

MPO Meeting Minutes

Draft Memorandum for the Record

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

January 19, 2023, Meeting

10:00 AM–11:05 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

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

- Approve the minutes of the meeting of November 17, 2022
- Endorse Amendment Two for the Federal Fiscal Years (FFYs) 2023–27 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)
- Endorse Adjustment Two for the FFYs 2023–27 TIP
- Release Adjustment Three for the FFYs 2023–27 TIP for a 21-day public review period
- Release the MPO’s Title VI Triennial Report for a 30-day public review period

Meeting Agenda

Introductions

See attendance on page 10.

1. Chair’s Report—*David Mohler, MassDOT*

There was none.

2. Executive Director’s Report—*Tegin Teich, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff*

T. Teich stated that there will be a *Destination 2050* Investment Programs Workshop following this meeting.

Updated information related to population, household, and employment forecasts to support the development of *Destination 2050* will be sent out by Monday, January 23, 2023. This information will contain draft municipal and sub-municipal allocations. Feedback is requested back by Friday, February 10, 2023.

There are two public surveys open to anyone in the Boston area. The *Destination 2050* Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Transportation Vision and Priorities Survey closes on Friday, January 20, 2023. The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Study Ideas Survey closes on Wednesday, February 15, 2023.

Upcoming MPO meetings will occur on Thursday, January 26, 2023, and Thursday, February 2, 2023, at 10:00 AM.

3. Public Comments

There were none.

4. Committee Chairs' Reports

Derek Krevat, from MassDOT's Office of Transportation Planning (OTP) stated that Srilekha Murthy, MPO staff, should be reaching out to UPWP Committee members to schedule the next committee meeting, which is expected to occur in February. This will begin the cycle of developing the Federal Fiscal Year 2024 UPWP.

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

Lenard Diggins reported that at the previous Regional Transportation Advisory Council meeting, a presentation was made by the Vice Chair, Franny Osman, and Susan Barrett, Transportation Manager for the Town of Lexington. This presentation focused on gaps in service provided by regional transit authorities (RTAs) and the gaps in coordinating transit for the elderly and people with disabilities. L. Diggins stated that a lot of potential ways to address these gaps were discussed.

6. Action Item: Approval of November 17, 2022, MPO Meeting Minutes Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [November 17, 2022, Meeting Minutes \(pdf\)](#)
2. [November 17, 2022, Meeting Minutes \(html\)](#)

Vote

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of November 17, 2022, was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (Eric Bourassa) and seconded by the Inner Core Committee, City of Somerville (Tom Bent). The motion carried. The following members abstained: Massachusetts Port Authority (Sarah Lee), the Town of Brookline (Robert King), South Shore Coalition, Town of Hull (Jennifer Constable), and South West Advisory Planning Committee, Town of Medway (Peter Pelletier).

7. Action Item: FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment Two—*Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [TIP Amendment 2 for Endorsement \(pdf\)](#)
2. [TIP Amendment 2 Simplified for Endorsement \(html\)](#)

E. Lapointe reviewed the changes related to TIP Amendment Two and the public comment received during its 21-day public review period. TIP Amendment Two was originally presented to the Boston Region MPO Board on December 15, 2022, and has concluded its public review period. The proposed Amendment Two features project cost adjustments based on revised engineering estimates and scope changes, a design earmark for the Assabet River Rail Trail in Stow, and new projects for the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) and Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA).

The Assabet River Rail Trail project has been adjusted since it was presented to the board in December. This project's original presented budget was \$750,000, which reflected the federal funds programmed to the project under a member-designated project earmark. The budget has been adjusted to reflect an additional \$187,000 in matching state and local funds.

During the 21-day public review period, running from December 15, 2022, to January 6, 2023, one comment directly related to Amendment Two was received. The commenter asked if the replica trolley replacement electrification process will coincide with a greater shift towards zero or low-emission vehicles and general electrification plans for the CATA's fleet. Staff has advised the commenter to speak with CATA directly about their electrification strategies.

