MPO Meeting Minutes Draft Memorandum for the Record Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

June 16, 2022, Meeting

10:00 AM-12:00 PM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

Eric Bourassa, Vice Chair, representing Jamey Tesler, 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 April 28, 2022
- Approve the minutes of the meeting of May 5, 2022
- Approve the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2023 Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) Operating Budget
- Approve the Federal Fiscal Years (FFYs) 2022–26 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Adjustment Three for endorsement
- Approve the FFYs 2022–26 TIP Amendment Six for public review

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

See attendance on page 13.

2. Chair's Report—Eric Bourassa, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)

There was none.

3. Executive Director's Report—Annette Demchur, Director of Policy and Planning, Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS)

Annette Demchur gave staffing updates. A. Demchur acknowledged Matt Genova's work done over the last three and a half years as TIP Manager and noted his proven ability to be a strong leader and dedicated team player. The Boston Region MPO has several job postings, including the Travel Demand Manager position and the TIP Manager position. Additional postings are to come, and CTPS is currently holding interviews for a Graphic Designer position and a Climate Resiliency and Transportation Planner position.

In updates to public engagement activities, A. Demchur noted that the CTPS Outreach and Communications team will be changing its name to Communications and Engagement. She also reported that the Transit Working Group held a recent Coffee Chat with Victoria Ireton, Deputy Director of Public Engagement of the MBTA, where she spoke about her team's approach to engagement.

4. Public Comments

There were none.

5. Committee Chairs' Reports

There were none.

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

Lenard Diggins stated that during the last meeting members discussed the upcoming Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and that a surprise guest is planned for the upcoming Advisory Council meeting in July.

7. Action Item: Approval of April 28, 2022, MPO Meeting Minutes Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

- 1. April 28, 2022, MPO Meeting Minutes (pdf)
- April 28, 2022, MPO Meeting Minutes (html)

Vote

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of April 28, 2022, was made by the At-Large Town, Town of Arlington (Daniel Amstutz), and seconded by the Three Rivers Interlocal Council, Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce (Tom O'Rourke). The motion carried.

8. Action Item: Approval of May 5, 2022, MPO Meeting Minutes Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

- 1. May 5, 2022, MPO Meeting Minutes (pdf)
- 2. May 5, 2022, MPO Meeting Minutes (html)

Vote

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of May 5, 2022, was made by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Lenard Diggins) and seconded by the At-Large City, City of Everett (Jay Monty). The motion carried.

9. Action Item: State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2023 Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) Operating Budget—Brian Kane, MBTA Advisory Board

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

- 1. SFY23 Requested Operating Budget Memo (pdf)
- 2. SFY23 Requested Operating Budget Memo (html)
- 3. SFY 2023 Revenue Projections (html)
- 4. SFY 2023 Computer Plan Memo (pdf)
- 5. SFY 2023 Computer Plan Memo (html)

Brian Kane stated that the Administration and Finance (A&F) Committee had met in the morning to consider the SFY 2023 CTPS Operating Budget. The budget runs from July 1 to June 30, and the A&F Committee recommends the MPO pass the budget. The committee had many questions that were answered by MPO staff. The budget is balanced and includes full funding for studies, 3C planning efforts, and increased spending to recruit additional staff.

Hiral Gandhi, MPO staff, added that the SFY 2023 overhead rate is expected to be 109.34 percent, with sixty full-time employees expected for the next SFY.

Discussion

There was none.

Vote

A motion to approve the SFY 2023 CTPS Operating Budget, was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (Brian Kane) and seconded by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Lenard Diggins). The motion carried.

10. Action Item: Federal Fiscal Years (FFYs) 2022—26 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Adjustment Three—Jonathan Church, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

- 1. FFYs 2022–26 TIP Adjustment Three (pdf)
- 2. FFYs 2022–26 TIP Adjustment Three (html)

Jonathan Church presented the FFYs 2022–26 TIP Adjustment Three. The adjustment proposes funding source changes for one existing FFY 2022 MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) project. The adjustment will reallocate funds from the FFY 2022 State Regional Transit Authority Capital Assistance Program (RTACAP) from project #RTD0011487 to project #RTD0010209 to allow the funds to be spent on other

bus-related items before the end of the state fiscal year. These funds are no longer needed for the vehicle replacement project due to supply chain issues preventing procurement of a vehicle before the June 30 deadline to spend SFY 2022 RTACAP funds. The remaining \$60,000 in FTA Section 5307 funds for the project are proposed for reallocation to project #RTD0010209 through FFYs 2022-26 TIP Amendment Six, a separate action item proposed for consideration by the Boston Region MPO. J. Church presented the following table to discuss the proposed changes.

