

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Operations Plan

Administration and Finance Committee
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By Telephone:
857.702.3700 (voice)

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- Relay Using TTY or Hearing Carry-over: 800.439.2370
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INTRODUCTION

This Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) operations plan is a supplement to the MPO's Memorandum of Understanding, last approved in 2011. The 2011 Memorandum of Understanding Relating to the Comprehensive, Continuing, and Cooperative Transportation Planning Process in the Boston Metropolitan Area¹ required the Boston Region MPO to create an operations plan to address administration and finance, programming, policy, and technical products. The MPO's Administration and Finance (A&F) Committee, chaired by Brian Kane of the MBTA Advisory Board, worked with MPO staff to develop this operations plan. The operations plan was approved by the MPO board in June, 2023.

SECTION 1—ELECTIONS PROCESS

The process for electing the Boston Region MPO's municipal board members, described below, is overseen by Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and the MBTA Advisory Board according to the 2011 MOU for the Boston Region MPO. At the MAPC Fall Council meeting held each year in late October, the results of elections shall be announced for four (4) of the twelve (12) elected municipal seats.

1.1 ELIGIBLE NOMINATIONS

- I. The elected municipal MPO seats are held by the municipality. The chief elected official or their official designee shall represent the municipality throughout the municipality's term of office. Chief elected officials are considered to be the following:
 - A. in cities, this is the Mayor or, if the city does not have the office of Mayor, then the Chair of the Council, with the exception of Plan E cities in which case it shall be the City Manager.
 - B. in towns, the Chair of the Select Board.
- II. A nominee for an open municipal seat must receive three (3) nominations made by any chief elected official from the Boston region, regardless of which sub-region they are from. A chief elected official may nominate their municipality and that nomination shall count as one of the three

¹The 2011 memorandum of understanding is available via https://www.bostonmpo.org/data/pdf/about/mpo/Boston_Region_MPO_MOU_2011.pdf.

nominations needed to place a municipality on the ballot. Each chief elected official may only nominate one municipality per open seat.

- III. The MPO shall accept the Select Board Chair's nomination of a candidate whether or not the full Select Board has voted for it.

1.2 NOMINATIONS PROCESS

- I. In advance of the MAPC Fall Council meeting, MAPC staff shall send a correspondence inviting nominations with information about the process and deadlines. This correspondence shall be sent typically in early August.
- II. Nominations shall be submitted electronically to MAPC staff by early October. Nomination papers shall include a statement of candidacy of the community. The statement shall not exceed 250 words.
- III. MAPC staff shall contact the nominating municipal chief elected officials by phone or email to confirm their nomination.

1.3 ENGAGEMENT WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CANDIDATE COMMUNITIES

MAPC and the MBTA Advisory Board shall provide an appropriate opportunity for the electorate to meet representatives of candidate communities in the month of October, after nominations are submitted. This may be accomplished by holding a virtual Candidates Forum.

1.4 ELECTIONS PROCESS

- I. The election shall be held through the submission of ballots electronically to MAPC. A ballot shall be prepared by MAPC and the MBTA Advisory Board based on the certification of nominations. The ballot shall contain a list of the nominated municipalities. Candidate communities shall appear on the ballot in an order drawn by lot by designated officers of MAPC and the MBTA Advisory Board. The subregion of each of the communities shall be identified on the ballot. Electronic ballots shall be emailed from MAPC to the chief elected official of each municipality in the Boston MPO region with correspondence explaining the ballot submittal process and deadlines. Ballots are sent in mid-October and shall be due the day before the MAPC Fall Council meeting (late-October)

- II. Only municipalities in the subregion with an open seat shall cast a ballot for that seat. All municipalities may vote for the at-large open seats.
- III. The ballot shall be submitted electronically to MAPC by the municipal chief elected officer.
- IV. The designated officers of MAPC and of the MBTA Advisory Board shall certify the results of the election to the Chair of the MPO by 12 noon on the Monday following the election.

1.5

APPOINTING DESIGNEES AND ALTERNATES

- I. Within 30 days of the completion of the election, new board members must submit in writing to the Chair of the MPO their official designee and alternate, if desired, for that designee. A designee can be the chief elected official themselves or a representative of the municipality or agency that they represent. **Alternates may vote in MPO board meetings on behalf of the designee when the designee is not present.** In writing, the chief elected official should address **the Chair** and provide the name, title, and contact information of the designee and alternate.
- II. If, at any time, the chief elected official or designee leaves their position, a new letter must be submitted to the Chair identifying the new designee and alternate within 30 days of the position being vacated.
- III. If a representative other than the official designee or alternate attends a board meeting in representation of the seat, it is at the Chair's discretion whether that representative is acknowledged with other board members.