Vote

A motion to endorse the TIP Amendment Two was made by the MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the Inner Core Committee, City of Somerville (T. Bent). The motion carried unanimously.

8. Action Item: FFYs 2023–27 TIP Adjustment Two—*Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [TIP Adjustment 2 for Endorsement \(pdf\)](#)
2. [TIP Adjustment 2 Simplified for Endorsement \(html\)](#)

E. Lapointe presented proposed items for the TIP Adjustment Two for endorsement. Changes included in an adjustment are not required to go through a 21-day public

review period. Adjustment Two proposes funding source changes, a project cost adjustment for Signal and Intersection Improvements on Interstate 93 at Mystic Avenue and McGrath Highway, and updated MWRTA project descriptions.

E. Lapointe explained relevant project funding source changes. Project #608348, Reconstruction of Bridge Street in Beverly, has been updated to better reflect the correct breakdown of state funds matched to federal funds. The scope of work and budget remain the same as they were originally presented. Advertisement for this project is planned for May 13, 2023.

Project #608562, Signal and Intersection Improvements on Interstate 93 at Mystic Avenue and McGrath Highway in Somerville, has a cost increase of \$402,557. These budgetary changes reflect updated engineers' estimates based on revised designs. Advertising for this project is planned for February 17, 2024.

The final adjustment is a project description change for the MWRTA's facilities and vehicle maintenance program. The original project description specified discretionary funding for maintenance and body shops, which has been updated to reflect a shift towards vehicle maintenance for alternative fuel infrastructure.

Vote

A motion to endorse the TIP Adjustment Two was made by the MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the Inner Core Committee, City of Somerville (T. Bent). The motion carried unanimously.

9. Action Item: FFYs 2023-2027 TIP Amendment Three—*Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [TIP Amendment 3 for Public Review \(pdf\)](#)
2. [TIP Amendment 3 for Public Review \(html\)](#)

E. Lapointe presented items for the TIP Amendment Three, to be released for a 21-day public review period following this vote. The public review period will commence on Friday, January 20, 2023, and conclude on Friday, February 9, 2023. Items included in this amendment include the bundling of a deck replacement for Cambridge Street over Interstate 90 and the Lincoln Street Pedestrian Overpass with the Allston Multimodal Project. Other changes include a design earmark for the Centre Street/Central Avenue Bridge design in Dover and programming of Community Transit Grants providing funding to improve transit accessibility for seniors and people with disabilities.

E. Lapointe presented the FFY 2023 Statewide Highway funded project changes. First, the Boston Deck Replacement for Cambridge Street over Interstate 90 and the preservation of the Lincoln Street Pedestrian Overpass have been incorporated into the Allston Multimodal Project. All funding and work scopes will be moved to MassDOT's Capital Investment Plan and will no longer be reflected in the TIP. Second, bridge engineering and design for Centre Street/Central Avenue in Dover and Needham have been added to the TIP. This project is funded by an earmark for \$2,500,000.

E. Lapointe described changes that have been made to projects receiving MassDOT State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2023 Community Transit Grant Operating Awards. First, CATA was awarded \$122,640 for a project that provides van transportation to dialysis and medical appointments in Beverly, Danvers, and Peabody. These funds will also cover direct transfers to the MBTA RIDE. Second, the City of Newton will receive \$380,000 in operating funds to continue the NewMo program, providing on-demand transportation centering on the needs of older adults in Newton. Greater Lynn Senior Services will receive \$80,000 to fund Move Safe/Mobility Links, designed to strengthen the capacity of consumers to efficiently navigate around their communities using available transportation options, including public transportation.