Project Name	Change	Amount
Vehicle Replacement 1 E2(a) with Options		-\$15,000 (from \$75,000 to \$60,000)
Acquisition of Bus Support Equipment/Facilities		\$15,000 (from \$103,750 to \$118,750)

MPO staff requested that the MPO vote to endorse TIP Adjustment Three.

Discussion

There was none.

Vote

A motion to endorse the FFYs 2022–26 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Adjustment Three was made by the MetroWest Regional Collaborative, City of Framingham (Eric Johnson), and seconded by the At-Large Town, Town of Arlington (Daniel Amstutz). The motion carried.

11. Action Item: FFYs 2022–26 TIP Amendment Six—Jonathan Church, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

- 1. FFYs 2022–26 TIP Amendment Six (pdf)
- 2. FFYs 2022–26 TIP Amendment Six (html)

Jonathan Church presented FFYs 2022–26 TIP Amendment Six. For the FFY 2022 MPO Regional Target Program, the amendment proposes removal of project #607738: Bedford—Minuteman Bikeway Extension, from Loomis Street to Concord Road (Route 62). The amendment further proposes an increase in funding for projects #608443: Littleton—Ayer—Intersection improvements on Route 2A at Willow Road and Bruce Street, and #608495: Concord—Lexington—Lincoln—Resurfacing and related work on Route 2A. Further, for the FFY 2022 Transit Program, the amendment proposes the removal of project #RTD0011487: MWRTA—Vehicle Replacement 1 E2(a) with options, and a change of funding source for project #RTD0010209: MWRTA—Acquisition of Bus Support Equipment/Facilities. J. Church presented the following table to discuss the proposed changes.

Project Name	Change	Amount
607738: Bedford— Minuteman Bikeway Extension, from Loomis Street to Concord Road (Route 62)	Remove Project (FFY 2022 MPO Regional Target Program)	-\$11,000,168
608443: Littleton–Ayer— Intersection improvements on Route 2A at Willow Road and Bruce Street	Cost Increase (FFY 2022 MPO Regional Target Program)	\$509,853 (from \$3,226,285 to \$3,736,138)
608495: Concord– Lexington– Lincoln— Resurfacing and related work on Route 2A	Cost Increase (FFY 2022 Statewide Highway Program)	\$1,415,000 (from \$3,248,450 to \$4,368,447)
RTD0010209: MWRTA— Acquisition of Bus Support Equipment/Facilities	State RTACAP (SFY 2022) / FTA Section 5307 (FFY 2022)	\$60,000 (from \$118,750 to \$178,750)
RTD0011487: MWRTA—Vehicle Replacement 1 E2(a) with options	Remove Project (FFY 2022 Transit Program)	-\$60,000

MPO staff requested that the MPO vote to release Amendment Six for a 21-day public comment period.

Discussion

Daniel Amstutz, Town of Arlington, asked what would happen to the funding for the #607738: Bedford—Minuteman Bikeway Extension, from Loomis Street to Concord Road (Route 62) project if it was removed from the TIP. D. Amstutz further asked why the funding was being removed as opposed to moving the project to a later fiscal year. J. Church explained that the funding for this project would be partially absorbed by cost increases from the #608495: Concord—Lexington—Lincoln—Resurfacing and related work on Route 2A project. Further, the Boston Region MPO does not have another project ready to program for FFY 2022 and did not have available space in FFY 2023 without removing a project from that list. The MPO could look at FFY 2024 if the board would like to reinstate the project.

Eric Bourassa, MAPC, asked if the #607738 Bedford project would be addressed in the next TIP cycle. Derek Krevat, MassDOT, explained that MassDOT is exploring funding options with the Highway Division, but programs are currently full. Normally, MassDOT would find funding for this project. The project will be addressed at the earliest possible meeting.

E. Bourassa stated that for the project to be fully approved, the Town of Bedford would need to acquire the necessary right-of-way. The Town of Bedford was unable to approve the right-of-way purchase at a recent town meeting. The project would have to be advertised prior to September 30, 2022, for FFY 2022 funding.

