

# **MPO Meeting Minutes**

## **Draft Memorandum for the Record**

### **Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting**

#### **October 24, 2024, Meeting**

10:00 AM–11:30 AM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

David Mohler, Chair, representing Monica Tibbits-Nutt, 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 August 15, 2024
- Endorse and waive the 21-day public comment period for Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2025–29 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment Two
- Release FFYs 2025–29 TIP Amendment Three for a 21-day public comment period
- Approve updates to the Operations Plan
- Approve the work scope for Bluebikes and MBTA Connections
- Approve the work scope for Exploring the Potential for Using E-Bikes for First- and Last-Mile Freight Deliveries

#### **Meeting Agenda**

##### **1. Introductions**

See attendance starting on page 13.

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

There was none.

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

Tegin Teich, Executive Director, presented a staffing update, which included the resignation of Judy Day, Climate Resilience and Air Quality Program Manager. T. Teich stated that J. Day will be taking on the role of Conservation Administrator for the Town of Hopkinton. T. Teich also stated that the MPO is hiring for several positions and asked members for support in seeking applicants.

T. Teich announced the date of the last Regional Transportation Advisory Council meeting, which will be held on November 13, 2024. This Advisory Council meeting will be the last meeting with its current structure and membership. MPO Staff will work to restructure the Advisory Council in the following months.

T. Teich overviewed the agenda, which included five action items and three presentations.

T. Teich reminded members that the MPO's Annual Meeting will be held on November 14, 2024.

Lenard Diggins, Regional Transportation Advisory Council, invited T. Teich to attend the Advisory Council meeting.

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

Andy Reker, City of Cambridge, commented on the MBTA's North Station Draw 1 Bridge Replacement project included in FFYs 2025–29 TIP Amendment Three.

A. Reker stated that the City of Cambridge understands the importance of this project, and it is happy to see that the MBTA is receiving federal funding for the project. However, A. Reker stated that the City of Cambridge remains concerned about the status of the pedestrian and bicycle connection that has been a longstanding mitigation commitment from the Central Artery Tunnel Project. A. Reker stated that the City is concerned because it appears that there is no lead agency conducting the design and construction of the pedestrian and bike connection, and the City hopes that the MBTA and other state agencies can continue the conversation about this important regional pedestrian and bike connection.

#### **5. Committee Chairs' Reports**

Derek Krevat, MassDOT, stated that the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Committee will meet on November 7, 2024, at 1:00 PM. D. Krevat stated that committee members will be voting on FFY 2025 UPWP Amendment One and invited anyone interested to attend.

Jen Rowe, City of Boston, stated that the TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee met on October 17, 2024, to kick off the FFYs 2026–30 TIP development process. J. Rowe stated that Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff, overviewed the anticipated schedule for TIP development and highlighted important dates in the process. J. Rowe stated that the presentation would be sent to all board members so they can be aware of what to expect in the following months. J. Rowe stated that E. Lapointe presented challenges faced during the last TIP development cycle paired with discussions of

potential interventions to find solutions to previous challenges. J. Rowe invited interested board members to attend the next committee meeting scheduled for December 19, 2024, at 1:00 PM.

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

L. Diggins stated that MPO staff are leading the next Advisory Council meeting, and asked MPO staff to present any additional updates.

T. Teich stated that the upcoming Advisory Council meeting will be on November 13, 2024, at 2:30 PM.

Stella Jordan, MPO Staff, invited board members to attend.

## **7. Action Item: Approval of August 15, 2024, MPO Meeting Minutes Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar**

1. August 15, 2024, Meeting Minutes ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

### ***Vote***

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of August 15, 2024, was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) (Eric Bourassa) and seconded by the City of Boston (J. Rowe). The motion carried.

## **8. Action Item: FFYs 2025-29 TIP Amendment Two—*Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff***

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

1. FFYs 2025–29 TIP Amendment Two Table ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

E. Lapointe presented FFYs 2025–29 TIP Amendment Two, which was initially presented for consideration at the October 10, 2024, board meeting, but board members decided to delay voting on the amendment until this MPO meeting.

Amendment Two programs a portion of an FFY 2023 Reconnecting Community and Neighborhoods Grant for early action items on Project 606475: Boston-Replacement of Allston I-90 Elevated Viaduct B-16-359, Including Interchange Reconstruction, Beacon Park Yard Layover and West Station. E. Lapointe stated that \$10.3 million of the \$335.3 million grant will be programmed within the FFY 2025 Earmark Discretionary Program. E. Lapointe stated that the overall budget for the MassDOT portion of the project has increased, but that the budget increase was not included in Amendment Two.