MWRTA will receive \$100,000 for its Transitions Outreach Program (TOP) to improve individual mobility needs and enhance transportation equity and accessibility by expanding travel independence. Mystic Valley Elder Services, Inc. will receive \$132,750 for its Connect a Ride Alliance, which provides transportation services to 11 communities north of Boston. The Town of Acton will receive \$150,000 for driver and dispatch salaries for CrossTown Connect, a regional approach to transportation for older adults and people with disabilities. SCM Community Transportation will receive \$18,300 to facilitate scheduling software to reduce the number of unfulfilled trip requests for older adults and people with disabilities in Somerville, Cambridge, and Medford.

Discussion

E. Bourassa asked how the financials of the Lincoln Street Pedestrian Overpass project change with its removal from the TIP and addition to the Capital Investment Plan. D. Mohler responded that the overpass project is being combined into the Allston Multimodal Project, so its funding will be secured when the overall project funding is finalized. The projects were bundled due to requests from advocacy groups and the City of Boston.

Ken Miller, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), asked for further clarification on the type of earmark that is used in the Dover–Needham bridge engineering project. D. Mohler responded that it is a congressional earmark from the federal budget.

K. Miller stated that it would be helpful for MPO staff to denote specifics about earmarks, including the year and type of earmark. K. Miller followed up by asking who would be conducting work for the project. D. Mohler replied that since this is a federal earmark, it must go through MassDOT and MassDOT will work with the Towns to coordinate next steps. D. Krevat responded that this specific earmark was in the 2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act to be used exclusively for design. John Bechard, MassDOT Highway Division, added that he is currently working with the community to identify design professionals. He confirmed that the money was available through the Appropriations Act and MassDOT is in communication with the town proponent.

L. Diggins asked how much funding MassDOT has for the Community Transit Grants. D. Mohler responded that he does not know, but he can find the exact number.

Vote

A motion to endorse the TIP Amendment Three for a 21-day public comment period was made by the MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins). The motion carried unanimously.

10. Action Item: Title VI Triennial Report—*Betsy Harvey, MPO Staff Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar*

1. [Title VI Report \(pdf\)](#)
2. [Title VI Report \(html\)](#)

Betsy Harvey, Transportation Equity Program Manager, shared the Title VI Triennial Report with the board and asked for members' approval to release the report for a 30-day public review period. Title VI, which is part the Civil Rights Act, prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin. In practice, national origin is defined as limited English proficiency (LEP). Both the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and FHWA require their financial recipients to pass through Title VI requirements. Every year, the MPO reports on compliance efforts to MassDOT. The FTA requires Title VI reporting triennially, while the FHWA requires Title VI, environmental justice (EJ), and other nondiscrimination regulations reporting annually.

B. Harvey defined Title VI and EJ protections. Title VI covers people with limited English proficiency and minority populations, while EJ covers minority and low-income populations. Title VI is a law that provides legal protections against discrimination. EJ protections are set in an Executive Order that focuses on the inclusion of low-income and minority populations in the planning process and avoiding adverse impacts, with no legal authority. The purpose of Title VI reporting is to demonstrate compliance with

relevant federal requirements and to share the analyses that the MPO uses to make decisions.

The report contains general reporting requirements as well as requirements related to planning practices. General reporting requirements include certifications and assurances, Title VI complaints, the Public Engagement Plan (PEP), the Language Assistance Plan (LAP), a description of the MPO's Title VI Program, and the dissemination of Title VI information.

B. Harvey shared a graph examining the demographic profiles of people impacted by MPO planning practices in the years 2010 and 2020. From 2010 to 2020, the minority population increased from 28.2 percent to 36.5 percent. The low-income population decreased from 23.2 percent to 20.1 percent. The youth population decreased from 20.6 percent to 18.9 percent. The population of people with limited English proficiency increased from 10.5 percent to 11.2 percent. The population of people with disabilities remained relatively constant from 10.0 percent to 10.2 percent. The older adult population also remained relatively unchanged, from 6.7 percent to 6.9 percent.