Jeanette Rebecci, Town of Bedford, stated that a special town meeting is planned for November to approve the right-of-way acquisition. Marie Rose, MassDOT, echoed J. Rebecci's statement.

- L. Diggins asked about thresholds for cost increases, and if the cost increases would require the MPO to reapprove the funding. M. Rose stated that any project costing less than \$5 million would not require an amendment for funding increases less than \$500,000. J. Church stated that some of the cost increases are due to inflation.
- E. Bourassa asked about what happens to the remaining \$9.4 million that is unprogrammed in FFY 2022. J. Church stated that the funds are available for programming, but there are no projects currently available to fill the gap. MPO staff has been working with the MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (OTP) and the Highway Division to identify potential projects. M. Rose stated that after a preliminary search, no projects appeared to be ready for advertisement by the September 30 deadline.

- E. Bourassa asked what the deadline for program funding is. J. Church answered that August would be the latest time to program funding. Derek Shooster, MassDOT, stated that TIP actions take two to three months to process for final approval from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The MPO would need to release an action no later than the next MPO meeting in July to be endorsed by the FWHA in August. D. Shooster further noted that it was not unusual for programs to have five to ten percent of funding left unspent. D. Krevat added that unspent funding is placed into a pool for funding other MassDOT projects that can be immediately advanced. D. Shooster added that advanced construction projects that could be expedited are done in the last State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) action of the year.
- D. Amstutz asked if the MPO could add additional projects after the amendment has been released for the public comment period. J. Church stated that an additional amendment would be required to add additional projects.
- M. Rose stated that for the #608495 Concord–Lexington–Lincoln project, there is a fair amount of concern from various stakeholders, including the National Park Service, and the Towns of Concord, Lexington, and potentially Lincoln, about mitigating potential adverse effects on historical properties, and a discussion between these stakeholders is planned.
- E. Bourassa asked if there is a potential for the #608495 Concord–Lexington–Lincoln project to be taken off the TIP. M. Rose answered yes.
- D. Shooster stated that the #608495 Concord–Lexington–Lincoln project is funded through a statewide priority program, and changes to this project cost will therefore not impede the MPO's regional target funding allocation. The project will need an action by the July 7 MPO meeting if the project has an increase in cost or if the project is not approved by the Town of Bedford and must be removed from the TIP. Unfortunately, it is still too early to tell which action would be needed.

Vote

A motion to approve the FFYs 2022–26 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment Six to release for public review was made by the At-Large Town, Town of Arlington (Daniel Amstutz), and seconded by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (Derek Krevat). The motion carried.

12. Presentation: MBTA Bus Network Redesign Project—Doug Johnson, MassDOT, and Rob Guptill, MBTA

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. MBTA Bus Network Redesign Project (pdf)

Doug Johnson of MassDOT and Rob Guptill of the MBTA presented on the MBTA Bus Network Redesign Project. D. Johnson stated that the Bus Network Redesign is a complete reimagining of the MBTA's bus network to better reflect the travel needs of the region and create a better experience for current and future bus riders. The MBTA is doing this project because the region has changed, but the bus network has not changed with it. Transit is essential to the region's economy and the bus serves the most transit-dependent populations in the region. The redesign is coordinated with other initiatives to maximize benefit to riders. Besides redesigning bus routes, there are other initiatives as part of the project, such as bus priority infrastructure as well as fleet and facility maintenance.

Municipal partnerships are key to success, and the coordination will continue to ensure that the Bus Network Redesign is successful. The MBTA works with municipalities to ensure transit priority in congested corridors, new and expanded layover locations, bus shelters and accessible bus stops, and new and upgraded garages to make the MBTA Bus Redesign Project successful. The MBTA has had an extensive public engagement process that has been happening for many years. As public engagement is continuing, the MBTA has found that riders are looking for service that goes where people want to travel, and when they need it. Riders also expressed that great bus service is simple to use and understand, fast, frequent, reliable, and serves the people who need it most.

The MBTA has several goals for the Bus Network Redesign. First, equity, to prioritize the needs of those who depend on buses and need frequent, reliable service. Second, more frequent service in busy neighborhoods. Third, more all-day service. Fourth, new connections to more places, including non-downtown centers, and fifth, a network that's simpler and easier to use.