### ***Discussion***

J. Rowe stated that at the previous board meeting on October 10, 2024, board members had expressed support for a presentation on the project and asked if there were any updates on when the presentation would be.

David Mohler, MassDOT, stated that MassDOT is happy to present when board members would like them to, but that the presentation may not be until January due to the Annual Meeting in November and the holidays in December.

T. Teich clarified that there is a second MPO board meeting in November that will be held on November 21, 2024.

Eric Bourassa, MAPC, stated that the end of November, early December, or early January would be good times for the presentation. E. Bourassa stated that he would be in favor of waiting until January if there is more information to present at that time.

D. Mohler stated that there would be a benefit to waiting to have the presentation because MassDOT would present decisions made before the end of the calendar year.

L. Diggins proposed having the presentation earlier and having a follow-up discussion at a later board meeting to discuss the project's updates.

D. Mohler stated that if any board members have specific meeting dates in mind for a presentation, to let him and E. Bourassa know for agenda setting.

### ***Vote***

A motion to approve FFYs 2025–29 TIP Amendment Two was made by MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the City of Boston (Matt Moran). The motion carried.

## **9. Action Item: FFYs 2025-29 TIP Amendment Three—*Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff***

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

1. FFYs 2025–29 TIP Amendment Three Table ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

E. Lapointe presented FFYs 2025–29 TIP Amendment Three, which included changes to the FFY 2025 Earmark Discretionary Program and the FFY 2025 and 2026 Transit Programs. This amendment programs 17 new federal discretionary grant awards and four previously programmed discretionary grants. E. Lapointe stated that Amendment Three also includes design, construction, and planning grant awards. The changes to the FFY 2025 Earmark Discretionary Program are listed in Table 1. All projects are new projects.

**Table 1**  
**FFY 2025 Earmark Discretionary Program Changes**

<b>Project ID and Name</b>	<b>New Budget</b>
S13115: BOSTON–NEW TRAFFIC SIGNAL OPERATIONS (FFY 2023 SS4A IMPLEMENTATION GRANT)	\$18,000,000
S13113: BOSTON–SAFETY AT NINE KEY INTERSECTIONS	\$10,015,625
S13110: BOSTON–RECONNECTING CHINATOWN (FFY 2022 RCN)	\$2,400,000
S13111: BOSTON, CHELSEA–GREENING CHELSEA CREEK WATERFRONT	\$3,125,000
S13122: BOSTON REGION MPO–SS4A SUPPLEMENTAL PLANNING AND DEMONSTRATION GRANT FOR THE BOSTON REGION MPO	\$9,375,000
S13116: EVERETT–PLANNING AND DEMONSTRATION ACTIVITIES (FFY 2023 SS4A DEMONSTRATION GRANT)	\$113,400
S13120: EVERETT–UNITING NEIGHBORHOODS AND TRANSIT OPPORTUNITIES IN EVERETT	\$1,500,000
S13121: LYNN–RIVER WORKS REIMAGINED	\$3,125,000
S13117: NORWOOD–UPDATE FOUR EV CHARGING PORTS (FFY 2024 EVC RAA)	\$300,000
TBD: SALEM–SOUTH SALEM COMMUTER RAIL STOP PROJECT	\$3,470,000
S13112: SOMERVILLE-TEMPORARY QUICK-BUILD TREATMENTS ON BROADWAY	\$146,000
S13114: SOMERVILLE–QUICK BUILD PROTECTED BICYCLE LANES PILOT	\$4,980,000

FFY = Federal Fiscal Year. RCN = Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods. SS4A = Safe Streets and Roads for All.

The changes to the FFY 2025 Earmark Discretionary Transit Program are listed in Table 2. All projects are new projects.

**Table 2**  
**FFY 2025 Earmark Discretionary Transit Program Changes**

<b>Project ID and Name</b>	<b>New Budget</b>
MBTA011852: ASHMONT STATION BEB CHARGER DESIGN (FFY 2023 APP)	\$18,000,000
MBTA-TBD: LOWER BROADWAY EVERETT CORRIDOR (FFY 2024 RAISE)	\$10,015,625
MBTA-TBD: GREEN LINE B/C BRANCH ACCESSIBILITY (FFY 2024 ASAP)	\$84,512,090
MBTA-TBD: MOBILEYE SHIELD AND BUS COLLISION AVOIDANCE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT (FFY 2024 SS4A)	\$2,693,775
MBTA-TBD: QUINCY SQUANTUM PIER MODERNIZATION (FFY 2024 FTA PASSENGER FERRY)	\$5,280,308
MBTA-TBD: MBTA BATTERY ELECTRIC BUS PURCHASE (FFY 2024 FTA LOW-NO)	\$47,205,882
MWRTA011455: MWRTA-BESST-BLANDIN ENERGY AND SUSTAINABLE STORAGE TECHNOLOGY	\$985,000

MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. MWRTA = MetroWest Regional Transit Authority.  
NIPA = National Infrastructure Project Assistance. BEB = Battery electric bus.

