

MPO Meeting Minutes

Draft Memorandum for the Record

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

February 16, 2023, Meeting

10:00 AM–12:30 PM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

David Mohler, Chair, representing Gina Fiandaca, 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 January 19, 2023
- Endorse Federal Fiscal Years (FFYs) 2023–27 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment Three
- Approve the work scope for the Lab and Municipal Parking Study
- Approve calendar year 2023 bridge and pavement condition targets

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

See attendance on page 11.

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 announced the departure of two long-term MPO staff members: Jonathan Church, Manager of MPO Activities, and Michelle Scott, the Long-Range Transportation Plan Manager. T. Teich invited J. Church and M. Scott to address the board.

T. Teich stated that the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) is currently hiring for four positions: Manager of MPO Activities, Manager of Planning and Policy, Manager of Multimodal Planning and Design, and Program Manager of the Long-Range Transportation Plan.

4. Public Comments

Brad Rawson, City of Somerville, spoke in support of the work scope for the Lab and Municipal Parking Study. Related to the TIP, B. Rawson encouraged MBTA staff to propose implementation-ready projects early in the TIP cycle and for those projects to benefit communities outside of the Inner Core.

Alex Train, City of Chelsea Director of Housing and Community Development, spoke in support of the Park and Pearl Street Reconstruction in Chelsea, which was discussed in Agenda Item 11, TIP Project Readiness Updates. A. Train stated that the project design is 25 percent complete and is on track to have the design finalized by the end of FFY 2024. The reconstruction will revitalize parts of Chelsea's downtown, abate air pollution, and function as pedestrian access to schools.

5. Committee Chairs' Reports

Derek Krevat, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (OTP), stated that the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Committee will meet following this meeting to discuss the FFY 2024 UPWP development timeline.

Brian Kane, MBTA Advisory Board, stated that the Administration and Finance Committee met before this meeting to continue work on the Operations Plan related to the Executive Director hiring process. The next meeting will continue this discussion.

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

Lenard Diggins, Chair of the Regional Transportation Advisory Council, stated that the February 8, 2023, meeting had presentations from Betsy Harvey, MPO Staff, about MPO equity work and Srilekha Murthy, MPO Staff, featuring a brainstorming session for FFY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program study ideas.

7. Action Item: Approval of January 19, 2023, MPO Meeting Minutes *Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar*

1. [January 19, 2023, Meeting Minutes \(pdf\)](#)
2. [January 19, 2023, Meeting Minutes \(html\)](#)

Vote

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of January 19, 2023, was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane) and seconded by the City of Somerville (Tom Bent). The motion carried through a roll call vote.

8. Action Item: Federal Fiscal Years (FFYs) 2023–27 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment Three—*Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [FFYs TIP Amendment Three \(pdf\)](#)
2. [FFYs TIP Amendment Three \(html\)](#)

Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff, presented the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment Three for endorsement, following the conclusion of the 21-day public comment period. Amendment Three proposes the bundling of the Boston Deck Replacement for Cambridge Street over Interstate 90 and the Lincoln Street Pedestrian Overpass with the Allston Multimodal Project (Project #612624). In addition, Amendment Three proposes a design earmark for the Centre Street/Central Avenue Bridge design in Dover (Project #612978) and the programming of multiple Community Transit Grant awards.

Two comments were received during the public comment period. One was a request for safer pedestrian infrastructure and accessible demand-response service in Natick. Another was a comment in support of the new Community Transit Grants.

Vote

A motion to endorse the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment Three, was made by the MBTA Advisory Council (B. Kane) and seconded by the Inner Core Committee, City of Somerville (T. Bent). The motion carried through a roll call vote.