The benefits of the Bus Network Redesign include high-frequency service near 275,000 more residents, a 25 percent increase in bus service across the network, along with 200,000 more residents gaining fast and frequent access to the Longwood Medical Area. The number of high-frequency corridors would increase from 15 to 30 corridors. Presently, Everett, Lynn, Medford, Somerville, South Boston, and West Roxbury have no all-day high-frequency routes. the Bus Network Redesign would provide these communities with access to these services. The MBTA is focused on frequent bus service on corridors and connections that are not served by rapid transit, which will

increase access to destinations such as the Longwood Medical Area, South Boston Waterfront, Back Bay, and Kendall Square.

Rob Guptill spoke about the different types of bus routes. There are three categories of routes, high-frequency service, medium-frequency service, and low-frequency service. In Everett, there would be an increase in high-frequency service where there is no high-frequency service today. The project proposes a 70 percent increase in service, with more midday, evening, and weekend service. Further, Everett would see better service and improved connections to Chelsea, Cambridge, Downtown Boston, Somerville, Malden, Revere, Medford, and more. In Lynn and Nahant, there would be two proposed high-frequency bus routes where there were previously none. The project proposes a 40 percent increase in service, with more midday, evening, and weekend service. In Roxbury, there would be an increase in high-frequency service from six routes today to nine routes in the future. The proposed redesign would increase service in the area by 25 percent, with more midday, evening, and weekend service.

D. Johnson spoke about the timeline of the Bus Network Redesign Project. Currently, the MBTA has proposed a draft network and is reaching out to residents for public comment. The next phase, scheduled to begin in fall 2022, will finalize the network design based on public comment with an additional outreach phase to review the draft map with routes and frequencies. The MBTA will begin Phase 1 of new bus service beginning in 2023, with new routes being implemented over five years. Since 2019, the MBTA has received over 1,000 comments on the travel survey in multiple languages and has held focus groups with more than 100 riders. Further, the street teams have spent more than 30 hours at stops and stations to promote the project, and they have worked with elected officials to give briefs on the Bus Network Redesign Project.

Discussion

David Koses, City of Newton, asked about the reactions from municipal staff and elected officials, and if the MBTA has heard any significant concerns so far. R. Guptill responded that there will be opportunities to get into details about frequencies, layovers, and more. The MBTA is finding general support for the redesign, but people want more. The MBTA is looking for feedback from municipal partners. Some of the bus map will change substantially before the final map is released.

D. Koses asked how long the phase three outreach period would be and if there would be an ability to modify the finalized map at that time. R. Guptill responded that the intent is that the map will be finalized by the fall and the public outreach will be informational. D. Johnson added that there will be outreach to the public and municipalities prior to the release of the final proposal.

Daniel Amstutz, Town of Arlington, asked if there is a deadline for public comments for this phase of public outreach. D. Johnson stated that there will be an official comment deadline coming following the July 28 in-person public meeting, and that the MBTA anticipates the end of July as the end of the current public comment period.

D. Amstutz stated that the Town of Arlington has not had conversations with the MBTA since the draft of the Bus Network Redesign, and he asked if the Town should reach out to the MBTA to schedule a formal conversation. D. Johnson stated that the Town of Arlington should reach out to the MBTA if they are interested in having a conversation.

13. Presentation: Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan—Derek Krevat, Massachusetts Department of Transportation Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan (pdf)

Derek Krevat, MassDOT, presented *Beyond Mobility*, the Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan. The purpose of the plan is to provide a direction for the future of MassDOT, to serve as a strategic plan across transportation modes, and to guide future capital planning and program sizing. The last public outreach effort for a long-range transportation plan was in 2014 for the *We Move Massachusetts Plan*, and in 2017 for the Capital Investment Plan. The *Beyond Mobility* plan updates the statewide vision for transportation and revisits the changes in transportation since the last long-range plan was completed.

The process for developing the *Beyond Mobility* plan involves several public engagement phases including assessment, visioning, evaluation, and recommendations. The current engagement phase is visioning, which asks questions about people's visions for the transportation system now and in 2050. This public engagement will inform the vision statement and development of goals and objects for the plan. The next engagement phase is evaluation, which will analyze trade off and priorities between the variety of programs. These public engagement phases will culminate in the recommendations of the *Beyond Mobility* plan.

