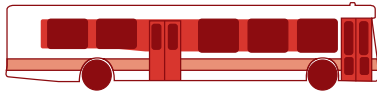


# APPENDIX F





# APPENDIX F

## REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND MPO MEMBERSHIP

This appendix contains two elements: detailed background on the regulatory documents, legislation, and guidance that shape the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) transportation planning process, and information on the permanent voting members of the MPO.

### REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The Boston Region MPO plays a critical role in helping the region move closer to achieving federal, state, and regional transportation goals. Therefore, an important part of the MPO's core work is to ensure that the MPO's planning activities align with federal and state regulatory guidance. This appendix describes all of the regulations, policies, and guidance taken into consideration by the MPO during development of the certification documents and other core work undertaken during federal fiscal year (FFY) 2020.

### Federal Regulations and Guidance

#### *Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act: National Goals*

The purpose of the national transportation goals (outlined in Title 23, United States Code [USC], Section 150) is to increase the accountability and transparency of the Federal-Aid Highway Program and to improve decision-making through performance-based planning and programming. The national transportation goals include the following:

1. **Safety:** Achieve significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads
2. **Infrastructure condition:** Maintain the highway infrastructure asset system in a state of good repair
3. **Congestion reduction:** Achieve significant reduction in congestion on the National Highway System
4. **System reliability:** Improve efficiency of the surface transportation system
5. **Freight movement and economic vitality:** Improve the national freight network, strengthen the ability of rural communities to access national and international trade markets, and support regional economic development
6. **Environmental sustainability:** Enhance performance of the transportation system while protecting and enhancing the natural environment
7. **Reduced project delivery delays:** Reduce project costs, promote jobs and the economy, and expedite movement of people and goods by accelerating project

completion by eliminating delays in the project development and delivery process, including reducing regulatory burdens and improving agencies' work practices

The Boston Region MPO has incorporated these national goals, where practicable, into its vision, goals, and objectives, which provide a framework for the MPO's planning processes.

### **FAST Act: Planning Factors**

The MPO gives specific consideration to the federal planning factors (described in 23 USC 134) when developing all documents that program federal transportation funds. The FAST Act added two new planning factors to the eight factors established in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) transportation legislation. In accordance with the legislation, studies and strategies undertaken by the MPO shall

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competition, productivity, and efficiency
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for all motorized and nonmotorized users
3. Increase the ability of the transportation system to support homeland security and to safeguard the personal security of all motorized and nonmotorized users
4. Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns
6. Enhance integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight
7. Promote efficient system management and operation
8. Emphasize preservation of the existing transportation system
9. Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate storm-water impacts of surface transportation
10. Enhance travel and tourism

### **FAST Act: Performance-based Planning and Programming**

The US Department of Transportation (USDOT), in consultation with states, MPOs, and other stakeholders, has established performance measures relevant to these national goals. These performance topic areas include roadway safety, transit system safety, National Highway System (NHS) bridge and pavement condition, transit asset condition, NHS reliability for both passenger and freight travel, traffic congestion, and on-road mobile source emissions. The FAST Act and related federal rulemakings require states, MPOs, and public transportation operators to follow performance-based planning and programming practices—such as setting targets—to ensure that transportation investments support progress towards these goals.



## 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments

The Clean Air Act, most recently amended in 1990, forms the basis of the US air pollution control policy. The act identifies air quality standards, and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) may designate geographic areas as attainment or nonattainment areas with respect to these standards. If air quality in a nonattainment area improves such that it meets EPA standards, the EPA may redesignate that area as being in maintenance for a 20-year period to ensure that the standard is maintained in that area.

The conformity provisions of the Clean Air Act “require that those areas that have poor air quality, or had it in the past, should examine the long-term air quality impacts of their transportation system and ensure its compatibility with the area’s clean air goals.” Agencies responsible for Clean Air Act requirements for nonattainment and maintenance areas must conduct air quality conformity determinations, which are demonstrations that transportation plans, programs, and projects addressing that area are consistent with a State Implementation Plan (SIP) for attaining air quality standards.

