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

July 20, 2023, Meeting

10:00 AM-11:40 AM, 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 May 18, 2023
- Approve the Transit Transformation work scope
- Endorse the *Destination 2050* Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- Endorse the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- Endorse the FFYs 2023–27 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
   Amendment Eight
- Endorse the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment Nine
- Waive the public review period and endorse the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment
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- Release the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment 11 for its 21-day public review period
- Endorse the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Adjustment Four
- Approve the MPO Operations Plan
- Approve the MPO Communication Norms

### **Meeting Agenda**

### 1. Introductions

See attendance on page 13.

### 2. Chair's Report—David Mohler, MassDOT

D. Mohler stated that the ad hoc Memorandum of Understanding Committee will be chaired by the Inner Core Committee, City of Somerville (Tom Bent). The committee consists of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) (Eric Bourassa), the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Lenard Diggins), the MetroWest Regional

Collaborative, City of Framingham (Dennis Giombetti), the MBTA Advisory Board (Brian Kane), the MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (Derek Krevat), the City of Boston (Matthew Moran), and the MassDOT Highway Division (John Romano).

# **3. Executive Director's Report**—Tegin Teich, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff

- T. Teich stated that three new staff members joined the agency in July: Rounaq Basu as the Manager of Multimodal Planning and Design, Chandler Jong as a Data Scientist-Travel Demand Modeler, and Paris Charitatos as a Data Scientist-Travel Demand Modeler. T. Teich stated that two staff members will be leaving the agency in August. Open positions include the Manager of MPO Activities, two Senior Transportation Planners, and a Principal Analyst/Travel Demand Modeler.
- T. Teich stated that staff participated in a peer exchange hosted by the MAPC and funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The peer exchange focused on investments in engaging diverse constituents and best practices for public engagement. Contact Sean Rourke (<a href="mailto:srourke@ctps.org">srourke@ctps.org</a>) for more information.

### 4. Public Comments

Representative Christine Barber and Senator Pat Jehlen advocated for the inclusion of the Mystic Valley Parkway station on Route 16, part of the Green Line Extension Phase Two (GLX2) project, in the *Destination 2050* LRTP. Rep. Barber stated that the MPO previously programmed \$150 million for the station, but in 2016 the MPO decided to reallocate funds to support the implementation of the Green Line Extension Phase One project. Rep. Barber stated that when the MPO took this vote, then Secretary of Transportation Stephanie Pollack committed to bringing the GLX2 project through environmental permitting, which has not yet begun. Rep. Barber spoke of the regional support for the project.

### 5. Committee Chairs' Reports

D. Krevat stated that the UPWP Committee voted to recommend for the full MPO board to vote to endorse the FFY 2024 UPWP. The next meeting of the UPWP Committee will be on July 27, 2023, to discuss budgetary adjustments to the current FFY 2023 UPWP.

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

L. Diggins stated that the previous Advisory Council meeting was dedicated to drafting comment letters. There will be no meeting in August.

### 7. Action Item: Approval of May 18, 2023, MPO Meeting Minutes Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. May 18, 2023, MPO Meeting Minutes (pdf) (html)

### Vote

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of May 18, 2023, was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) (Eric Bourassa) and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (Brian Kane). The motion carried.

# 8. Action Item: Transit Transformation Work Scope—Logan Casey, MPO Staff

### Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. Transit Transformation Work Scope (pdf) (html)

L. Casey stated that the Transit Transformation work scope has a budget of \$34,246 over eight weeks, using funding originally allocated toward the Transit Modernization discrete study included in the FFY 2023 UPWP. The Transit Transformation program was created in the *Destination 2050* LRTP and envisioned to support projects that do the following:

- Enhance amenities for transit customers
- Improve accessibility of the transit system
- Increase capacity of transit stations and improve multimodal connections
- Make state-of-good-repair improvements to transit assets, including tracks, signals, and power systems
- Modernize transit fleets through the purchase of vehicles and upgrades to maintenance facilities
- Make investments in climate resiliency to support the future security of transit infrastructure, including system electrification

Objectives of the program are to review best practices at other MPOs and solicit feedback from stakeholders on potential projects to be funded, define the process for determining needs and evaluating projects, and recommend project types for funding in future TIPs.