SECTION 2—BOSTON REGION MPO BOARD OFFICERS

The MOU states: “The Chair of the Boston Region MPO shall be the Secretary of MassDOT or the Secretary’s designee. The Vice-chair shall be a municipal representative or an official of one of the two regional agencies (MAPC or MBTA Advisory Board) and shall be elected to a one-year term by the MPO members by majority vote. This election shall take place at the first meeting after the election of Boston Region MPO elected municipal representatives.”

2.1 CHAIR

- I. The Chair of the Boston Region MPO Board is the Secretary of Transportation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, ex officio. Their term on the Boston Region MPO Board, and as its Chair, begins upon their official first day of employment as Secretary of Transportation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
- II. The Secretary shall preside at all Boston Region MPO Board meetings at which they are present. If the Secretary cannot preside at a Board meeting, their designee shall preside in their stead.
- III. The Chair or their designee is responsible for signing, as Chair of the Boston Region MPO, any official acts, orders, or proceedings of the board, such as:
 - A. Letters
 - B. Resolutions
 - C. 3C documents, including the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- IV. The Chair or their designee shall respond to requests for information relevant to Board business at least 48 hours in advance of a meeting during which the Board votes on a topic. In addition, the Chair shall ensure that all member questions are satisfied before calling votes.
- V. The Chair or their designee shall have such powers, and perform such other duties as may from time to time be voted by the MPO Board of Directors.

2.2 VICE-CHAIR

- I. The Vice-chair **or their designee** presides at meetings in the absence of the Chair or Chair's designee.
- II. The Vice-chair may sign official acts, orders, or proceedings of the board as the Chair's proxy if the Chair is not able.
- III. The Vice-chair shall collaborate on agenda setting with the Chair and MPO staff. In collaborating on agenda setting, the Vice-chair shall represent MPO Board members to ensure adequate discussion of topics of interest to the Board. Any MPO Board member, including the Vice-chair, may request an item be added to a future meeting's agenda.
- IV. The Vice-chair shall have such powers, and perform such other duties as may from time to time be voted by the MPO Board of Directors.
- V. Vice-chair Nomination Process
 - A. Following the annual election of municipal representatives, the MPO Board of Directors shall nominate a municipal representative or an official of one of the two regional agencies for a one-year term as the Vice-chair.
 - B. Only MPO Board members representing municipalities or one of the two regional agencies may make a nomination. This nomination shall take place one meeting prior to the Boston Region MPO Annual Meeting.

2.3 OFFICER ELECTION—ANNUAL MEETING

Each year, the MPO shall hold an Annual Meeting, typically in November. The Annual Meeting shall come after the completion of the MPO elections (typically held at the end of October) and within 30 days of the new members' term (typically beginning November 1), either in concurrence with or in addition to an existing board meeting. At that meeting:

- I. The Secretary of Transportation shall be invited to preside and address the board as the Chair
- II. The Vice-chair seat shall be elected by a majority vote
- III. Designees and alternates for new members, and any new designees or alternates for continuing members, shall be introduced

2.4 BOSTON REGION MPO PRESIDING OFFICER(S)

- I. When the designee of the Chair is not present or able to preside at the meeting, the Vice-chair assumes the presiding role at an MPO meeting. If the designees of both the Chair and Vice-chair are not present to preside at an MPO meeting, the Board membership may elect a presiding officer for the meeting by a majority vote.
- II. The presiding officer shall be responsible for calling the meeting to order, closing the meeting, and ensuring that the meeting follows Robert's Rules of Order, which can be overridden by processes in this Operations Plan. The primary functions of presiding during a meeting include recognizing board members to speak and facilitating voting procedures. The presiding officer shall also recognize requests for agenda and discussion items from members of the Board and of the public, facilitate meetings in a manner that encourages participatory dialogue that gives all parties a chance to be heard, and ensure that the board engages in timely and effective cooperative decision-making.
- III. At the direction of the presiding officer, discussions of agenda items can be facilitated by other Board members or staff.