9. Action Item: Work Scope for the Lab and Municipal Parking Study—*Rosemary McCarron*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [Work Scope for Lab and Municipal Parking Study \(pdf\)](#)
2. [Work Scope for Lab and Municipal Parking Study \(html\)](#)

Rosemary McCarron, MPO Staff, presented the work scope for the Lab and Municipal Parking Study. Objectives for the study include gaining a better understanding of the growing lab and life sciences industry in the Boston region and expanding upon the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's (MAPC) Perfect Fit Parking study to develop a methodology to study supply and demand for parking at lab and life science facilities.

The study contains four general tasks. Task One involves gathering information about the expanding lab and life sciences industry in the region and reviewing parking policy regarding the regulation of parking at lab and life science facilities. In Task Two, staff

will interview stakeholders to gain insight into the travel and parking patterns of those who work in the facilities. Task Three involves using the information in Tasks One and Two to develop a methodology for data collection and analysis. Task Four is the production of a technical memorandum to summarize the findings of the study and recommend a methodology for conducting parking utilization studies at lab and life science facilities.

Discussion

Jim Fitzgerald, Boston Planning and Development Agency, stated that lab loading needs should be included in the work scope.

B. Kane stated his support of the work scope.

Dennis Giombetti, City of Framingham, asked if communities have been identified to participate in the study and advocated for geographic diversity when selecting communities. R. McCarron responded that communities will be chosen during the study and geographic diversity will be considered.

Susan Barrett, Town of Lexington, noted that developers often have difficulty finding lenders when the developments have limited parking and asked if the study will address this issue. S. Barrett also asked if the study would examine travel demand management (TDM). R. McCarron responded that the study can investigate pressures that developers face and that TDM is outside of the work scope, but it can be a potential future study idea.

Ali Kleyman, MBTA, stated that a potential interview question in Task Two could be used to analyze how existing lab developments manage their parking.

Melisa Tintocalis, Town of Burlington, asked if the study will analyze mixed-use development, particularly developments that combine lab and office spaces.

Vote

A motion to endorse the work scope for the Lab and Municipal Parking Study, was made by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins) and seconded by the North Suburban Planning Council, Town of Burlington (Melisa Tintocalis). The motion carried through a roll call vote.

10. Action Item: Bridge and Pavement Condition Targets—*Jack Moran and Annabel Shein, Massachusetts Department of Transportation Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar*

1. [Bridge and Pavement Condition Targets Memo \(pdf\)](#)
2. [Bridge and Pavement Condition Targets Memo \(html\)](#)

Jack Moran, MassDOT, presented six bridge and pavement condition targets set by MassDOT and adopted by the Commonwealth for MPO approval. The Federal Highway Administration has created thresholds that classify bridges or pavement as being in good or poor condition. Approximately 37 percent of the Interstate System within Massachusetts falls within the Boston region, while 35 percent of non-interstate roads are within the Boston region. Current conditions reflect 41.6 percent of non-interstate pavement in good or excellent condition, while 34.7 percent of non-interstate pavement is in poor condition. Pavement condition targets are as follows:

- Calendar Year (CY) 2023 National Highway System (NHS) Percent Good Pavement Target: 70%
- CY 2025 NHS Percent Good Pavement Target: 70%
- CY 2023 NHS Percent Poor Pavement Target: 2%
- CY 2025 NHS Percent Poor Pavement Target: 2%
- CY 2023 Non-NHS Percent Good Pavement Target : 30%
- CY 2025 Non-NHS Percent Good Pavement Target : 30%
- CY 2023 Non-NHS Percent Poor Pavement Target : 5%
- CY 2025 Non-NHS Percent Poor Pavement Target : 5%

The Boston Region contains 844 NHS bridges. Approximately 15.66 percent of NHS bridges in the Boston region are in good condition, while 12.92 percent of NHS bridges in the region are in poor condition. Bridge condition targets are as follows:

- CY 2023 NHS Percent Good Bridge Target: 16%
- CY 2025 NHS Percent Good Bridge Target: 16%
- CY 2023 NHS Percent Poor Bridge Target: 12%
- CY 2025 NHS Percent Poor Bridge Target: 12%

Vote

A motion to endorse the bridge and pavement condition targets was made by the MBTA Advisory Council (B. Kane) and seconded by the MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried through a roll call vote.