As part of the visioning phase, MassDOT has held multiple engagement opportunities, including multilingual and multiethnic focus groups and interviews. Additionally, MassDOT has released a community survey that closes July 8, and staff will continue to reach out to stakeholders and hold internal meetings in the spring and summer of 2022. With the public engagement feedback, MassDOT is validating or correcting its data and assumptions, and educating itself about new trends, challenges, and opportunities to establish a shared vision and values. MassDOT is trying to cast a wide net to include as

many stakeholders as possible. Additional planned engagement opportunities include Meeting in A Box, where community facilitators will host a public meeting or focus group on behalf of MassDOT. Some of the feedback that MassDOT has already received from the visioning survey includes themes such as intermodal connectivity, improved mobility options, increased electric-vehicle charging options, late night and weekend service, better maintained sidewalks and bike lanes, and congestion in the context of reliability and other modal options.

The statewide long-range transportation plan includes a needs assessment to identify the most pressing transportation needs through data-driven exercises, using existing and new data to identify barriers and make recommendations for the plan. This data will be overlayed with existing MassDOT projects to highlight where work still needs to be done in high-priority locations. Further, there will be an intentional focus on transportation justice communities to ensure equity and to ensure disadvantaged areas are addressed. In addition to analyzing data about low-income households, minorities, and people with limited English proficiency, MassDOT is also looking at data on zero-vehicle households, people with disabilities, and broadband access. MassDOT is also analyzing transportation impacts with multiple categories of criteria, including infrastructure, safety, affordability, accessibility, and environment.

Discussion

Lenard Diggins asked if the long-range transportation plan fits in parallel with the future transportation report or if the future transportation report would be a larger vision of the findings within this plan. D. Krevat answered that the long-range transportation plan is a way to inform MassDOT programs and to allow public input to shape the funding of future programs.

Tom Bent, Inner Core Committee, asked how the long-range transportation plan would address input from the business community. D. Krevat answered that MassDOT has a stakeholder outreach list that includes all chambers of commerce and MassDOT is working to gain their perspective.

14. Members' Items

There were none.

15. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the Inner Core Committee, City of Somerville (Tom Bent), and seconded by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Lenard Diggins). The motion carried.

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Jay Monty
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	Daniel Amstutz
At-Large Town (Town of Brookline)	
City of Boston (Boston Planning & Development Agency)	Jim Fitzgerald
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Matthew Moran
Federal Highway Administration	Cassandra
· ,	Ostrander
Federal Transit Administration	
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Derek Krevat
·	Marie Rose
MassDOT Highway Division	John Romano
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	Laura Gilmore
Massachusetts Port Authority	Sarah Lee
MBTA Advisory Board	Brian Kane
•	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 (City of Woburn)	Melissa Tintocalis
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Lenard Diggins
South Shore Coalition (Town of Rockland)	Jennifer Constable
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/Neponset	Tom O'Rourke
Valley Chamber of Commerce)	Steven Olanoff

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Other Attendees	Affiliation
Moiz Abdul Majid	
Jessica Boulanger	MAPC
Sarah Bradbury	MassDOT District 3
Paul Cobuzzi	
Margo Costigan	MassDOT
Johannes Epke	Conservation Law Foundation
James Fitzgerald	
Tiffany Garcia	MBTA
Michael Garrity	MassDOT
Joy Glynn	MWRTA
Robert Guptill	MBTA
Michelle Ho	
Abby Jamiel	
Doug Johnson	MassDOT
Chris Klem	
Josh Klingenstein	
Raissah Kouame	MassDOT
Aleida Leza	
Jillian Linnell	MBTA
Benjamin Muller	MassDOT District 6
Jeanette Rebecchi	Town of Bedford
C. Senior	MassDOT District 5
Jon Seward	
Ishmael Sharif	MassDOT
Derek Shooster	MassDOT
Gregory Sobczynski	
Tyler Terrasi	MWRTA

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Annette Demchur

Jonathan Church

Logan Casey

Silva Ayvazyan

Hiral Gandhi

Matt Genova

Betsy Harvey

Sandy Johnson

Stella Jordan

Heyne Kim

Anne McGahan

Srilekha Murthy

Meghan O'Connor

Gina Perille

Sean Rourke

Michelle Scott

Uday Schultz

Ryan Hicks

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Title VI Specialist

Boston Region MPO 10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150 Boston, MA 02116 civilrights@ctps.org

By Telephone:

857.702.3700 (voice)

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