2.5 OTHER OFFICERS

Other officers can be designated by majority vote of the Boston Region MPO

SECTION 3—BOARD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 MEMBER TERMS

- I. Permanent Members - There are 10 permanent members of the Boston Region MPO as defined in the 2011 MOU. The permanent members are:
 - A. Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) - three seats, including Chair
 - B. Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)
 - C. Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport)
 - D. Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
 - E. MBTA Advisory Board
 - F. Regional Transportation Advisory Council
 - G. City of Boston (two seats - one from the Boston Transportation Department and the other from the Boston Planning and Development Agency)
- II. Elected Members
 - A. There are 12 municipal elected members of the Boston Region MPO which include two at-large cities, two at-large towns, and eight subregions. Members are elected to three-year terms.
 - B. Each fall, four (4) of the 12 elected municipal members are voted on by chief elected officials of municipalities in the region for three-year terms.

3.2 ONBOARDING OF BOARD MEMBERS

- I. Within 90 days of the start of a board member's term, new board members and recurring board members shall be invited to an overview orientation meeting with MPO staff to review the purpose of MPOs, the 3c process, the TIP, UPWP, and LRTP, public engagement, and other fundamental aspects of the operations of the MPO. New board members must work with staff to find a date within the 90 days – the orientation or reorientation is optional for returning Board members.
- II. Within 90 days of the start of a board member's term, the board member shall be invited to a one-on-one conversation with the Executive Director of the MPO.
- III. Prior to the orientation of new board members, existing board members shall be contacted by staff to ask for volunteers to meet with and assist in orienting and mentoring new board members, also within the first 90 days.

- IV. At times, board members may also be invited to additional training modules organized by staff. These modules would focus more deeply on particular and timeline topics, such as one of the primary 3C documents (the UPWP, TIP, and LRTP)

3.3 BOARD MEMBER EXPECTATIONS

In the following sections, “board member” also refers to designees and alternates when serving in place of designees.

- I. General
 - A. In order to successfully plan and implement projects of regional significance, all members of the MPO must be able to understand the larger picture of regional transportation planning. All board members are designees for their agency, subregion, or municipality, and are invited to share their perspective in representing their entities. However, all board members, when serving on the Boston Region MPO board, agree to act in the interests of the regional goals, even if representing different local interests.
 - B. Board members, including designees and alternates, are expected to follow the “Communications Norms” when participating in MPO activities.
 - C. Board members shall declare any and all duality or conflicts of interests, material or otherwise, that may impede or be perceived as impeding the capacity to deliberate or act in good faith.
 - D. Board members shall communicate in a manner that is compliant with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.
- II. Representing the MPO
 - A. Board members shall not speak on behalf of the MPO board outside of MPO Board meetings unless approved by the Chair or Vice-chair of the MPO board.
 - B. When contacted by the press about Boston Region MPO activities or products, board members should respond with: “Thank you for your interest in the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization. All press inquiries are handled by the agency’s communications and public engagement staff. Please contact them at news@ctps.org.” They should cc news@ctps.org on the response. If press requests are received by phone, the board member should summarize the message, the date received, and

the reporters' contact information, and send the summary to news@ctps.org.

- III. Board members, designees, or their alternates are expected to make every effort to attend all meetings of the board and the committees of which they are members. When not able to attend, board members shall notify MPO staff and review minutes and video recordings after the meeting.
- A. Board meetings are generally held on the first and third Thursdays of the month at 10 AM
 - B. Board meetings are conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, except to the extent the board acting as a body suspends application of such Rules.
 - C. Staff and board members shall strive to offer multiple forums for board meetings throughout the year, potentially including up to quarterly meetings held in different locations throughout the region, virtual meetings (if allowed by law), and in person meetings. If allowed by law, virtual meetings may replace any required meetings in other locations in the region.
 - D. Meeting minutes are presented according to Massachusetts Open Meeting Law requirements: within three (3) meetings or thirty (30) days, whichever is later
 - E. Staff strive to post audio and video recordings to the Boston Region MPO website as soon as possible after a meeting
- IV. Informed Participation
- A. Board members are expected to keep well informed of all MPO matters, including reading advance materials for each meeting and asking questions about those materials in advance of and at board meetings. Board members may ask questions of the Chair, Vice-chair, and staff.
 - 1. Staff strive to post meeting agendas and materials one week in advance of a scheduled meeting. At a minimum, the agenda shall be posted 48 hours in advance of a meeting as defined by the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.
 - B. Board members present at meetings shall review each set of meeting minutes to ensure an accurate record of decision-making and so that they are able to vote on the approval of those minutes at following meetings.

