

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 6, 2016
TO: Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
FROM: Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director
RE: Conclusions of Initial Discussion on Municipal Contributions to Transportation Improvement Program Projects

At the meeting of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) on September 15, 2016, MPO members discussed the question of whether municipalities should contribute more funding at the outset than they now do to the costs of the transportation projects they seek to have programmed in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The MPO staff was asked to summarize the consensus points that emerged from the discussion, and these are listed in draft form below.

- Municipalities already pay for design and engineering, right-of-way, and certain other costs associated with projects, such as mitigation and utility relocations, if necessary.
- States in which municipalities contribute to construction costs are states in which those municipalities are able to levy taxes to raise necessary revenue. No such ability exists in Massachusetts.
- Any requirement to increase their up-front contributions might compel municipalities to use Chapter 90 funds for such purposes, resulting in shifting these funds from other urgent transportation infrastructure needs.
- The requirement to pay for design costs with no certainty that projects will be placed on the TIP already represents a barrier to participation in the TIP process for some municipalities.
- For the reasons cited above, the MPO does not favor requiring municipalities to contribute more to the costs of transportation projects at the outset than they already do.
- The MPO is going to explore whether, under certain prescribed circumstances, municipalities might contribute to project cost increases that occur after a project has been programmed on the TIP.

Once MPO members have approved this or a modified list, staff will render it in the form of a letter from the MPO to the MassDOT Board of Directors.