11. FFYs 2024–28 TIP Project Readiness Updates—*Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. [FFYs 2024–28 TIP Project Readiness \(pdf\)](#)
2. [FFYs 2024–28 TIP Project Readiness \(html\)](#)

E. Lapointe presented the status of projects programmed in the FFYs 2024–28 TIP, which were discussed during MassDOT’s TIP Readiness Day. Information on impacted regional target projects can be found below:

- FFYs 2024–28 Regional Target TIP Project Readiness Cost Increases
 - The FFY 2023 Lowell and Woburn Street in Wilmington’s cost increased by 9.16 percent, creating a revised budget of \$7,031,311.
 - The FFY 2024 Justice Cushing Highway in Cohasset’s cost increased by 40.78 percent, with a revised budget of \$17,611,835.
 - The FFY 2024 Reconstruction of Foster Street in Littleton’s cost increased by 34.52 percent, with a revised budget of \$5,370,950.
 - The FFY 2024 Independence Greenway Extension in Peabody’s cost increased by 33.13 percent, with a revised budget of \$5,221,550.
 - The FFY 2024 Interstate 495/Route 1A Ramp Reconfiguration in Wrentham’s cost increased by 34.22 percent, with a revised budget of \$20,922,344.
- FFYs 2024–28 Regional Target TIP Readiness Cost Decreases
 - The FFY 2025 Route 3A Improvements including Summer Street in Hingham’s cost decreased by 3.70 percent, with a revised budget of \$15,018,900.
 - The FFY 2026 Community Path in Belmont, the Town of Belmont’s component of the Mass Central Rail Trail, has a cost decrease of 3.57 percent, with a revised budget of \$20,283,154.
 - The FFY 2026 Boston Post Road at Wellesley Street Intersection Improvement in Weston’s cost decreased by 18.50 percent, with a revised budget of \$2,185,303.
 - The FFY 2026 Route 30 Reconstruction in Weston’s cost decreased by 3.57 percent, with a revised budget of \$16,420,119.
 - The FFY 2027 Rehabilitation of Washington Street in Brookline’s cost decreased by 3.45 percent, with a revised cost of \$28,995,267.
- FFYs 2024–28 TIP Regional Target Readiness High-Risk Projects

- The FFY 2023 Bridge Street Reconstruction in Beverly's cost increased by 8.4 percent, with a revised budget of \$8,839,401. MassDOT has categorized this project as high-risk due to utility concerns.
- The FFYs 2023–24 Mount Auburn Street Rehabilitation in Watertown's cost increased by 2.4 percent. MassDOT has categorized this project as high-risk due to the advertisement date's proximity to the end of FFY 2023.
- The FFY 2026 Park and Pearly Street Reconstruction in Chelsea's cost decreased by 3.4 percent, with a revised budget of \$11,705,708. MassDOT has categorized this project as high-risk due to coordination needed with the McArdle Bridge Rehabilitation.
- FFY 2024 Regional Target TIP Readiness Delay Recommendations
 - The Cherry Street and Rail Crossing Rehabilitation in Ashland was recommended to be delayed to FFY 2025 due to concerns with MBTA coordination, right-of-way takings, and the requirement to potentially go through the Article 97 process, which involves legislative action and adds additional length to the project development process.
 - The Boylston Street Reconstruction in Boston was recommended to be delayed to FFY 2025 due to concerns with subsurface utilities and the need for a public design hearing. Additionally, the project will be required to go through the Article 97 process.
 - The Essex Street Reconstruction in Lynn was recommended to be delayed to FFY 2025 due to concerns with design development and the large size of the project.
 - The Resurfacing of Central and South Main Streets in Ipswich was recommended to be delayed to FFY 2026 due to concerns about utilities, right-of-way, and lack of recent design progress.
- FFYs 2025–28 Regional Target TIP Readiness Delay Recommendations
 - The Woburn Common Project was recommended to be delayed from FFY 2025 to FFY 2026 due to concerns with design coordination, the need for an Environmental Justice (EJ) Environmental Impact Report (EIR), the Article 97 process, and lack of right-of-way plans.
 - The Rutherford Avenue Reconstruction in Boston was recommended to be delayed from FFYs 2025–28 to begin funding in FFY 2028 due to concerns with design coordination. Specifically, the last official design submission is more than two years old and there is not yet agreement on how accommodation of bus rapid transit will be incorporated. Additionally, the project involves 27 takings and 76 permanent easements and there is a need for an EJ EIR as well as the Article 97 process.