- C. Board members are expected to participate in decisions by bringing to the attention of the board, its officers, and/or Executive Director any questions or comments of significance or relevance on matters of governance or policymaking.
 - D. Board members are expected to bring items from the entities that they represent that may have relevance for other stakeholders in the region in “Members Items.”
 - E. Board members representing a city, town, or subregion are expected to participate in subregional meetings relevant for the entity that they represent, to be able to share information about the operations of the MPO, promote opportunities to engage with the MPO such as events and elections, as well as hear and understand transportation and related (land use, resiliency, etc.) issues in their subregion.
- V. Board members shall participate in ensuring that the Boston Region MPO carries out a comprehensive, continuing, and cooperative (3C) transportation planning process resulting in plans, programs and operations consistent with the planning objectives of the metropolitan area. The 3C process is defined in the 2011 MOU.
- VI. Board members shall develop transportation planning policies in support of the Boston Region’s vision and goals, consistent with the MPO’s long-range transportation plan.
- VII. Board members shall recommend, participate in, review, and approve plans, projects and studies, consistent with the goals of the region.
- A. Board members shall review and approve at meetings throughout the federal fiscal year work scopes for staff to conduct plans, projects and studies. Ongoing MPO Programs described in detail in the UPWP, such as the Long-Range Transportation Plan, TIP, UPWP, Equity, Air Quality, and Climate Resilience programs, do not require separate work scope approval unless the Board members indicate a desire to do so.
 - B. Board members shall engage with staff when appropriate to provide input and guidance when some plans, projects, and studies are underway.
 - C. Board members shall review and approve final products of plans, projects and studies at meetings throughout the federal fiscal year

- VIII. Board members shall annually prioritize and select projects to be included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). To do so, board members shall consider information from staff and project proponents as well as public comments.
- IX. Board members shall carry out MPO activities and decision-making while maintaining fiscal constraint, promoting cost-feasible partnering to maximize opportunities for enhancing and maintaining an affordable, efficient transportation system.
- X. Board members shall participate in and create opportunities for public engagement and education on transportation issues, particularly for those affected in environmental justice areas, by attending staff-led events, recommending ways to engage with local stakeholders, and participating in outreach and engagement to local stakeholders.
- XI. Board members shall annually review and approve the United Planning Work Program (UPWP), including the annual programming of all federal planning funding, in consideration of the recommendation of the UPWP Committee.
- XII. Board members shall annually review and approve the Boston Region MPO's operating budget in consideration of the recommendation of the Administration and Finance Committee

SECTION 4—STANDING AND AD HOC COMMITTEES

4.1 EXISTING MPO COMMITTEES AND PROCESSES

- I. Current standing MPO committees are the Administration and Finance Committee, UPWP Committee, Congestion Management Committee, and TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness committee.
- II. Each committee is charged with the following:
 - A. The Administration and Finance (A&F) Committee reviews the operating budget of the Central Transportation Planning Staff – the staff to the MPO – and annually recommends approval of that operating budget to the MPO board. The A&F Committee engages in periodic (typically quarterly) review of the fiscal health of the agency in collaboration with the executive director. The committee may also take on topics on an as needed basis related to the administration or finance of the Boston Region MPO and its staff.
 - B. The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Committee oversees the development of the UPWP and monitors the progress of projects and programs funded through the UPWP. Annually, the Committee recommends approval of the UPWP to the MPO board.
 - C. The Congestion Management Committee facilitates the development and implementation of the MPO's Congestion Management Process (CMP) and recommends projects and programs that reduce congestion and improve mobility, safety, and efficiency.
 - D. The TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee facilitates discussion about the TIP development process and improvements that could be discussed with the full board. The committee provides an additional forum for board members and various project proponents and stakeholders to better understand project developments, which may include cost and readiness changes.
- III. Committee meetings are generally on an as-needed basis.
- IV. MPO staff strive to send/post agenda and materials one week in advance of a scheduled meeting. At a minimum, agenda and materials shall be shared 48 hours in advance of a meeting as defined by the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.

- V. Meeting minutes are presented according to Massachusetts Open Meeting Law requirements: within three (3) meetings or thirty (30) days, whichever is later.
- VI. Staff strive to post audio and video recordings to the MPO website as soon as possible after the meeting.