B. Harvey shared a line chart showing the share of dollars spent on MPO target-funded projects located near minority and low-income communities and the share of the overall population that minority groups and low-income communities make up. The difference between these two lines is the basis of the following analysis. B. Harvey noted that there is a sharp increase in the metrics for the 2023–27 TIP, which can be attributed to the availability of new census data from the 2020 Census. Examining the minority population first, there is a disparity between the percent of the minority population and the percent of TIP funding that will directly benefit them, marking a concerning trend. B. Harvey also noted a methodological change when running the same analysis for low-income populations. Through the 2021–25 TIP, low-income populations were measured with a household income measure, while the 2021–25 TIP and future TIPs utilize a poverty measure. Trends show that funding for low-income populations is relatively below their population share for the region.

Another analysis examines the funding per capita ridership of all TIP public transit projects. This analysis tracks the per capita transit expenditures for four groups: the minority ridership, the low-income ridership, the nonminority ridership, and the non-low-income ridership. Ridership data comes from pre-COVID-19 metrics. Since the FFY 2019–23 TIP, funding for all ridership groups have decreased. Funding for minority and low-income populations decreased by a third, while funding for nonminority and non-low-income populations decreased by half. Despite these decreases, funding per capita is still less for minority and low-income populations than their counterparts.

A similar analysis was conducted on the per capita expenditures for target-funded TIP public transit projects, or projects funded by the Boston Region MPO. This chart shows similar trends to the previous analysis, with transportation funding decreasing for all population groups by over 50 percent. Since the FFY 2021–25 TIP, there has been an uptick in funding across all populations. The funding decrease can be attributed to the recently completed Green Line Extension project. The increase in funding is related to the Community Connections Program, the Columbus Avenue bus lane, and the refurbishment of the Lynn and Forest Hills transit stations. The funding for minority and low-income populations remains below that of their counterparts.

Each LRTP contains a disparate impact and disproportionate burden (DI/DB) analysis to determine if MPO-funded projects would likely cause disparate impacts to minority and low-income populations. The eight metrics used to determine potential impacts are access to jobs, access to retail, access to healthcare, access to higher education, travel time, carbon monoxide emissions, and congested vehicle-miles traveled (VMT). An analysis run for the *Destination 2040* LRTP showed no disparate impacts to minority populations, nor disproportionate burdens to low-income populations. In the coming months, another analysis will be run for *Destination 2050*, the upcoming LRTP.

Each year, TIP Title VI and EJ analyses are run to assess the impact of MPO-funded projects on populations of interest. B. Harvey shared charts from this analysis focused on the difference of emissions of TIP projects between different population groups. An analysis was made to determine the difference between nonminority and minority populations, non-low-income and low-income populations, and English speakers and people with LEP. For minority populations and people with LEP, the emission reductions compared to their counterparts are nearly equal. Low-income population emissions reductions in the FFY 2023–27 TIP outpaced those of the non-low-income population.

B. Harvey concluded by bringing attention to public engagement and data collection activities that are related to Title VI. The foundational approach to Title VI and EJ public engagement is developing and strengthening community relationships with protected populations. This requires an understanding of historical and demographic contexts of the communities that the MPO engages with and a commitment to meeting the communities where they are by developing creative and flexible engagement strategies to meet their needs. Building and strengthening relationships with communities helps to meet their transportation needs. Efforts to facilitate engagement throughout the planning process include the LRTP DI/DB analysis, updating TIP criteria in 2021, and various MPO studies. Data collection and analysis is a key aspect to the MPO's Title VI work. The main data source used is from the U.S. Census Bureau. As the MPO works to better understand the impacts of its projects, additional data is being used such as

safety, air quality, climate, and destination data. The Central Transportation Planning Staff's New Data Program has been a key factor in expanding its Title VI program.