Air quality conformity determinations must be performed for capital improvement projects that receive federal funding and for those that are considered regionally significant, regardless of the funding source. These determinations must show that projects in the MPO’s Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) will not cause or contribute to any new air quality violations; will not increase the frequency or severity of any existing air quality violations in any area; and will not delay the timely attainment of air quality standards in any area. The policy, criteria, and procedures for demonstrating air quality conformity in the MPO region were established in Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Parts 51 and 93.

As of April 1, 2016, the Boston Region MPO has been classified as being in attainment for carbon monoxide (CO), but a conformity determination must still be completed as there is a carbon monoxide maintenance plan in place and approved as part of the SIP. In the most recent LRTP, *Charting Progress to 2040*, the air quality conformity determination concluded that the emissions levels from the Boston area CO maintenance area, including emissions resulting from implementing the LRTP, are in conformance with the SIP according to state and federal conformity criteria. Specifically, the CO emissions that would be produced under the build scenarios that were modeled during the development of the LRTP were less than the projections for the years 2020 through 2040 for the nine cities in the Boston CO maintenance area. In accordance with Section 176(c) (4) of the Clean Air Act as amended in 1990, the Boston Region MPO has completed this review and hereby certifies that the LRTP and its latest conformity determination conditionally conform with federal (40 CFR Part 93) and Massachusetts regulations (310 CMR 60.03) and are consistent with the air quality goals in the Massachusetts SIP.

The MPO must also perform conformity determinations if transportation control measures (TCMs) are in effect in the region. TCMs are strategies that reduce transportation-related air pollution and fuel use by reducing vehicle-miles traveled and improving roadway operations. The Massachusetts SIP supports the attainment of air quality standards and identifies TCMs. SIP-identified TCMs are federally enforceable and projects that address the identified air quality issues must be given first priority when federal transportation dollars are spent. Examples of TCMs that were programmed in previous TIPs include rapid-transit and commuter-rail extension programs (such as the Green Line Extension in Cambridge, Medford, and Somerville, and the Fairmount Line improvements in Boston), parking-freeze programs in Boston and Cambridge, statewide rideshare programs, park-and-ride facilities, residential parking-sticker programs, and the operation of high-occupancy-vehicle lanes.

On February 16, 2018, the US Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit issued a decision in *South Coast Air Quality Management District v. EPA*, which struck down portions of the 2008 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) SIP Requirements Rule concerning the ozone NAAQS. Those portions of the SIP Requirements Rule included transportation conformity requirements associated with EPA's revocation of the 1997 ozone NAAQS. Massachusetts was designated as an attainment area for 2008 Ozone NAAQS, but as a nonattainment or maintenance area for 1997 Ozone NAAQS. As a result, MPOs in Massachusetts must demonstrate conformity for ozone when developing LRTPs and TIPs. The MPOs in Massachusetts are also required to report on the TCMs as part of air quality conformity determinations in these documents. In addition, the MPOs are still required to perform air quality analyses for carbon dioxide as part of the state's Global Warming Solutions Act.

### **Nondiscrimination Mandates**

The Boston Region MPO complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Environmental Justice Executive Order (EJ EO), and other federal and state nondiscrimination statutes and regulations in all programs and activities it conducts. Per federal law, the MPO does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin (including limited English proficiency), religion, creed, gender, ancestry, ethnicity, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran's status, or background. The MPO takes steps in its communication practices and planning processes to provide for and facilitate participation of all persons in the region, including those protected by Title VI, ADA, the EJ EO, and other nondiscrimination mandates. The MPO also considers distribution of the potential beneficial and adverse effects to populations covered by these mandates when making decisions about the programming of federal funding, including funding for MPO-supported studies. The MPO conducts activities as part of its Transportation Equity Program to ensure that the MPO meets these requirements. The MPO staff also conducts the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Title VI Program, and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Title VI Program monitoring. The major federal requirements are discussed below.

## Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin, under any program or activity provided by an agency receiving federal financial assistance. Executive Order 13166, dated August 11, 2000, extends Title VI protections to persons who, as a result of national origin, have limited English-language proficiency (LEP). Specifically, it calls for improved access to federally assisted programs and activities, and requires MPOs to develop and implement a system through which people with LEP can meaningfully participate in the transportation planning process. This requirement includes the development of a Language Assistance Plan that documents the organization's process for providing meaningful language access to people with LEP that access their services and programs.

## Environmental Justice Executive Order

Executive Order 12898, dated February 11, 1994, requires each federal agency to achieve environmental justice by identifying and addressing any disproportionately great adverse human health or environmental effects, including interrelated social and economic effects, of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations.

On April 15, 1997, the USDOT issued its *Final Order to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*. Among other provisions, this order requires programming and planning activities to

- explicitly consider the effects of transportation decisions on minority and low-income populations;
- provide meaningful opportunities for public involvement by members of minority and low-income populations;
- gather (where relevant, appropriate, and practical) demographic information such as race, color, national origin, and income level of populations affected by transportation decisions; and
- minimize or mitigate any adverse impact on minority or low-income populations.

The 1997 Final Order was updated in 2012 with USDOT Order 5610.2(a), which provided clarification while maintaining the original framework and procedures.

## Americans with Disabilities Act

Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) “prohibits states, MPOs, and other public entities from discriminating on the basis of disability in the entities’ services, programs, or activities,” and requires all transportation projects, plans, and programs to be accessible to people with disabilities. It means that the MPO must consider the mobility needs of people with disabilities when programming federal funding for studies and capital projects.

Title III of the ADA also requires all transportation projects, plans, and programs to be accessible to people with disabilities. For the MPO, this means MPO-sponsored meetings must be held in accessible buildings and be conducted in a manner that provides for accessibility. MPO materials must also be made available in accessible formats.

## **State Guidance and Priorities**

Much of the MPO's work focuses on encouraging mode shift and diminishing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through improving transit service, enhancing bicycle and pedestrian networks, and studying emerging transportation technologies. All of this work helps the Boston region contribute to statewide progress towards the priorities discussed in this section.

## ***We Move Massachusetts and Planning for Performance***

We Move Massachusetts (WMM) is MassDOT's statewide strategic multimodal plan. The initiative is a product of the transportation reform legislation of 2009, the You Move Massachusetts civic engagement process, wider outreach to environmental justice and Title VI communities, and other outreach activities. In May 2014, MassDOT released *We Move Massachusetts: Planning for Performance, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' 2040 LRTP*. WMM also incorporates performance management in investment decision-making to calculate the differences in performance outcomes resulting from different funding levels available to MassDOT.

MassDOT has expanded upon the incorporation of performance management in WMM by developing a Planning for Performance (PfP) tool to influence investments. The PfP tool is a scenario-planning tool, custom built for MassDOT, which forecasts asset conditions and allows capital planners within the divisions to consider the tradeoffs between investment strategies. The tool reports future conditions in comparison to the desired performance targets.

## ***Massachusetts Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP)***

The *Massachusetts 2018 SHSP* identifies the state's key safety needs and guides investment decisions to achieve significant reductions in highway fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads. The SHSP establishes statewide safety goals and objectives and key safety emphasis areas, and it draws on the strengths of all highway safety partners in the Commonwealth to align and leverage resources to address the state's safety challenges collectively. The MPO considers SHSP goals, emphasis areas, and strategies when developing its plans, programs, and activities.

## ***MassDOT Modal Plans***

In 2017, MassDOT finalized the *Massachusetts Freight Plan*, which defines the short- and long-term vision for the Commonwealth's freight transportation system. In 2018, MassDOT released the related *Commonwealth of Massachusetts State Rail Plan*, which outlines short- and long-term investment strategies for Massachusetts' freight and passenger rail systems (excluding the MBTA's commuter rail system). In 2018, MassDOT also released drafts of the *Statewide*



*Bicycle Transportation Plan* and the *Massachusetts Pedestrian Transportation Plan*, both of which define roadmaps, initiatives, and action plans to improve bicycle and pedestrian transportation in the Commonwealth. The MPO considers the findings and strategies of MassDOT's modal plans when conducting its planning, including through its Freight Planning Support and Bicycle/Pedestrian Support Activities programs.