4.2 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

- I. Selecting Board Members to Serve on Committees
 - A. Within thirty (30) days of the start of a board member's term, new board members and recurring board members shall join at least one MPO Committee.
 - B. Committee members shall be selected by whomever volunteers to serve on a committee.
 - C. Committee members and officers shall be selected from all Board members and there shall be no requirement to have a specific "split" of state, regional or municipal members.
- II. Quorum

A quorum consists of two-thirds of the committee members present at all meetings.
- III. Committee Member Terms

Committee members serve a two-year term, which may start following the MPO's annual election of board members or other times of the year if a new designee is assigned.
- IV. Officers of Committees
 - A. During the first committee meeting after the annual election of board members, a chair of the committee shall be elected by the membership of the committee by majority vote.
 - B. Chairs of committees are responsible for:
 - 1. Coordinating with staff on agenda setting for each meeting
 - 2. Coordinating with staff to ensure that information needed for informed decision making is available for each meeting
 - 3. Facilitating presentations, discussions, and voting according to Robert's Rules of Order

V. Onboarding of Committee Members

- A. Within ninety (90) days of the start of a committee member's term, new committee members and recurring committee members shall be invited to an overview orientation meeting with MPO staff to review the purpose of the committee and the committee's role. New committee members must work with staff to find a date within the 90 days; the orientation or reorientation is optional for returning committee members.
- B. Prior to the orientation of new committee members, existing committee members shall be contacted by staff to ask for volunteers to meet with and assist in orienting and mentoring new committee members, also within the first 90 days.

4.3 COMMITTEE MEMBER EXPECTATIONS

Refer to **3.3 Board Member Expectations** (I) and (II), with the additional expectations:

- I. To ensure that a committee is able to reach quorum, committee members are asked to make every effort to attend each committee meeting. If a committee member is not able to attend a meeting, that member shall inform staff and the chair of the committee.
- II. If a Board member or their designee cannot attend a committee meeting, that meeting may be attended by an alternate.

4.4 AD HOC COMMITTEES

Through the recommendation of the Chair or through a motion and majority vote, the Board may establish ad hoc committees as needed to address topics that would not be addressed in the existing committees.

SECTION 5—REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Regional Transportation Advisory Council provides a forum for members of the public, including representatives of municipal, business, and advocacy interests, to participate in the MPO's 3C planning process, via:

1. A voting seat on the MPO board;
2. Continuous communication with MPO staff developing programs and projects, including timely opportunities to provide input and participate in decision-making; and
3. Opportunities for discussion about MPO work and regional issues.

The Advisory Council is supported by MPO staff, who facilitate conversations and presentations and provide timely opportunities to engage with the MPO's planning process and work products. The Advisory Council is also a key stakeholder in the MPO's Public Engagement Program, collaborating with staff on strategies to support public involvement in the planning process. The Advisory Council maintains bylaws to define its operations.

SECTION 6—MPO WORK

6.1 MPO PRODUCTS AND PROGRAMS

The following are MPO work products and programs produced and operated by MPO staff that support the continuing, cooperative and comprehensive (3C) transportation planning process for the Boston region.

- I. MPO Certification Documents:
 - Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
 - Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
 - Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
 - Congestion Management Process (CMP)
 - Air Quality Conformity (AQ)
 - Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan)
 - Public Engagement Plan (PEP)
 - MPO Title VI Report
 - Language Assistance Plan (LAP)
 - Freight Plan
- II. MPO Board agendas and meeting minutes
- III. MPO Committee agendas and meeting minutes
- IV. MPO study work scopes and final products
- V. Agency funded work scopes and final products

6.2 MPO CERTIFICATION DOCUMENTS

Prior to bringing a work product to the MPO Board, staff complete a number of quality assurance checks internally before sharing these products with the MassDOT MPO Liaison (or appropriate MassDOT staff) for review and approval before being presented to the MPO Board. Most product reviews are completed by the MPO liaison or specialized OTP staff. While three weeks are provided for this review, most products are turned around more quickly. The work products are as follows:

- I. MPO Certification Documents (specifically the LRTP, TIP, AQ, Coordinated Plan, PEP, Title VI Report, LAP and Freight Plan)
 - A. These certification documents are developed in consultation with and approved by the board
 - B. Each document is led by a staff project or program manager

- II. MPO Certification Documents (specifically UPWP and CMP)
 - A. The UPWP is developed in consultation with and reviewed by the UPWP Committee before approval by the full board.
 - B. The CMP is developed in consultation with and reviewed by the CMP committee before approval by the full board
 - C. Each document is led by a staff project or program manager

