

MPO Meeting Minutes

Draft Memorandum for the Record

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

August 17, 2023, Meeting

10:00 AM–10:55 AM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

Eric Bourassa, Vice Chair, representing the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)

Decisions

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

- Approve the minutes of the June 15, 2023, MPO meeting
- Endorse the Federal Fiscal Years (FFYs) 2023–27 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment 11
- Waive the public review period and endorse the FFY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

See attendance on page 7.

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 stated that there are multiple open positions with the agency.

T. Teich stated that MPO staff participated in a workshop hosted by the Federal Highway Administration and MAPC on Equity in Transportation. MPO staff discussed its experience with equitable public engagement, such as the Blue Hills study.

T. Teich stated that MPO staff participated in an Association of MPOs Core Product Webinar on Best Practices of MPO TIP and State TIP Project Integration.

4. Public Comments

There were none.

5. Committee Chairs' Reports

Derek Krevat, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), stated that the UPWP Committee met on August 16, and voted to recommend that the board votes to waive the public review period and endorse FFY 2023 UPWP Amendment Two.

Jay Monty, City of Everett, stated that the Congestion Management Process Committee met before this meeting to discuss the Learning from Roadway Pricing study.

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

L. Diggins stated that the next Advisory Council meeting will be on September 13, 2023, to discuss TIP project scoring criteria.

7. Action Item: Approval of June 15, 2023, MPO Meeting Minutes

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. June 15, 2023 ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

Vote

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of June 15, 2023, was made by the City of Boston, Boston Transportation Department (Matthew Moran) and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (Amira Patterson). The motion carried.

8. Action Item: FFYs 2023-27 TIP Amendment 11—*Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment 11 ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))
2. Public Comment Letter ([pdf](#))

E. Lapointe stated that the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment 11 proposes:

- Cost increases for three FFY 2023 Statewide Highway Projects and one Regional Target Project
- Programming of two design earmarks in Marblehead and Brookline
- Deprogramming of anticipated MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) Section 5339 Discretionary Grant line items

The public review period lasted from July 21 to August 11, 2023. One comment was received in support of the amendment from the 495/MetroWest Partnership requesting that MWRTA projects that did not receive grant funding be considered for other funding avenues.

Vote

A motion to endorse the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment 11 was made by the City of Newton (Josh Ostroff) and seconded by the Town of Brookline (Robert King). The motion carried.

9. Action Item: FFYs 2023 UPWP Amendment Two—*Srilekha Murthy, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. UPWP Amendment Two Memo ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))
2. UPWP Amendment Two Table ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

S. Murthy stated that the FFYs 2023 UPWP Amendment Two proposes third-quarter adjustments to program budgets, due to changes in staffing or program needs over the fiscal year. Budgets are estimated approximately six months before the work is scheduled to begin.

Examples of budget changes include the Long-Range Transportation Plan, where development engaged more staff across the agency than was initially anticipated. Similarly, the Climate Resilience Program was budgeted before a Resilience Planner was hired. Since the budget was developed, a full-time Resilience Planner has been hired, in addition to an intern.

S. Murthy stated that the adjustments result in a net zero impact on the overall budget of the UPWP and a reduction in the budget does not mean that planned work will not be complete.

Vote

A motion to waive the public review period and endorse the FFY 2023 UPWP Amendment Two was made by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (Tom Bent) and seconded by the City of Newton (J. Ostroff). The motion carried.

10. Intersection Improvement Studies—*Casey Cooper, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. Stow Intersection Improvement Memo ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))
2. Wellesley Intersection Improvement Memo ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

C. Cooper stated that the intent of Intersection Improvement studies is to provide low-cost, small scale, and quickly implementable improvement recommendations in the Boston region, focusing on inexpensive, high-benefit improvements. Intersections are selected for studies from solicited intersection suggestions. These suggestions were examined under the lens of municipal support, transportation equity populations, total

number of crashes, bicycle or pedestrian crashes, and Highway Safety Improvement Program Crash Clusters. Intersections are determined if they are well-suited for low-cost improvements using a Google Street View assessment. Ultimately, the intersections of Route 112 at Route 62 in Stow and Weston Road at Linden Street in Wellesley were selected for the studies. Each intersection study followed the process of documenting existing conditions, identifying issues and concerns, assessing bicycle and pedestrian conditions, and analyzing crashes and intersection traffic, which led to recommended improvements.

The intersection of Routes 117 and 62 in Stow is within the civic center of Stow and is within walking distance to the Randall Library, Children's Horizon's Preschool, and the Center School. Route 117 runs east-west across the intersection, while Route 62 travels north-south into the intersection from the south, turning east and converging with Route 117. One concern is that it is the most heavily trafficked intersection in Stow. Points of interest identified at the beginning of the study include signal timing, the addition of a left-turn lane for approaching Library Hill Road, converting Common Road to one-way, pedestrian accommodations due to the proximity of the library and schools, and the addition of bicycle facilities.

