

**Boston Region MPO Administration & Finance Committee**  
**Operations Plan Development**  
**MPO Work Products Workflow and Review Process – December 2, 2022**

**Operation Plan Memo - Relevant Sections from Operations Plan Memo**

**MPO Work Products**

Clarify roles, responsibilities, and collaboration around MPO products identified in the Unified Planning Work Program ([UPWP](#))

*[Note that the UPWP includes all work done by CTPS, including the following:*

- *Certification requirements and administrative activities*
- *Ongoing/continuing work programs*
- *New studies*
- *Agency-funded studies and technical analyses*

**2011 MOU - Summary of relevant sections pertaining to MPO Work Products**

*[Note that there is a significant amount of text in the MOU about one core document produced by the MPO - the TIP. There is less text about the UPWP and LRTP, none of which is likely relevant for this topic. The text below includes highlights or short sections of MOU text that refer to the intent, process and timing around the production and workflow of the TIP, i.e. review and approval processes. Timing is highlighted in yellow.]*

- **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**
  - The TIP shall be the result of a cooperative, open, and informed process that balances local, regional, and state input and priorities.
  - The state, regional, and municipal members of the Boston Region MPO shall work in a unified, timely, and cooperative manner to develop and establish priorities for the TIP.
  - The Boston Region MPO shall discuss and decide on the TIP development process for the upcoming TIP in the first quarter of each federal fiscal year (October-December). The process shall be documented in the TIP Development Memorandum to the MPO [and shall provide for:]
    - the collection of current information about projects to be considered for programming
    - review and possible revision of TIP project-selection criteria
    - application of the criteria in project evaluations
    - maintenance of certain lists of projects, such as ... the “First Tier” set of projects
  - The [TIP selection] criteria shall **be reviewed each year** and updated and improved as needed.
- **Improvement of TIP-Related Information**
  - **TIP Project Information and Dissemination**

*[Note that this section of information is also relevant or perhaps more relevant for the “Information Sharing” portion of the Operations Plan]*

    - The implementing agencies shall keep the Boston Region MPO informed of project status on a regular basis to support MPO

planning and programming and to enable the Boston Region MPO to notify project sponsors of the outstanding issues that could cause the project to be deferred to a subsequent fiscal year. **At least quarterly and on request**, the implementing agencies shall submit this information to the Boston Region MPO Chair and staff for coordination and for distribution to the MPO members. This information shall include project status and other issues of interest to the MPO members and shall be compiled from all available resources, including municipalities, regional entities, state transportation agencies, and other sources. Boston Region MPO member municipalities shall provide needed and relevant information to Boston Region MPO staff for dissemination to the full Boston Region MPO. Staff shall utilize appropriate and up-to-date information systems for maintaining, processing, analyzing, and reporting information.

- **At the end of the federal fiscal year**, the state agencies shall offer a full summary of how projects fared in the previous fiscal year before asking the Boston Region MPO to vote on the new TIP.
- Boston Region MPO staff shall have primary responsibility for informing local governments regarding transportation funding and for collecting local input to the Boston Region MPO. All members of the Boston Region MPO, however, shall have a role in informing local governments about transportation aid and the programming process and in considering local input to the Boston Region MPO.

### **Considerations from the [2019 Certification Review](#)**

- The BRMPO should develop an operations plan, as called for in its MOU. An operations plan should clarify roles and responsibilities among BRMPO members and staff, particularly among CTPS, MAPC, and MassDOT, pertaining to collaboration, communication, work assignments, and products.

### **Questions for Discussion**

- What questions do you have about the work flow as it currently occurs and is documented here? A very simple summary is that:
  - Staff produce a work product through an internal QA/QC process.
  - That work product is then submitted for review at OTP or with a non-MPO funder.
  - While that work product is being reviewed, staff add it to the list of potential agenda items for review at agenda setting meetings.
  - Once the work product is reviewed and finalized through OTP or a non-MPO funder, staff prepare a presentation of the work in time for the meeting date selected at agenda setting meetings.
  - The Chair and Vice Chair decide jointly when work products are presented at MPO meetings.

- How should the process for MPO work product reviews be adjusted?
- What presentations of work products or processes are you **most** interested in hearing about at the Board meetings?
- What presentations of work products or processes are you **least** interested in hearing about at the Board meetings?
- Are you satisfied with the level of information you receive at board meetings about agency-funded (non-MPO funded) work?