In task one, staff will conduct a literature review and host workshops and meetings with the MPO board, Regional Transportation Advisory Council, and transit authorities. In task two, staff will develop a model for program administration and project evaluation criteria. In task three, staff will present the draft program to the board and lead a discussion. This feedback will be incorporated and presented to the board as the final Transit Transformation program.

### Discussion

M. Moran asked how staff plan to coordinate with municipalities and other stakeholders. L. Casey stated that municipality engagement will primarily occur in the Advisory Council workshop.

Ali Kleyman, MBTA, stated that it would be helpful to discuss the size and budget of projects within this program and challenges that occur when managing and administering low-budget projects.

### Vote

A motion to approve the Transit Transformation work scope was made by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins) and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane). The motion carried.

- 9. **Action Item: Destination 2050 LRTP**—Bradley Putnam, MPO Staff Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar
  - 1. Destination 2050 (pdf) (html)
  - 2. Destination 2050 Appendices (html)
  - 3. Summary of Public Comments (pdf) (html)
  - 4. Compiled Public Comment Letters (pdf)
- B. Putnam stated that the LRTP contains an overview of the document; vision, goals, and objectives; the structure of investment programs; funding allocations to respective programs; and recommended projects. The appendices contain information on public engagement activities, the universe of projects, an air quality analysis, a financial report, a system performance report, and a Transportation Equity performance report.

The public comment period was open from June 16, 2023, to July 16, 2023, when 18 written public comments and 67 verbal comments were received at in-person engagement events. Publicity methods included the MPO website, email lists, social media posts, direct outreach to stakeholders, and paper brochures in six languages. Public engagement events included meetings with the Regional Transportation Advisory Council, subregions, and advocacy groups. In-person events were held at locations including the Mattapan Farmers' Market, Framingham Farmers' Market, and Boston Open Streets. Themes of public comments included resilience, bicycles and pedestrians, projects and investment programs, and the equity analysis.

Staff requested the board vote to endorse the 2023 LRTP, *Destination 2050*.

### Discussion

Kenneth Miller, FHWA, suggested that the funding tables in the main document of the LRTP include information about all the federal funding dollars that flow through the MPO, instead of limiting the tables to the Regional Target funds that the MPO has discretion over. E. Bourassa added that it could be helpful to add an explanation of the formula funds for the region.

Brad Rawson, Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville), spoke of the public comment from Representative Barber and Senator Jehlen about the GLX2 project and the need to continue coalition building around the project and usher it through the environmental permitting process.

L. Diggins thanked those who provided public comments on the LRTP.

Steve Olanoff, Three Rivers Interlocal Council (TRIC), spoke about the Canton Interchange in the TRIC subregion and its importance to the region.

### Vote

A motion to endorse the *Destination 2050* LRTP was made by the MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the City of Newton (Josh Ostroff). The motion carried.

- 10. Action Item: FFY 2024 UPWP—Srilekha Murthy, MPO Staff Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar
  - 1. FFY 2024 UPWP (pdf) (html)
  - 2. FFY 2024 UPWP Executive Summary (pdf) (html)
  - 3. FFY 2024 UPWP Appendices (html)
- S. Murthy stated that six comments were received during the public comment period: three from members of the public, one from the Advisory Council, and two from partner agencies (MassDOT and the MBTA). Comments included the topics of advocacy to expand electric vehicle charging infrastructure, incorporate bicycle and pedestrian issues in planning work, and work towards climate adaptation and mitigation, and a question about the MTBA Green Line Extension project.
- S. Murthy stated that minor text edits were made to the document during the public comment period.

Staff requested the board vote to endorse the FFY 2024 UPWP.

### Vote

A motion to endorse the FFY 2024 UPWP was made by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins) and seconded by the MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

# 11. Action Item: FFYs 2023-27 TIP Amendment Eight—Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff

### Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment Eight (pdf) (html)

E. Lapointe stated that the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment Eight proposes a cost increase and delay for Project #607342—Milton Intersection Improvements at Route 28 and Chickatawbut Road. No public comments were received during the public review period. Staff requested the board vote to endorse Amendment Eight.