The change to the FFY 2026 Earmark Discretionary Transit Program is listed in Table 3.  
This project is also new.

**Table 3**  
**FFY 2026 Earmark Discretionary Transit Program Changes**

<b>Project ID and Name</b>	<b>New Budget</b>
MBTA-TBD: NORTH STATION DRAW 1 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT (FFY 2024 NIPA-MEGA)	\$354,044,859

FFY = Federal Fiscal Year. MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. NIPA = National  
Infrastructure Project Assistance.

**Discussion**

E. Bourassa asked if all the discretionary grants included in the amendment were recently awarded.

E. Lapointe responded that many of these discretionary grants were recently awarded, but there are also a number that were awarded as a part of FFY 2022 and 2023 awards years and may have been programmed in the FFYs 2024–28 TIP but were not contracted or obligated in that year and are included in Amendment Three to be reprogrammed.

E. Bourassa expressed support for the large amount of discretionary grants in the region and stated that it is a testament to the amount of work being done to apply to these grant opportunities.

E. Bourassa also asked if Laura Gilmore, MBTA, could speak to A. Reker's public comment on the MBTA's Draw 1 project included in Amendment Three.

L. Gilmore responded that MBTA staff members met with the City of Cambridge and had a productive conversation about the City's concerns for the project. L. Gilmore stated that the Draw 1 project is a great example of federal funding that has been coming into the region, and that this is the largest federal award the MBTA has ever won. L. Gilmore stated that the pedestrian and bike connection is not included in the grant due to delays from environmental permitting requirements. L. Gilmore stated that the exclusion of the pedestrian and bike connection from the project allows for the rail elements of the project to move forward on the MBTA's desired timeline.

L. Diggins asked if MPO staff would be able to speak to the ideas for Project S13122: Boston Region MPO-SS4A Supplemental Planning and Demonstration Grant.

Rebecca Morgan, MPO Staff, stated that MPO staff are considering a combination of demonstration projects such as quick-build implementations and supplemental planning projects, including working with municipalities to develop Vision Zero task forces or additional education on Vision Zero content.

Matt Moran, City of Boston, also expressed support for the number of discretionary grants. In addition, M. Moran stated that there is confusion regarding the MBTA's Draw 1 project and its timeline and asked if it would be possible to have an additional conversation about the pedestrian and bike connection and the concerns about the project.

L. Gilmore responded that she is happy to work with MPO staff to set up a conversation about the project.

**Vote**

A motion to release FFYs 2025–29 TIP Amendment Three for a 21-day public comment period was made by MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the Advisory Council (L. Diggins). The motion carried.

## **10. Action Item: Operations Plan Update—*David Hong and Erin Maguire, MPO Staff***

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

1. Revised Operations Plan ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

Dave Hong, MPO Staff, presented a summary of the revisions to the Operations Plan as presented on October 10, 2024. These revisions included the following:

- Incorporated elements previously in the Memorandum of Understanding document
- Inserted additional text to further clarify certain sections
- Added a board development section
- Added an agency information-sharing section

MPO Staff did not receive comments on the Operations plan since the October 10, 2024, board meeting.

### ***Vote***

A motion to approve updates to the Operations Plan was made by the City of Boston (J. Rowe) and seconded by E. Bourassa (MAPC). The motion carried.

## **11. Action Item: Work Scope for Bluebikes and MBTA Connections—*Tanner Bonner, MPO Staff***

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

1. Bluebikes and MBTA Connections Work Scope ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

Tanner Bonner, MPO Staff, presented the work scope for Bluebikes and MBTA Connections, which will build on previous research on the interaction between the Bluebikes and MBTA system to better understand system connectivity and rider behavior. Bluebikes and MBTA Connections is a UPWP-funded discrete study with a budget of approximately \$60,000. The timeline for the project is approximately 11 months.

### ***Discussion***

L. Diggins asked if the Github repository used for the study will be publicly available.

T. Bonner responded that it would be publicly available.

L. Diggins asked if there would be further updates on this study for board members, specifically regarding the Github repository.