6.3 MPO BOARD AGENDA SETTING AND MEETING MINUTES

- I. Agenda Setting
 - A. Developing agenda items
 1. At any meeting of the Boston Region MPO or in communication with the Chair or Vice-chair, a member of the Board may request an item to be considered on a future board meeting agenda.
 2. At least four to six weeks before a scheduled Board meeting, MPO staff solicit potential agenda items from staff and include them on a running list of potential future agenda items.
 3. At least three to four weeks before a scheduled board meeting, MPO staff solicit potential agenda items from the Chair and Vice-chair
 4. MPO staff develop a draft list of agenda topics, including:
 - a) standard items, such as MPO meeting minutes, introductions, Chair's report, Executive Director's report, etc.
 - b) items solicited from staff, the Chair, and Vice-chair, as well as requests heard from board members over that time period.

The time allowed for each of these is set in coordination with the presenters.
 - B. Reviewing agenda items
 1. MPO staff schedule agenda-setting meetings with the Chair or their designee, as well as relevant review staff (currently MassDOT OTP MPO liaison staff) and the Vice-chair or their designee, where agenda items are reviewed and approved, typically 10 days before the MPO meeting.
 2. Materials relevant to any agenda items are submitted to MassDOT OTP staff to allow time for them to review

materials on behalf of the Chair. This includes work scopes, reports, meeting minutes, etc.

3. Meeting agendas are determined during this meeting, and staff then proceed with internal processes to review and post agendas as decided at the planning meeting.

C. Posting agendas

1. MPO staff shall follow Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, publishing the agenda and other meeting materials online and through email at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. MPO staff strive to publish meeting notices and any already available materials one week in advance of the meeting.

II. Meeting minutes

- D. MPO staff drafts meeting minutes in a timely fashion to comply with the Open Meeting Law.
- E. Once meeting minutes are completed and have gone through an internal MPO review process, they are shared with the MassDOT MPO Liaison for review at least one week in advance of the planned MPO Board meeting.
- F. Comments and feedback from the MPO liaison are then incorporated into the minutes
- G. **Staff strive to post** MPO meeting minutes one week in advance of a planned MPO Board meeting where they are presented for approval by the Board.
- H. Meeting minutes must be approved by the MPO Board every 30 days or by the third meeting after the minutes were taken, whichever is later, as outlined by the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.

6.4 MPO COMMITTEE AGENDA AND MEETING MINUTES

I. MPO Committee agendas

- A. Agenda topics are solicited and decided by the committee chair and the MPO staff assigned to work with the committee. For example, the UPWP Program Manager is designated to work with the Chair of the UPWP Committee.
- B. MPO committee agendas are reviewed and approved by the designated MPO committee Chair before being posted. **Staff strive to post** committee agendas at least one week before a scheduled meeting.

- II. MPO Committee minutes
 - A. MPO staff drafts meeting minutes in a timely fashion to comply with Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.
 - B. MPO Committee minutes are reviewed and approved by the Committee Chair.
 - C. **Staff strive to post** at least one week before a scheduled meeting where they are presented for approval by the committee.
 - D. Like MPO Board meeting minutes, Committee meeting minutes must be approved by the MPO Board every 30 days or by the third meeting after the minutes were taken, whichever is later, as outlined by the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.

6.5 MPO STUDY WORK SCOPES AND FINAL PRODUCTS

- I. If some portion of an intended MPO work scope, such as research to develop a methodology, is needed before a work scope can be completed, up to 10% of a project budget may be spent on a work scope.
- II. Staff draft work scopes/work products, complete internal reviews, and send work scopes/work products to the MPO liaison for review, ideally three weeks before the MPO meeting. This timing allows for review within two weeks and one week advance posting to the MPO. When appropriate, the MPO staff and liaison may identify relevant technical staff at MassDOT and/or MBTA to review the scope before submitting to the MPO Board.
- III. The MPO liaison at OTP and other relevant MassDOT staff review and provide feedback to be incorporated before finalized. While being reviewed, staff add the scope/study product to the list of items to be considered at the agenda-setting meeting.
- IV. Determination as to whether and when each item is presented is decided at the MPO board agenda-setting meeting
- V. **Staff strive to** post final work scopes or works product one week in advance of the MPO board meeting
- VI. Board members discuss and vote to approve work scopes

6.6 AGENCY-FUNDED STUDIES AND TECHNICAL ANALYSES

Similar to MPO work scopes and final products the process for agency-funded studies only differs as follows:

- I. Staff draft work scope/work product, complete internal review, and send to both the funding agency and the MPO liaison for review, ideally three weeks before the MPO meeting.
- II. The funding agency and MPO liaison at OTP, and in some cases other relevant MassDOT staff review, provide feedback to be incorporated before finalized.