### Vote

A motion to endorse the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment Eight was made by the MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins). The motion carried.

# 12. Action Item: FFYs 2023-27 TIP Amendment Nine—Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff

### Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment Nine (pdf) (html)

E. Lapointe stated that the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment Nine proposes programming of FFY 2023 Community Project Funding to support electric vehicle charging infrastructure in Cambridge. No comments were received during the 21-day public review period.

Staff requested the board vote to endorse Amendment Nine.

### Vote

A motion to endorse the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment Nine was made by the Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Steve Olanoff, Town of Norwood) and seconded by the MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

# 13. Action Item: FFYs 2023-27 TIP Amendment 10—Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff

### Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment 10 (pdf) (html)

### 2. Amendment 10 Van Classifications (pdf) (html)

E. Lapointe stated that FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment Ten proposes programming of the FFY 2023 MassDOT Community Transit Grant awards for Program Vehicles, found in Table 1. Staff requested that the board vote to waive the public comment period for Amendment Ten. A waived comment period is required to endorse Amendment Ten by August 3, 2023, to obligate Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding before fiscal books close.

Table 1
MassDOT SFY 2023 Community Transit Grant Program Vehicle Awards

Awardee	Description	Budget
CATA	Procurement of six LF vans at \$186,656 per van	\$1,119,936
MWRTA	Procurement of three replacement type E vans	\$318,000
	Procurement of two Ford E-Transit electric cargo	
MWRTA	vans	\$211,396
SCM Community		
Transportation	Procurement of replacement type E van	\$106,000
SCM Community		
Transportation	Procurement of a replacement type E2A van	\$116,700
Cohasset Elder Affairs	Purchase of replacement van	\$106,000
Hingham COA	Purchase of replacement van	\$186,656
Marblehead	Procurement of a replacement type A van	\$78,604
Marblehead	Procurement of a replacement type E van	\$106,000
Medfield COA	Procurement of a replacement type A van	\$78,604
Medfield COA	Procurement of a replacement type Cb van	\$113,500
Upham's Corner		
Health Committee	Purchase of a 30-foot bus	\$212,000
Upham's Corner	Purchase of a less than 30-foot bus for service	
Health Committee	expansion	\$106,000
Revere	Procurement of a replacement van	\$121,000
Hull COA	Procurement of a replacement type E van	\$121,000
Randolph	Purchase of a replacement van	\$121,000
Manchester	Replacement of a van with an electric van	\$105,698
Manchester	Procurement of a replacement E2B van	\$111,000

CATA = Cape Ann Transportation Authority. COA = Council on Aging. MWRTA = MetroWest Regional Transit Authority. SCM = Somerville, Cambridge, Medford. SFY = State Fiscal Year.

### **Discussion**

L. Diggins asked why the amendment was presented in a timeline that necessitates the public review period to be waived. E. Lapointe stated that the grants were programmed under the assumption that FTA books would be closed closer to the end of August or September, leading to a shortened timeline. D. Krevat stated that the timing of this TIP amendment is reliant on the MassDOT Rail and Transit Division's timing, as grant programming decisions are made by the division. D. Mohler stated that there are many processes that need to occur for FTA funding to be obligated to projects, leading to books closing early. Leah Sirmin, FTA, stated that projects must be included in the State TIP for grants to begin to be obligated and that the grant funds in the Community Transit Grant Program are lapsing at the end of FFY 2023.

#### Vote

A motion to waive the public review period and endorse the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment 10 was made by the City of Newton (J. Ostroff) and seconded by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins). The motion carried.

# 14. Action Item: FFYs 2023-27 TIP Amendment 11—Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment 11 (pdf) (html)

E. Lapointe stated that the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment 11 proposes the following:

- Cost increases for three FFY 2023 Statewide Highway projects and one Regional Target project
- Programming of two design earmarks in Marblehead and Brookline
- Deprogramming of anticipated MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA)
   Section 5339 Discretionary Grant line items

Project #608889, Framingham–Traffic Signal Installation at Edgell Road at Central Street, was originally budgeted for \$2,484,704 under a Regional Target program, the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funding program. The budget has increased by \$625,411, which will be funded using Statewide Highway funding in the Transportation Alternatives Program.