T. Bonner responded that the Github repository will be used to show what analysis methods and data that MPO staff use that can be published publicly. T. Bonner also stated that MPO staff would like to come back to the board to present the results once the report is completed.

L. Diggins asked what analysis MPO staff would be conducting for the project while they are in the planning process.

T. Bonner responded that MPO staff have conducted foundational analyses to determine the reachability of Bluebike stations to MBTA access points. There are other topics that MPO staff would like to learn more about, such as MBTA service characteristics and bicycle infrastructure near these connection points.

L. Gilmore expressed support for the study and emphasized the importance of the connection between Bluebikes and the MBTA system.

#### ***Vote***

A motion to approve the work scope for Bluebikes and MBTA Connections was made by the MBTA (L. Gilmore) and seconded by the Advisory Council (L. Reker). The motion carried.

## **12. Action Item: Work Scope for Exploring the Potential for Using E-Bikes for First- and Last-Mile Freight Deliveries—*Shravanthi Gopalan Narayanan, MPO Staff***

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

1. Exploring the Potential for Using E-Bikes for First- and Last-Mile Freight Deliveries Work Scope ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

Shravanthi Gopalan Narayanan, MPO Staff, presented the work scope for Exploring the Potential for Using Cargo E-Bikes for First- and Last-Mile Freight Deliveries, a UPWP-funded discrete study with a budget of approximately \$40,000 and a timeline of 10 months. The study will explore the potential for establishing neighborhood freight hubs and using e-cargo bikes for first- and last-mile freight deliveries across the Boston region.

S. Gopalan Narayanan stated that the study builds on ongoing efforts in freight decarbonization and complements the FFY 2024 UPWP study on decarbonization strategies within the freight and logistics sector. In addition, the City of Boston is currently piloting a cargo e-bike delivery program called Boston Delivers aimed at supporting local businesses in the Allston neighborhood and nearby areas.

Methodologies for the study include a literature review, a review of relevant case studies, and interviewing experts on the topic to understand challenges and opportunities when implementing cargo e-bikes.

The study will result in a summary of literature reviewed, a summary of case studies, interview takeaways, and recommendations and best practices compiled into a memorandum. These results will be presented to the MPO board upon completion of the study.

### ***Discussion***

L. Diggins expressed support for the study and suggested considering the results of the MPO's Parking in Bike Lanes study, which emphasized concerns about cargo e-bikes parking in bike lanes.

E. Bourassa also expressed support for the study and stated that MAPC has been helping the City of Boston with its pilot program. He emphasized fostering coordination between the efforts and highlighting the successes with cargo e-bikes.

J. Rowe also expressed support for the study and thanked MPO staff for engaging in conversations about cargo e-bikes with the City of Boston.

Tom Bent, Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville), spoke about growing concerns for unregistered motorized scooters, skateboards, and e-bikes using bike lanes, resulting in heightened congestion. T. Bent also stated that bicyclists are concerned with motorized bikes, skateboards, and scooters using bike lanes due to the speeds that they can reach. T. bent suggested including this in the study or potentially funding an additional UPWP study to examine these issues.

S. Gopalan Narayanan thanked the board members for their support and stated that MPO staff would be collaborating with the MPO staff members that worked on the Parking in Bike Lanes study and will ensure that those recommendations are considered.

S. Gopalan Narayanan thanked T. Bent for his recommendation and stated that vehicle size would be a consideration for the study.

### ***Vote***

A motion to approve the work scope for Exploring the Potential for Using E-Bikes for First- and Last-Mile Freight Deliveries was made by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) (T. Bent) and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

### **13. MPO Elections Update: Nominees—*Eric Bourassa, Metropolitan Area Planning Council***

E. Bourassa presented the nominations for the four seats up for election, which included the following nominees:

- Three Rivers Interlocal Council
  - Nominee: Town of Norwood
- North Suburban Planning Council
  - Nominee: Town of Burlington
- At-Large City
  - Nominees: City of Newton; City of Chelsea
- At-Large Town
  - Nominee: Town of Arlington

E. Bourassa stated that MPO staff hosted a virtual candidates' forum for the At-Large City seat on October 17, 2024, with Mayor Ruthanne Fuller, City of Newton, and City Manager Fidel Maltez, City of Chelsea.