### **Global Warming Solutions Act and GreenDOT Policy**

The Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA) makes Massachusetts a leader in setting aggressive and enforceable GHG reduction targets and implementing policies and initiatives to achieve these targets. In keeping with this law, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, in consultation with other state agencies and the public, developed the *Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2020*. This implementation plan, released on December 29, 2010 (and updated in 2015), establishes the following targets for overall statewide GHG emission reductions:

- 25 percent reduction below statewide 1990 GHG emission levels by 2020
- 80 percent reduction below statewide 1990 GHG emission levels by 2050

In January 2015, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection amended regulation 310 CMR 60.05, *Global Warming Solutions Act Requirements for the Transportation Sector and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation*, which was subsequently amended in August 2017. This regulation places a range of obligations on MassDOT and MPOs to support achievement of the Commonwealth's climate change goals through the programming of transportation funds. For example, MPOs must use GHG impact as a selection criterion when they review projects to be programmed in their TIPs, and they must evaluate and report the GHG emissions impacts of transportation projects in LRTPs and TIPs.

MassDOT's also fulfills its responsibilities, defined in the *Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2020*, through its GreenDOT Policy Directive, a comprehensive sustainability initiative that sets three principal objectives:

- **Reduce GHG emissions from the transportation sector.** MassDOT will achieve this objective by taking GHG emissions into account in all of its responsibilities, including strategic planning, project design and construction, and system operations.
- **Promote the healthy transportation modes of walking, bicycling, and taking public transit.** MassDOT will achieve this objective by pursuing multimodal Complete Streets design standards, providing choices in transportation services, and working with MPOs and other partners to balance funding for projects that serve drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit riders.
- **Support smart growth development.** MassDOT will achieve this objective by working with MPOs and other partners to invest in transportation projects that make possible denser smart growth development patterns, which help reduce GHG emissions.

The Commonwealth's 10 MPOs (and three non-metropolitan planning regions) are integrally involved in supporting the GHG reductions mandated under the GWSA. The MPOs seek

to realize these objectives by prioritizing projects in the LRTP and TIP that will help reduce emissions from the transportation sector. The Boston Region MPO uses its TIP project evaluation criteria to score projects based on their GHG emissions impacts, multimodal Complete Streets accommodations, and ability to support smart-growth development. Tracking and evaluating GHG emissions by project will enable the MPOs to anticipate GHG impacts of planned and programmed projects.

### **Healthy Transportation Policy Initiatives**

On September 9, 2013, MassDOT passed the Healthy Transportation Policy Directive to formalize its commitment to implementing and maintaining transportation networks that allow for various mode choices. This directive will ensure that all MassDOT projects are designed and implemented in ways that provide all customers with access to safe and comfortable walking, bicycling, and transit options.

In November 2015, MassDOT released the *Separated Bike Lane Planning & Design Guide*. This guide represents the next—but not the last—step in MassDOT’s continuing commitment to Complete Streets, sustainable transportation, and the creation of more safe and convenient transportation options for Massachusetts’ residents. This guide may be used by project planners and designers as a resource for considering, evaluating, and designing separated bike lanes as part of a Complete Streets approach.

In *Charting Progress to 2040*, the Boston Region MPO has established investment programs—particularly its Complete Streets and Bicycle and Pedestrian programs—that support the implementation of Complete Streets projects. The UPWP programs support for these projects, such as the MPO’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Support Activities program, corridor studies undertaken by MPO staff to make conceptual recommendations for Complete Streets treatments, and various discrete studies aimed at improving pedestrian and bicycle accommodations.