Table 2 FFY 2023 Statewide Highway Funds

Project ID and	Funding	Current	ga.y . aa.c	
Name	Source	Budget	New Budget	Explanation
608009: Boxborough – Bridge Replacement,				The budget for this project has increased following the advancing of project design and identification of additional needs for the structure. The original cost estimate for this project, and the one currently reflected in the
B-18-002, Route 111 over				FFYs 2023–27 TIP, was initially
I-495	HIP-BR	\$12,763,392	\$29,304,478	developed in 2014.
609254: Lynn – Intersection Improvements at Two Intersections	LIOID	ΦΕ 440 404	<b>#0.050.050</b>	The budget for this project is being revised to reflect the latest design
on Broadway	HSIP	\$5,413,401	\$6,059,056	estimate. The budget for this project is increasing to
608255: Stow– Bridge Replacement, S-29-011, Box Mill Road over Elizabeth	STBG-BR-			accommodate additional design elements meant to restore the streambed and embankments of
Brook	Off	\$3,454,408	\$4,250,386	the river.

BR-Off = Off-System Bridge. FFY = Federal Fiscal Year. HIP-BR = Highway Investment Program, Bridge. HSIP = Highway Safety Improvement Program. STBG = Surface Transportation Block Grant.

Table 3
FFY 2023 Earmark Discretionary Funds

Project ID and Name	Change Type	Funding Source	e Budget	Explanation
S12758:				This line item programs part of a
Marblehead –				federal earmark obtained through
Border to				FFY 2022 Congressionally
Boston Trail	New			Directed Spending for designing
Design	Projec	t Earmark	\$175,000	the Border to Boston Trail.
				This line item programs a
				\$2,000,000 FFY 2023
				Community Project Funding
				request to design the reopening
				and restoration of Fredrick Law
S12849: Brookline	Э			Olmsted and John Charles'
<ul><li>Beacon</li></ul>				original design for Beacon Street
Street Bridle				to incorporate a two-way multi-
Path Project	New			use path for 2.3 miles of the
Design	Projec	t Earmark	\$2,500,000	o roadway.

FFY = Federal Fiscal Year.

Table 4
FFY 2023 Transit Program—MWRTA

Project Name	Change Type	Former Budget
-		Duaget
RTD0011113: MWRTA – Competitive Revenue Vehicle	Remove	
Replacement	Project	\$585,200
	Remove	
RTD0011127: MWRTA – Back Entrance Project	Project	\$2,000,000
RTD0011129: MWRTA – Cochituate Rail Trail North	Remove	
Framingham Feasibility Study	Project	\$95,000

FFY = Federal Fiscal Year.

### Vote

A motion to release the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Amendment 11 for its 21-day public review period was made by the MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane). The motion carried.

# 15. Action Item: FFYs 2023-27 TIP Adjustment Four—Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff

E. Lapointe stated that the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Adjustment Four proposes one cost increase and source change for Project #610674, Newton—Reconstruction of Commonwealth Avenue (Route 30), from East of Auburn Street to Ash Street. The budget for the project has increased by \$258,001 to reflect the latest cost estimate. The project funding sources have been adjusted to include Transportation Alternatives Program funding.

#### Discussion

J. Ostroff stated that this project is part of an emerging shared-use path along Route 30.

### Vote

A motion to endorse the FFYs 2023–27 TIP Adjustment Four was made by the City of Newton (J. Ostroff) and seconded by the MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

### 16. Action Item: MPO Operations Plan and Communication Norms— Tegin Teich, Executive Director

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

- 1. Operations Plan (pdf) (html)
- 2. Communication Norms (pdf) (html)
- T. Teich stated that the Operations Plan and Communication Norms were presented to the board for review on June 15, 2023. T. Teich reviewed changes made to the document in response to comments and suggestions received. On page seven, the rules of a majority vote are clarified. Page eight has a clarification of the vice chair election process.
- T. Teich stated that feedback received at the previous meeting discussed the MPO member election process for municipal representation. The MBTA Advisory Board and MAPC, responsible for conducting elections, noted that the election process recently changed and decided to evaluate its effectiveness within this context once one full round of elections have occurred, which is three election cycles.