E. Bourassa stated that the ballots have been posted and the deadline to submit ballots is November 6, 2024.

### **14. Solicitation of Vice Chair Nominations—*David Mohler, MassDOT, and Tegin Teich, Executive Director, MPO Staff***

T. Bent nominated MAPC for Vice Chair of the MPO Board.

L. Diggins seconded T. Bent's nomination for MAPC as Vice Chair.

L. Diggins asked how long it takes to learn how to be the Vice Chair.

E. Bourassa thanked T. Bent and L. Diggins for their nomination and stated that MAPC enjoyed acting as Vice Chair. E. Bourassa stated that having a few years of experience with the board is helpful, and if there is anyone in the future who is interested in the role, MAPC is happy to have a conversation. E. Bourassa stated that MAPC looks to foster regionalism and the values that they have identified as a board member and Vice Chair of the MPO.

D. Mohler announced that the nominations are closed and expressed appreciation for MAPC agreeing to serve as Vice Chair again.

### **15. Solicitation of New Committee Members—*Current committee chairs with staff support***

Jay Monty, City of Everett, stated that there are vacancies on the Congestion Management Process (CMP) Committee. J. Monty stated that there is a new CMP Program Manager, Priyanka Chapekar, who is doing a fantastic job bringing the committee to a new level and looking to integrate it with the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

D. Krevat presented an overview of the UPWP Committee, which deliberates on the development of and recommends studies that should be included in the UPWP.

J. Rowe provided an overview of the TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee, which reviews the annual TIP development process and provides forums for board members, project proponents, and stakeholders seeking a better understanding of the TIP process. J. Rowe stated that the Committee typically meets on Thursdays at 1:00 PM.

Hanna Switekowski, MBTA Advisory Board, presented an overview of the Administration and Finance Committee, which reviews the operating budget, quarterly updates, and any other matters that are requested by the MPO board relating to administration or finance. The Committee meets quarterly, and typically meets at 9:00 AM on Thursdays.

T. Teich stated that any board members interested in serving on any of these committees should reach out to the respective committee chair by October 31, 2024. T. Teich stated that committee slates would be approved at the Annual Meeting on November 14, 2024.

### **16. Members' Items**

There were none.

### **17. Adjourn**

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

## Attendance

<b>Members</b>	<b>Representatives and Alternates</b>
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Jay Monty
At-Large City (City of Newton)	Eric Molinari
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Brookline)	John Alessi
City of Boston	Erin Chute
	Jen Rowe
Federal Highway Administration	Matthew Moran
Federal Transit Administration	Ken Miller
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Kirstie Hostetter
	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority	Brad Rawson
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Laura Gilmore
	David Mohler
Massachusetts Department of Transportation Highway Division	Derek Krevat
	John Bechard
Massachusetts Port Authority	John Romano
MBTA Advisory Board	Sarah Lee
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Hanna Switekowski
	Eric Bourassa
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham)	Julia Wallerice
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Acton)	Dennis Giombetti
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)	Kristen Guichard
North Suburban Planning Council (Town of Burlington)	Darlene Wynne
	Melisa Tintocalis
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Kelly Cogavin
	Lenard Diggins
South Shore Coalition (Town of Hull)	Andy Reker
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood)	Christopher Diiorio
	Tom O'Rourke
	Steven Olanoff

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<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Srilekha Murthy	BETA Group, Inc.
Heyne Kim	City of Boston
Yem Lip	City of Malden
Samira Saad	Federal Highway Administration
Derek Shooster	MassDOT
Michelle Scott	MassDOT
Cheryll-Ann Senior	MassDOT
Andrew Wang	MassDOT
Barbara Lachance	MassDOT
Miranda Briseño	MassDOT
Chris Klem	MassDOT
Josh Ostroff	MBTA
Paul Cobuzzi	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
Tyler Terrasi	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
Benjamin Coulombe	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
Joy Glynn	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
Jane Fulton	Rep. Joan Meschino's Office, Third Plymouth District
State Rep. Joan Meschino	Third Plymouth District
Kristina Johnson	Town of Hudson
Meghan McNamara	Town of Lexington
Sheila Page	Town of Lexington
George Thiel	

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**MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff**

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Tegin Teich, Executive Director  
Abby Cutrumbes  
Adriana Jacobsen  
Ali Kleyman  
Annette Demchur  
Betsy Harvey  
Bradley Putnam  
Dave Hong  
Erin Maguire  
Ethan Lapointe  
Gina Perille  
Hiral Gandhi  
Judy Day  
Lauren Magee  
Meghan O'Connor  
Priyanka Chapekar  
Rebecca Morgan  
Rosemary McCarron  
Sam Taylor  
Sarah Philbrick  
Sean Rourke  
Shravanthi Gopalan Narayanan  
Silva Ayvazyan  
Stella Jordan  
Tanner Bonner

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