### **Regional Guidance and Priorities**

#### **Focus40, The MBTA’s Program for Mass Transportation**

*Focus40* is the 25-year investment plan that aims to position the MBTA to meet the needs of the Greater Boston region through 2040. It is known officially as the Program for Mass Transportation (PMT). On July 30, 2018, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) and the MBTA released a draft of the *Focus40* plan. The *Focus40* plan, which is guided by the MBTA’s Strategic Plan and other internal and external policy and planning initiatives, will serve as a comprehensive playbook guiding all capital planning initiatives at the MBTA. This includes the *RailVision* plan, which will inform the vision for the future of the MBTA’s commuter rail system; the Better Bus Project, the plan to improve the MBTA’s bus network; and other plans. The Boston Region MPO continues to monitor the development of *Focus40* and

related MBTA modal plans to inform its decision making about transit capital investments, which are incorporated to the TIP and LRTP.

### **MetroFuture**

*MetroFuture*, which was developed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and adopted in 2008, is the long-range plan for land use, housing, economic development, and environmental preservation for the Boston region. It includes a vision for the region's future and a set of strategies for achieving that vision, and is the foundation for land-use projections used in the MPO's LRTP, *Charting Progress to 2040*. MAPC is now developing *MetroCommon*, the next regional plan, which will build off of *MetroFuture* and include an updated set of strategies for achieving sustainable growth and equitable prosperity. The MPO will continue to consider *MetroFuture's* goals, objectives, and strategies in its planning and activities, and will monitor *MetroCommon* as it develops.

### **The MPO's Congestion Management Process**

The purpose of the Congestion Management Process (CMP) is to monitor and analyze performance of facilities and services, develop strategies for managing congestion based on the results of monitoring, and move those strategies into the implementation stage by providing decision makers in the region with information and recommendations for improving the transportation system's performance. The CMP monitors roadways and park-and-ride facilities in the Boston region for safety, congestion, and mobility, and identifies problem locations. The CMP is described in more detail in the UPWP, and studies undertaken through the CMP are often the inspiration for discrete studies funded through the UPWP.

## **VOTING MEMBERS OF THE BOSTON REGION MPO**

The Boston Region MPO includes both permanent members and municipal members who are elected for three-year terms. Details about the MPO's members are listed below.

**MassDOT** was established under Chapter 25 (*An Act Modernizing the Transportation Systems of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts*) of the Acts of 2009. MassDOT has four divisions: Highway, Rail and Transit, Aeronautics, and the Registry of Motor Vehicles. The MassDOT Board of Directors, comprised of 11 members appointed by the Governor, oversees all four divisions and MassDOT operations, including the MBTA. The board was expanded to 11 members by the legislature in 2015 based on a recommendation by Governor Baker's Special Panel, a group of transportation leaders assembled to review structural problems with the MBTA and deliver recommendations for improvements. MassDOT has three seats on the MPO board, including seats for the Highway Division and the Rail and Transit Division.

- The **MassDOT Highway Division** has jurisdiction over the roadways, bridges, and tunnels formerly overseen by the Massachusetts Highway Department and the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority. The Highway Division also has jurisdiction over

many bridges and parkways that previously were under authority of the Department of Conservation and Recreation. The Highway Division is responsible for the design, construction, and maintenance of the Commonwealth's state highways and bridges. It is also responsible for overseeing traffic safety and engineering activities for the state highway system. These activities include operating the Highway Operations Control Center to ensure safe road and travel conditions.

- The **Rail and Transit Division** oversees MassDOT's freight and passenger rail program, and provides oversight of Massachusetts's 15 regional transit authorities (RTAs), as well as intercity bus service, the MBTA's paratransit service (THE RIDE), and a statewide mobility-management effort.