Discussion

L. Diggins asked for clarification of a point made on page 12 of the Title VI Triennial Report. The report notes that Randolph, whose population is 73.4 percent minority, had six studies, compared to Boston's 60 studies. L. Diggins asked if Randolph's six studies is a point of concern when factoring in its smaller size than Boston. B. Harvey responded that the UPWP examines the demographics of municipalities, minority communities, people with LEP, and low-income communities and examines how many studies are done impacting each community. The goal of these analyses is to understand where projects are happening and what the demographics of those communities are. B. Harvey stated that the comparison between Randolph and Boston was made to show the similarly high minority population in both communities and the large difference in number of studies centered on each community.

L. Diggins asked if population density impacts analyses comparing minority and nonminority communities. B. Harvey responded that in this case it does not, because the analysis was run based on ridership data.

Vote

A motion to release the Title VI Triennial Report for a 30-day public review period was made by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins) and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried unanimously.

11. Members' Items

There were none.

12. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the Inner Core Committee, City of Somerville (T. Bent). The motion carried.

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Jay Monty
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	
At-Large Town (Town of Brookline)	Robert King
City of Boston (Boston Planning & Development Agency)	Jim Fitzgerald
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	William Conroy
	Cassandra Ostrander
Federal Highway Administration	Kenneth Miller
Federal Transit Administration	
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)	Ali Kleyman
Massachusetts Port Authority	Sarah Lee
MBTA Advisory Board	Amira Patterson
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Acton)	Austin Cyganiewicz
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 Shore Coalition (Town of Hull)	Jennifer Constable
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
	Steve Olanoff

Other Attendees	Affiliation
Rich Benevento	WorldTech Engineering
Sarah Bradbury	MassDOT District 3
Miranda Briseño	MassDOT
Paul Cobuzzi	
Johannes Epke	Conservation Law Foundation
Joy Glynn	MWRTA
Michelle Ho	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (OTP)
Tina Hooper	FHWA
Rhain Hoyland	
Katie Kalugin	
Joshua Klingenstein	MBTA
Raissah Kouame	MassDOT OTP
Derek Krevat	MassDOT OTP
Carys Lustig	
Gene Manning	Town of Canton
Christine Marshall-Bradley	Northeast Employment Collaborative
Kevin McCabe	
Benjamin Muller	MassDOT District 6
Shona Norman	CATA
Jon Rockwell	TEC, Inc.
Sarkis Sarkisian	Town of Natick
Justin Savignano	Needham Engineering
Cheryll-Ann Senior	MassDOT District 5
Jon Seward	
Derek Shooster	MassDOT OTP
Pat Sullivan	
Tyler Terrasi	MWRTA
Andrew Wang	MassDOT

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Tegin Teich, Executive Director

Logan Casey

Jonathan Church

Annette Demchur

Hiral Gandhi

Betsy Harvey

Stella Jordan

Heyne Kim

Ethan Lapointe

Erin Maguire

Marty Milkovits

Rebecca Morgan

Srilekha Murthy

Meghan O'Connor

Sean Rourke

Gina Perille

Michelle Scott

Judy Taylor

Sam Taylor

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The Boston Region MPO also complies with the Massachusetts Public Accommodation Law, M.G.L. c 272 sections 92a, 98, 98a, which prohibits making any distinction, discrimination, or restriction in admission to, or treatment in a place of public accommodation based on race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or ancestry. Likewise, the Boston Region MPO complies with the Governor's Executive Order 526, section 4, which requires that all programs, activities, and services provided, performed, licensed, chartered, funded, regulated, or contracted for by the state shall be conducted without unlawful discrimination based on race, color, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, creed, ancestry, national origin, disability, veteran's status (including Vietnam-era veterans), or background.

A complaint form and additional information can be obtained by contacting the MPO or at http://www.bostonmpo.org/mpo_non_discrimination. To request this information in a different language or in an accessible format, please contact

Title VI Specialist

Boston Region MPO
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
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civilrights@ctps.org

By Telephone:

857.702.3700 (voice)

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