- The Intersection Improvements at Route 1 and University Avenue in Norwood was recommended to be delayed from FFYs 2025–26 to FFYs 2026–27 due to concerns with utilities, stormwater, and wetlands. Additionally, there are 29 state right-of-way cases and the 75 percent design submission has not yet been received.
- The Rail Trail Construction in Swampscott was recommended to be delayed from FFY 2027 to FFY 2028 due to concerns with right-of-way and design coordination, as well as utility coordination with National Grid. Right-of-way plans have not yet been received and there is not yet agreement on a preferred alternative for design.

Discussion

D. Giombetti asked for further detail on the delayed Cherry Street and Rail Crossing Rehabilitation in Ashland. E. Lapointe responded that the delay is due to a lack of available inspectors and engineers to conduct the work.

Jay Monty, City of Everett, asked for further information from MassDOT and the MBTA regarding potential projects that can be accelerated due to the funding gap that project delays have created.

B. Kane noted that the Cherry Street and Rail Crossing Rehabilitation in Ashland is a priority for the Town of Ashland and advocated for steps to be taken to keep it in FFY 2024.

L. Diggins asked for further detail on the Mount Auburn Street Rehabilitation in Watertown's high-risk designation. E. Lapointe responded that the project is marked as high-risk due to its budget of approximately \$25 million and the advertisement date's proximity to the end of the fiscal year, which can result in funding shifts across multiple fiscal years. John Bechard, MassDOT Highway Division, stated that MassDOT is collaborating with MBTA personnel, the City of Watertown, and other relevant agencies to keep the Watertown project set for a FFY 2024 advertising date.

William Conroy, Boston Transportation Department, stated that the City of Boston is committed to working with MassDOT and MBTA staff to produce a conceptual design of Rutherford Avenue to move forward with the project.

A. Kleyman stated that the MBTA is creating its Capital Investment Plan and will bring a list of potential projects to the MPO once further decisions have been made.

Rich Benevento, WorldTech Engineering, provided updates on the Bridge Street Reconstruction in Beverly and the Mount Auburn Street Rehabilitation in Watertown.

12. Community Connections Shuttles Performance Update (NewMo and Royall Street Shuttles)—*Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff*

E. Lapointe presented ridership information to the board pertaining to the Royall Street Shuttles, with data provided by the Neponset Valley Transportation Management Association (NVTMA). The Royall Street Shuttles provide last-mile transportation for individuals traveling to work in Canton, with service to the MBTA Red Line and commuter rail.

Throughout calendar year 2022, the average monthly ridership of the shuttles was 178 passengers, with 27 unique riders a month. The shuttles are funded through MPO funds and partnerships with nearby businesses, which allow employees to ride free of charge. Individuals unaffiliated with partner businesses can ride for two dollars. Feedback from shuttle users has been positive. An October 2022 Rider Satisfaction Survey with 26 respondents indicated that 20 of the respondents do not have access to a vehicle.

David Koses, City of Newton, stated that the NewMo shuttle service has been frequently used by seniors and high school students to travel throughout Newton.

Josh Ostroff, City of Newton Planning Department, stated that NewMo recently surpassed 100,000 riders, with demand outpacing supply.