### **Draft Operations Plan Elements: MPO Work Products and Flow:**

- Existing MPO Work Products

The following are MPO work products and programs produced and operated by MPO staff that support the continuing, cooperative and comprehensive (3C) transportation planning process for the Boston region:

- Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- Congestion Management Process (CMP)
- Air Quality Conformity (AQ)
- Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan)
- Public Engagement Plan (PEP)
- MPO Title VI Report
- Language Assistance Plan (LAP)
- Freight Plan
- Work scopes for studies to be completed
- MPO Board agendas and meeting minutes
- MPO Committee agendas and meeting minutes
- Completed MPO studies

- MPO Workflow and Review Process

Prior to bringing a work product to the MPO Board, staff completes a number of quality assurance checks internally before sharing these products with the MassDOT MPO Liaison (or appropriate MassDOT staff) for review and approval before being presented to the MPO Board. Most product reviews are completed by the Boston MPO's liaison or specialized OTP staff. While three weeks are provided for this review, most products are turned around much more quickly than that. The work products are as follows:

1. MPO Certification Documents (specifically the LRTP, TIP, AQ, Coordinated Plan, PEP, Title VI Report, LAP and Freight Plan)
  - These certification docs are developed in consultation with and approved by the board
  - Each document lead by a staff Project or Program Manager

2. MPO Certification Documents (specifically UPWP and CMP)
  - The UPWP is developed in consultation with and reviewed by the UPWP Committee before approval by the full board.
  - The CMP is developed in consultation with and reviewed by the CMP committee before approval by the full board
  - Each document lead by a staff Project or Program Manager
3. MPO Board meeting agendas
  - The Manager of MPO Activities coordinates with MPO staff, the MPO liaison, and the MPO Vice Chair to develop a list of potential agenda items for upcoming meetings.
  - The MPO Chair, MPO Vice Chair, MPO Liaison, CTPS Executive Director, CTPS Deputy Executive Director, CTPS Director of Planning and Policy, and CTPS Manager of MPO Activities meet 10 days prior to a scheduled MPO meeting to discuss the list of potential agenda items and any additional items brought by the chair and vice chair.
  - Meeting agendas are determined during this meeting, and staff then proceeds with internal processes to review and post agendas as decided at the planning meeting.
  - MPO meetings are held the first and third Thursday of the month, and MPO agendas are posted one week in advance of the planned MPO Board meeting
4. MPO Meeting minutes
  - Meeting minutes must be approved by the MPO Board every 30 days or by the third meeting after the minutes were taken, whichever is later, as outlined by the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law (OML).
  - MPO staff drafts meeting minutes in a timely fashion to comply with OML. Once meeting minutes are completed and have gone through an internal MPO review process, they are shared with the MassDOT MPO Liaison for review at least one week in advance of the planned MPO Board meeting.
  - Comments and feedback from the MPO liaison are then incorporated into the minutes
  - MPO meeting minutes are posted one week in advance of a planned MPO Board meeting where they are approved by the Board
5. MPO Committee agendas
  - MPO committee agendas are reviewed and approved by the designated MPO committee Chair before being posted at least one week before a scheduled meeting.
  - Agenda topics are decided by the committee chair and the MPO staff assigned to work with the committee. For example, the UPWP Program Manager is designated to work with the Chair of the UPWP Committee
  - Meeting agendas are decided at least 10 days in advance of a planned meeting

- MPO committee meetings are typically held the hour before or the hour after an MPO meeting on either the first or third thursday of the month
- MPO committee agendas are posted one week in advance of a planned MPO committee meeting
- 6. MPO Committee minutes
  - MPO staff drafts meeting minutes in a timely fashion to comply with OML.
  - MPO Committee minutes are reviewed and approved by the Committee Chair before being posted at least one week before a scheduled meeting.
  - Like MPO Board meeting minutes, Committee meeting minutes must follow the requirements for meeting minutes under the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law
  - MPO Committee minutes are posted one week in advance of a planned MPO Board meeting
- 7. MPO work scopes and discrete study products
  - Work scoping is generally completed under administrative/overhead time since a project is not yet underway. However, if some portion of the intended work scope, such as research to develop a methodology, is needed before a work scope can be completed, up to 10% of a project budget may be spent on a work scope.
  - Staff draft work scope/work product, complete internal review, and send to MPO liaison for review, ideally three weeks before the MPO meeting to allow for review within two weeks and one week advance posting to the MPO. When appropriate, the MPO staff and liaison may identify relevant technical staff at MassDOT and/or MBTA to review the scope before submitting to the MPO Board.
  - The MPO liaison at OTP and other relevant MassDOT staff review, provide feedback to be incorporated before finalized, While being reviewed, staff add the scope/study product to the list of items to be considered at the agenda-setting meeting.
  - Determination as to whether and when each item is presented is decided at the agenda-setting meeting 10 days prior to the meeting by the chair and co-chair in coordination with the ED and MPO staff
  - Final work scope/work product is posted one week in advance of the MPO board meeting
  - Board members discuss and vote to approve work scopes
- Agency-funded studies and technical analyses
 

Similar to MPO work scopes and discrete study products as described in Item #7 above, the process for agency-funded studies only differs as follows:

  - Staff draft work scope/work product, complete internal review, and send to both the funding agency and the MPO liaison for review, ideally three weeks before the MPO meeting.

- The funding agency and MPO liaison at OTP, and in some cases other relevant MassDOT staff review, provide feedback to be incorporated before finalized.