Short-term recommendations for Stow include the following:

- Optimize signal timing
- Make Common Road one-way
- Split Liberty Hill Road southbound into two lanes
 - Dedicated left-turn lane
 - Through/right-turn lane
- Restripe lanes to 11-foot widths
- Repaint crosswalks
- Add crosswalk to eastern intersection leg
- Paint pedestrian zones that narrow curb radii and increase pedestrian visibility
 - Add vertical separation
- Use paint and vertical separation to better define Gleasondale Road pedestrian refuge island

Long-term recommendations for Stow include the following:

- Construct proper sidewalks along all intersection legs with minimum five-foot widths, curb ramps, and pedestrian detectable warning strips
- Install audible, vibrotactile pedestrian signals with countdown displays and a pedestrian crossing phase to existing signal timing

- Improve Stow's bicycle network and add bicycle facilities to study intersection

The intersection of Weston Road and Linden Street in Wellesley contains the western terminus of Linden Road forming a T-intersection with the north-south travel of Weston Road. Lights flash red for Linden Street and yellow for Weston Road, except for when pedestrians request the exclusive pedestrian phase, changing all signals to red for vehicular traffic. The eastern terminus of the Crosstown Trail is less than 200 feet from the intersection to the west and the North 40 parcel of undeveloped land, while the Wellesley Square Commuter Rail Station is located 0.3 miles east of the study intersection. Areas of concern at this intersection include motorists impeding the Linden Street crosswalk during the pedestrian phase, planned development expected to increase traffic, proximity to the Weston Road at Central Street (Route 135) intersection, and a person bicycling who was hit and killed at the intersection in 2012. The intersection has been identified by Wellesley for its Complete Streets prioritization list.

Short-term recommendations for Wellesley include the following:

- Restripe lanes to 11-foot widths to slow vehicle speeds and allocate more space to nonmotorists
- Expand pedestrian zones using paint and vertical separation to minimize crossing distance and improve pedestrian visibility
- Add full signalization of the intersection
- Test shared-use path along Weston Road between Linden Streets and Central Street using paint and vertical separation
 - Wellesley prefers shared-use paths to on-street bike lanes
 - Add wayfinding signage
 - Include bike box to facilitate left turns to North 40.

Long-term recommendations for Wellesley include the following:

- Actuate intersection signals
 - Coordinate with Weston Road's Central Street signal
- Formalize painted quick-build facilities
 - Concrete sidewalks with curbing
 - Vertically separated, paved, shared-use path
- Increase countermeasures to slow vehicle speeds
 - Vertical countermeasures such as raised crosswalks
 - Horizontal countermeasures such as chicanes or lane shifts

Discussion

R. King asked how the MPO can advocate to fund more intersection improvement studies. C. Cooper discussed the background of intersection improvement studies and stated that the Multimodal program could be an avenue to continue funding these studies.

L. Diggins commended the link that both intersection improvement studies make to housing and transit matters.

J. Ostroff asked how similar studies can be added to the pipeline for Complete Streets grants. C. Cooper stated that the goal of these studies is to bring them to implementation.

T. Bent asked if Stow or Wellesley have been in contact with the planned developments near the intersections regarding potential funding support.

Colette Aufranc, Town of Wellesley Select Board, thanked the MPO for the completed study and stated that she will follow up with town leadership on next steps. C. Aufranc stated that MWRTA buses have been added to the corridor and additional consideration will be needed to accommodate bus travel.

E. Bourassa stated that the Intersection Improvement program on the TIP was created to fund projects like those being discussed.

11. Members' Items

There were none.

12. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the Inner Core Committee (T. Bent) and seconded by the City of Newton (J. Ostroff). The motion carried.

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Jay Monty
At-Large City (City of Newton)	Josh Ostroff
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	John Alessi
At-Large Town (Town of Brookline)	Robert King
City of Boston (Boston Planning & Development Agency)	Jim Fitzgerald
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Matthew Moran Jen Rowe
Federal Highway Administration	
Federal Transit Administration	
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	John Bechard
MassDOT Highway Division	John Romano
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	Jillian Linnell
Massachusetts Port Authority	Sarah Lee
MBTA Advisory Board	Amira Patterson
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham)	Eric Johnson
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Acton)	
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)	Darlene Wynne
North Suburban Planning Council (Town of Burlington)	
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Lenard Diggins
South Shore Coalition (Town of Hull)	
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
Colette Aufranc	Town of Wellesley
Ross Bloom	Revvit
Miranda Briseño	MassDOT
Daniela Espinosa	Boston Planning and Development Agency
JR Frey	Town of Hingham
Seth Gadbois	
Joy Glynn	MWRTA
Sandy Johnston	MBTA
Chris Klem	MassDOT
Josh Klingenstein	MBTA
Raissah Kouame	MassDOT
Derek Krevat	MassDOT
Barbara Lachance	MassDOT
Jackie LaFlam	Cape Ann Transportation Authority
Owen MacDonald	Town of Weymouth
Ivonne Moguel	
Benjamin Muller	MassDOT
Jim Nee	MWRTA
Valerie Oorthuys	Town of Stow
Cheryll-Ann Senior	MassDOT
Derek Shooster	MassDOT
Tyler Terrasi	MWRTA
Frank Tramontozzi	

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Tegin Teich, Executive Director

Rounaq Basu

Logan Casey

Casey Cooper

Annette Demchur

Betsy Harvey

Ryan Hicks

Ethan Lapointe

Erin Maguire

Srilekha Murthy

Gina Perille

Bradley Putnam

Sean Rourke

Sam Taylor

Judy Taylor

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