the MBTA to identify inspector schedules and allocation plans across different modes of transit. The



efficiency and equity of different strategies will be analyzed by MPO staff and the methodology and results of the study will be reported to the MBTA.

***Discussion***

Sarah Lee, Massachusetts Port Authority (MassPort), stated that in the past, MBTA staff discussed how to address bus lines that feed directly into the rail service. S. Lee asked if the proposed analysis will address this issue. S. Lee further asked for MassPort to be included in the conversation of how fare enforcement will interact with MassPort's agreement to pay for service on the Silver Line. E. Domanico responded that people's movements throughout the transit system are factored into the model.

***Vote***

A motion to approve the work scope for the Evaluation of Proof-of-Payment Fare Inspection Strategies II was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane) and seconded by the MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

**11. Members' Items**

There were none.

**12. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by the Inner Core Committee (Tom Bent) and seconded by the MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

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## Attendance

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<b>Members</b>	<b>Representatives and Alternates</b>
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Jay Monty
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Brookline)	Heather Hamilton
City of Boston (Boston Planning & Development Agency)	Jim Fitzgerald
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Bill Conroy
Federal Highway Administration	Ken Miller
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	David Mohler
	John Bechard
MassDOT Highway Division	John Romano
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	Laura Gilmore
	Ali Kleyman
	Amira Patterson
Massachusetts Port Authority	Sarah Lee
MBTA Advisory Board	Brian Kane
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)	Darlene Wynne
North Suburban Planning Council (Town of Burlington)	Melisa Tintocalis
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Lenard Diggins
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	Peter Pelletier
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce)	Tom O'Rourke Stephen Olanoff

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<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Allison Patton	Health Effects Institute
Amanda Loomis	
Andrew Jennings	
Phyllis Jennings	
Andrew Wang	MassDOT
Bob Frey	MassDOT
Cheryll-Ann Senior	
Dan Albert	
David Koses	
Derek Krevat	MassDOT
Derek Shooster	MassDOT
George Thiel	
Holly MacMullen	
Jackie LaFlam	Cape Ann Transportation Authority
Joe Collins	Town of Norwood
Jon Seward	
Josh Klingenstein	MassDOT
Joe Glynn	MWRTA
Lynsey Heffernan	
Michelle Ho	MassDOT
Miranda Briseño	MassDOT
Owen MacDonald	Town of Weymouth
Brenda Christner	
Paul Cobuzzi	
Perry Grossman	
Raissah Kouame	
Robert Simmons	
Sefira Bell-Masterson	
Sheila Page	Town of Lexington
Steven Andrews	
Tyler Terrasi	MWRTA

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**MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff**

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Tegin Teich, Executive Director

Annette Demchur

Betsy Harvey

Casey Cooper

Erin Maguire

Ethan Lapointe

Gina Perille

Heyne Kim

Hiral Gandhi

Ilana Strauss

Jonathan Church

Judy Taylor

Logan Casey

Marty Milkovits

Rebecca Morgan

Michelle Scott

Sam Taylor

Sean Rourke

Silva Ayvazyan

Srilekha Murthy

Stella Jordan

Tanner Bonner

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**By Telephone:**

857.702.3700 (voice)

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