SECTION 7—MPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EVALUATION AND COMPENSATION

7.1 MPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EVALUATION

The performance of the MPO Executive Director shall be evaluated annually, with an adjustment implemented on the same cycle as the rest of MPO staff, effective the beginning of the State Fiscal Year (July 1).

- I. The process for performing an evaluation of the MPO executive Director shall be as follows:
 - A. In May, the Executive Director shall complete an evaluation form consistent with the process used by MPO staff or as otherwise directed by the consensus of the Chair, Vice-chair, and Chair of A&F Committee or their designees.
 - B. In May or June, the Executive Director shall meet with the Chair, Vice-chair, and Chair of A&F Committee or their designees to discuss the evaluation form, including the performance of the prior year and goal-setting for the coming year.
 - C. The Chair, Vice-chair, and Chair of A&F Committee or their designees shall confer on a salary adjustment for the Executive Director, unless otherwise dictated by an employment contract. That recommendation shall be shared with the Executive Director, who shall then share with the Director of Finance for budgeting purposes, by June 15th.
 - D. If this schedule is not feasible in a given year, any salary adjustment for the Executive Director shall be effective as of the start of the SFY, even if that start has passed.
 - E. The evaluation form and recommended salary adjustment shall be provided to the Director of Finance for record keeping.
- II. The evaluation of the Executive Director shall assess progress towards goals established in the prior year's evaluation for the coming SFY.
 - A. The goals shall be established through the evaluation form submitted each year, and reviewed and updated in consultation with the A&F Committee quarterly.
 - B. At each quarterly check-in, when the A&F Committee meets to discuss the operating budget of the staff to the MPO, the Executive Director shall report on their progress towards achieving goals and objectives, and offer any suggestions for revising or eliminating any of these goals.
 - C. If needed, the A&F Committee may submit recommended updates to the annual goals identified in the evaluation form.

7.2 MPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMPENSATION

The range for compensating an Executive Director shall be based on compensation benchmarking updated every three years. Benchmarking may occur through a consultant-led process.

- I. Central Transportation Planning Staff has established a Compensation Plan establishing grades and associated salary ranges for all jobs at the agency, including the Executive Director. The Compensation Plan was initially published in 2022 based on a compensation consultant's 2021 market analysis and benchmarking of those jobs.
 - A. The salary ranges are typically updated every year by a small percentage based on a minimum assessment.
 - B. Upon hiring an Executive Director or at a minimum every three years after hiring an Executive Director, a more thorough benchmarking shall be conducted to update the Compensation Plan and ensure that the Executive Director, in addition to staff as a whole, are compensated fairly and competitively. The benchmarking may be based on:
 1. A consultant-led market analysis, and
 2. Surveying of relevant salaries by staff and board members
 - C. Every three years, staff shall develop an estimate and determine the viability to update the benchmarking for all jobs or a subset at the agency including the Executive Director. The estimate for the level of benchmarking shall be included in an annual operating budget approved by the A&F Committee.
 - D. At least every six years, benchmarking shall be conducted for all jobs at the agency.
- II. Staff performance shall be evaluated annually by their supervisors and adjustments recommended at the discretion of the Executive Director with any approvals required through contracting or other legal obligations. In addition, the Executive Director's salary shall be reviewed and adjusted after the benchmarking process as well as the evaluation process described in the next section.
 - A. The MPO Board, as the appointing authority, may at the time of hiring or at any point in the future decide to offer the Executive Director a multi-year employment and compensation agreement, or opt to hire or maintain the Executive Director as an employee at will.

- B. The Executive Director is FLSA-exempt.
- III. The recommended and approved (if required through contractual obligations) staff adjustments, including the Executive Director, shall be shared with the A&F Committee during annual budget deliberations if feasible, and if not, when they have been approved for the SFY.