Discussion

D. Mohler requested supplemental information about monthly and daily ridership and the cost per rider. B. Kane requested information on the cost per trip.

Karen Dumaine, NVTMA, stated that the Royall Street Shuttles have been running for approximately one year and there is potential for ridership growth due to the concentration of businesses in the area.

S. Barrett encouraged the MPO to view transportation services from a holistic perspective.

13. Members' Items

D. Giombetti requested a discussion of whether the MPO should return to in-person or hybrid meetings to be added to an upcoming agenda. B. Kane advocated for determining if a different day of the week to hold MPO meetings is possible.

L. Diggins requested information regarding the decision-making process for taking out grant anticipation notes and other debts.

14. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins). The motion carried.

DRAFT

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)	Joshua Ostroff
At-Large Town (Town of Brookline)	Marisa Lau
City of Boston (Boston Planning & Development Agency)	Robert King
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Jim Fitzgerald
Federal Highway Administration	William Conroy
Federal Transit Administration	Cassandra
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Ostrander
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Kenneth Miller
MassDOT Highway Division	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	Brad Rawson
Massachusetts Port Authority	David Mohler
MBTA Advisory Board	John Bechard
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	John Romano
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham)	Ali Kleyman
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Acton)	Sarah Lee
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)	Brian Kane
North Suburban Planning Council (Town of Burlington)	Amira Patterson
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Eric Bourassa
South Shore Coalition (Town of Hull)	Dennis Giombetti
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	Darlene Wynne
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce)	Melisa Tintocalis
	Lenard Diggins
	Jennifer Constable
	Tom O'Rourke
	Steve Olanoff

Other Attendees	Affiliation
John Alessi	City of Malden
Karl Allen	City of Chelsea
Colette Aufranc	
Susan Barrett	Town of Lexington
Rich Benevento	
Miranda Briseño	MassDOT
Paul Cobuzzi	
Wes Edwards	MBTA
Maria Foster	Brookline Council on Aging
Valerie Gingrich	
Joy Glynn	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
Stephanie Groll	City of Cambridge
Michelle Ho	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (OTP)
Sandy Johnston	MBTA
Joshua Kingenstein	MBTA
Derek Krevat	MassDOT OTP
Daniel L. Engelberg	
Josh Levin	MassDOT District 4
Ibrahim Lopez-Hernandez	North Suffolk Office of Resilience and Sustainability
Owen MacDonald	Town of Weymouth
Holly MacMullen	Conservation Law Foundation
Jordan Martin	Circuit
Yadira Martinez	Boston Mutual, NVTMA Member
Jack Moran	MassDOT
Shona Norman	Cape Ann Transportation Authority
Linda Orel	The Trustees
Josh Ostroff	City of Newton, Planning Department
Jon Rockwell	TEC, Inc.
Mark Schieldrop	
Cheryll-Ann Senior	MassDOT District 5
Annabel Shein	MassDOT
Derek Shooster	MassDOT
Tyler Terrasi	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
Alex Train	City of Chelsea
Karen Dumaine	Neponset Valley TMA
Andrew Wang	MassDOT OTP
Sgalimore	(full name not provided)
gciampa	(full name not provided)

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Tegin Teich, Executive Director
Silva Ayvazyan
Logan Casey
Jonathan Church
Annette Demchur
Julie Dombroski
Sophie Fox
Hiral Gandhi
Betsy Harvey
Ryan Hicks
Stella Jordan
Heyne Kim
Ethan Lapointe
Erin Maguire
Rose McCarron
Martin Milkovits
Rebecca Morgan
Srilekha Murthy
Gina Perille
Bradley Putnam
Sean Rourke
Michelle Scott
Judy Taylor
Sam Taylor

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A complaint form and additional information can be obtained by contacting the MPO or at http://www.bostonmpo.org/mpo_non_discrimination. To request this information in a different language or in an accessible format, please contact

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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