The **MBTA**, created in 1964, is a body politic and corporate, and a political subdivision of the Commonwealth. Under the provisions of Chapter 161A of the Massachusetts General Laws (MGL), it has the statutory responsibility within its district of operating the public transportation system, preparing the engineering and architectural designs for transit development projects, and constructing and operating transit development projects. The MBTA district comprises 175 communities, including all of the 97 cities and towns of the Boston Region MPO area. In April 2015, as a result of a plan of action to improve the MBTA, a five-member Fiscal and Management Control Board (FMCB) was created. The FMCB was created to oversee and improve the finances, management, and operations of the MBTA. The FMCB's authorizing statute called for an initial three-year term, with the option for the board to request that the Governor approve a single two-year extension. In 2017, the FMCB's initial mandate, which would have expired in June 2018, was extended for two years, through June 30, 2020. The FMCB's goals target governance, finance, and agency structure and operations through recommended executive and legislative actions that embrace transparency and develop stability in order to earn public trust. By statute, the MBTA FMCB consists of five members, one with experience in transportation finance, one with experience in mass transit operations, and three who are also members of the MassDOT Board of Directors.

The **MBTA Advisory Board** was created by the Massachusetts Legislature in 1964 through the same legislation that created the MBTA. The Advisory Board consists of representatives of the 175 cities and towns that compose the MBTA district. Cities are represented by either the city manager or mayor, and towns are represented by the chairperson of the board of selectmen. Specific responsibilities of the Advisory Board include review of and comment on the MBTA's long-range plan, the PMT, proposed fare increases, and the annual MBTA Capital Investment Program; review of the MBTA's documentation of net operating investment per passenger; and review of the MBTA's operating budget. The MBTA Advisory Board advocates for the transit needs of its member communities and the riding public.

The **Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport)** has the statutory responsibility under Chapter 465 of the Acts of 1956, as amended, for planning, constructing, owning, and operating such transportation and related facilities as may be necessary for developing and improving

commerce in Boston and the surrounding metropolitan area. Massport owns and operates Boston Logan International Airport, the Port of Boston's Conley Terminal, Cruiseport Boston, Hanscom Field, Worcester Regional Airport, and various maritime and waterfront properties, including parks in East Boston, South Boston, and Charlestown.

**MAPC** is the regional planning agency for the Boston region. It is composed of the chief executive officer (or her/his designee) of each of the cities and towns in the MAPC region, 21 gubernatorial appointees, and 12 ex-officio members. It has statutory responsibility for comprehensive regional planning in its region under Chapter 40B of the MGL. It is the Boston Metropolitan Clearinghouse under Section 204 of the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966 and Title VI of the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act of 1968. Also, its region has been designated an economic development district under Title IV of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended. MAPC's responsibilities for comprehensive planning encompass the areas of technical assistance to communities, transportation planning, and development of zoning, land use, demographic, and environmental studies. MAPC activities that are funded with federal metropolitan transportation planning dollars are included in the UPWP.

The **City of Boston**, seven elected cities (currently **Beverly, Braintree, Everett, Framingham, Newton, Somerville, and Woburn**), and five elected towns (currently **Arlington, Bedford, Lexington, Medway, and Norwood**) represent the 97 municipalities in the Boston Region MPO area. The City of Boston is a permanent MPO member and has two seats. There is one elected municipal seat for each of the eight MAPC subregions and four seats for at-large elected municipalities (two cities and two towns). The elected at-large municipalities serve staggered three-year terms, as do the eight municipalities representing the MAPC subregions.

The **Regional Transportation Advisory Council**, the MPO's citizen advisory group, provides the opportunity for transportation-related organizations, non-MPO member agencies, and municipal representatives to become actively involved in the decision-making processes of the MPO as it develops plans and prioritizes the implementation of transportation projects in the region. The Advisory Council reviews, comments on, and makes recommendations regarding certification documents. It also serves as a forum for providing information on transportation topics in the region, identifying issues, advocating for ways to address the region's transportation needs, and generating interest among members of the general public in the work of the MPO.

The **Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)** and **Federal Transit Administration (FTA)** participate in the Boston Region MPO in an advisory (nonvoting) capacity, reviewing the LRTP, TIP, UPWP, and other facets of the MPO's planning process to ensure compliance with federal planning and programming requirements. These two agencies oversee the highway and transit programs, respectively, of the US Department of Transportation under pertinent legislation and the provisions of the FAST Act.