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SECTION 8—AGENCY INFORMATION SHARING

8.1 GENERAL INFORMATION SHARING

- I. After approval of the TIP, MPO staff shall contact implementing agencies for all projects and communicate the process by which they shall keep the Boston Region MPO staff informed of project status on a regular basis. Project status information supports MPO planning and programming to enable the Boston Region MPO to identify issues that could cause a project to be deferred or extended into a subsequent fiscal year. At least quarterly and on request, the implementing agencies shall submit this information to the Boston Region MPO Chair and staff for coordination and for distribution to the MPO members. More information about this process is included in [Section 8.2 - TIP Project Information Sharing](#)
- II. MPO staff shall work with the implementing and other agencies to gather and proactively provide MPO board members with relevant financial information pertaining to the primary 3C-planning documents – the Unified Planning Work Program, TIP, and Long-Range Transportation Plan – to assist MPO board members in the 3C planning process.
- III. Board members shall not vote on items if relevant or requested information about the topic of the vote is not shared by relevant agencies, either directly or through MPO staff, at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting where the vote takes place. MPO staff shall ensure that such relevant information is shared with Board members. If information is not adequate for Board members to make a well-informed vote the vote may be postponed until such information is provided. This policy is intended to ensure that board members and staff have enough time to review new information to inform questions and discussion at the next board meeting. As with public comment periods, the MPO may waive this requirement by two-thirds majority vote in emergency circumstances, such as when there is a need to take immediate action to protect public safety or take advantage of an extraordinary funding opportunity.

8.2 TIP PROJECT INFORMATION SHARING

- I. MPO staff shall attend or review notes from MassDOT Highway Division's weekly Priority of Projects (PoP) meeting to receive project readiness updates related to TIP projects advertising in the current fiscal year. MPO staff shall collect readiness status updates in a document that shall be shared with the MPO at least 48 hours in advance of quarterly updates to the Board (or more frequently if requested by the board). Quarterly

meetings, where staff share project updates and implementing agencies shall be invited for the purpose of providing updates shall take place by the end of each quarter of the federal fiscal year: by December 31 (end of Q1), March 31 (end of Q2), June 30 (end of Q3), and September 30 (end of Q4).

- A. At the end of the federal fiscal year in September (Q4), per the MOU, state agencies (primarily MassDOT and MBTA) shall provide staff with more detailed information on project status of all TIP projects that were programmed for completion in the prior fiscal year, and may have been advertised for construction. The agencies shall present this information or be present to answer questions on information presented by MPO staff.
 - B. In Q2 or early Q3, and before the board votes on the new TIP, state agencies shall present information or share information with staff to present to the Board while being present to answer questions about overall prioritization processes, as well as selected project scopes, readiness, and costs proposed to be funded in the new TIP.
- II. In addition to quarterly updates, the TIP Manager shall share relevant project and financial information with the MPO board on an as-needed basis.
 - III. As necessary, MassDOT OTP and Boston MPO staff shall coordinate to produce TIP Adjustments and Amendments for projects in the current or next fiscal year for MPO member review and approval.
 - IV. MPO staff shall coordinate with project stakeholders and share relevant project information with related municipalities and stakeholders with the goal of preventing projects from being deferred to a subsequent fiscal year if not necessary.
 - V. MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (OTP) and Boston Region MPO TIP Program Manager and Capital Programming Planner (or other relevant staff) shall meet at least monthly to exchange financial and project readiness updates on projects in all years of the TIP.
 - VI. The TIP Screening and Readiness Committee shall also play a role in reviewing and discussing additional information needed for the TIP as described earlier in this document.

8.3 FEDERAL FUNDING ASSUMPTIONS

- I. MPO staff shall attend quarterly financial update meetings held by the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) and MassDOT to obtain updates on federal funding assumptions. This includes the annual meeting of MARPA when the federal funding

information on obligation authority is shared with MARPA. MPO staff shall use that information to develop the constrained TIP.

- II. MPO staff shall annually and as-needed share federal funding assumptions, narrative guidance, and financial program targets to MPO members regarding the primary 3C-planning documents. This information shall include, but is not limited to:
 - A. expected future federal highway funding for Massachusetts
 - B. planned debt repayments
 - C. state matches for remaining federal highway funds
 - D. funding for statewide highway, planning, and pass-through items
 - E. formula for distributing remaining funds to regional planning agencies
 - F. federal discretionary grant opportunities
 - G. financial risk factors, such as inflation

SECTION 9—MAINTENANCE OF OPERATIONS PLAN

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