If the Operations Plan is approved, an appendix will be added with an annual timeline of key events to incorporate into the agenda-setting process. The Communication Norms, if approved, will be finalized and all members, designees, and alternatives will be asked for signatures of receipt.

### Discussion

D. Mohler asked if the draft Operations Plan authorizes the MPO to offer the Executive Director a multiyear employment agreement. T. Teich stated that the Operations Plan outlines potential options to consider but does not specify which option to pursue. D. Mohler asked which agency would be the contractor in the case of an employment agreement. T. Teich stated that additional research would need to be done if the board decided to pursue this option and added that the document has undergone a legal review to identify violations of legal requirements.

#### Vote

A motion to approve the MPO Operations Plan was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane) and seconded by the MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

#### Discussion

D. Mohler asked what the process is if there is a reported violation of the communication norms. T. Teich stated the reporting section of the document contains steps to report violations to the chair or vice-chair of the MPO to be investigated. They will then meet with the individual violating the norms. Potential consequences of repeated violations are outlined in the document.

#### Vote

A motion to approve the MPO Communication Norms was made by the MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane). The motion carried.

### 17. Members' Items

B. Rawson congratulated members of the staff and Administration and Finance Committee for their work on the Operations Plan and Communication Norms.

### 18. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the MAPC (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the City of Newton (J. Ostroff). The motion carried.

### Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
At-Large City (City of Everett)	
At-Large City (City of Newton)	Josh Ostroff
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	John Alessi
At-Large Town (Town of Brookline)	Rob King
City of Boston (Boston Planning & Development Agency)	Jim Fitzgerald
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Matt Moran
	Jen Rowe
Federal Highway Administration	Kenneth Miller
	Cassandra
	Ostrander
Federal Transit Administration	Leah Sirmin
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
, ,	Brad Rawson
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	David Mohler
·	John Bechard
MassDOT Highway Division	John Romano
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	Ali Kleyman
Massachusetts Port Authority	Sarah Lee
MBTA Advisory Board	Brian Kane
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Acton)	Kristen Guichard
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)	Darlene Wynne
North Suburban Planning Council (Town of Burlington)	,
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Lenard Diggins
South Shore Coalition (Town of Hull)	
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood)	Steve Olanoff

Other Attendees	Affiliation
Karl Allen	City of Chelsea
Fahran Bajaj	
Representative Christine	
Barber	34 <sup>th</sup> Middlesex District
Ross Bloom	Revvit Inc.
Sarah Bradbury	MassDOT District 3
Miranda Briseño	MassDOT
Johannes Epke	Conservation Law Foundation
Seth Gadbois	
Joy Glynn	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA)
Matt Hartman	
Senator Pat Jehlen	Second Middlesex District
Sandy Johnston	MBTA
Chris Klem	MassDOT
Josh Klingenstein	MBTA
Raissah Kouame	MassDOT
Derek Krevat	MassDOT
Jackie LaFlam	Cape Ann Transportation Authority
Owen MacDonald	Town of Weymouth
Benjamin Muller	MassDOT District 6
Jim Nee	MWRTA
Sheila Page	Town of Lexington
Cheryll-Ann Senior	MassDOT District 5
Jon Seward	MoveMassachusetts
Derek Shooster	MassDOT
Pat Sullivan	
Tyler Terrasi	MWRTA
Frank Tramontozzi	
Myles Tucker	Town of Needham
Julia Wallerce	MAPC
Chandler (full name not	
provided)	
Rebecca (full name not	
provided)	

### **MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff**

Tegin Teich, Executive Director

Logan Casey

Annette Demchur

Hiral Gandhi

Betsy Harvey

Marnie Kopec

Ethan Lapointe

Erin Maguire

Marty Milkovits

Srilekha Murthy

Meghan O'Connor

Gina Perille

Sarah Philbrick

**Bradley Putnam** 

Judy Taylor

Sam Taylor

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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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Relay Using TTY or Hearing Carry-over: 800.439.2370

Relay Using Voice Carry-over: 866.887.6619
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