

MPO Meeting Minutes

Memorandum for the Record

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

November 2, 2023, Meeting

10:00 AM–11:30 AM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

David Mohler, Chair, representing Monica Tibbits-Nutt, 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 September 21, 2023, and October 5, 2023, meetings
- Endorse the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Adjustment One

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

See attendance on page 7.

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

There was none.

3. New Member Introductions—*Julia Wallerice, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)*

J. Wallerice announced that the following municipalities were elected in the 2023 MPO municipal elections:

- At-Large City: City of Everett
- At-Large Town: Town of Brookline
- North Shore Planning Council, City of Beverly
- South West Advisory Planning Committee

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

T. Teich shared staffing updates and reviewed open job postings.

T. Teich stated that applications are now open for the FFYs 2025–29 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Staff will host TIP How-To sessions on November 2 at 3:00 PM and November 9 at 10:00 AM.

T. Teich stated that the next meeting will be the Annual Meeting, held on November 30, 2023.

5. Public Comments

Brad Rawson, Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville), spoke of efforts to engage the mayor of Somerville to attend the upcoming Annual Meeting and encouraged other board members to engage their mayors and select board chairs.

6. Committee Chairs' Reports

Derek Krevat, MassDOT, stated that the UPWP Committee met on October 26, 2023, and voted to recommend that the board votes to approve the FFY 2024 UPWP Amendment One.

Jen Rowe, City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department [BTD]), stated that the TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee met on October 19, 2023, for its first meeting and that the next meeting will be held in mid-December.

7. Regional Transportation Advisory Council Report—*Lenard Diggins, Chair, Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Advisory Council)*

L. Diggins stated that the upcoming November 8 Advisory Council meeting will discuss the MPO's freight program and the development of the next UPWP.

8. Action Item: Approval of September 21 and October 5, 2023, MPO Meeting Minutes

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. September 21, 2023, meeting minutes ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))
2. October 5, 2023, meeting minutes ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

Vote

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of September 21, 2023, was made by the BTD (J. Rowe) and seconded by the Town of Arlington (John Alessi). The motion carried.

Vote

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of October 5, 2023, was made by the Town of Arlington (J. Alessi) and seconded by the BTD (J. Rowe). The motion carried.

9. FFY 2024 UPWP Adjustment One—*Srilekha Murthy, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. FFY 2024 UPWP Adjustment One Memo ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))
2. FFY 2024 UPWP Adjustment One Redline ([pdf](#))
3. FFY 2024 UPWP Adjustment One ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))
4. FFY 2024 UPWP Executive Summary ([html](#))
5. FFY 2024 UPWP Appendices ([html](#))

S. Murthy stated that the FFY 2024 UPWP Adjustment One proposes the addition of the Federal Transit Authority's Areas of Persistent Poverty grant, awarded to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) to design bus charging infrastructure at Ashmont Station.

Vote

A motion to endorse the FFY 2024 UPWP Adjustment One was made by the Town of Arlington (J. Alessi) and seconded by the BTM (J. Rowe). The motion carried.

10. Vice-Chair Nominations—*David Mohler, Chair, and Tegin Teich, Executive Director*

D. Mohler stated that the vice-chair of the Boston Region MPO is nominated and elected annually. D. Mohler stated that vice-chair elections will occur at the November 30 Annual Meeting and asked members for their nominations.

Nominations

A motion to nominate MAPC for the vice-chair position was made by the MetroWest Regional Collaborative, City of Framingham (Dennis Giombetti) and seconded by the City of Somerville (Tom Bent).

J. Wallerce stated that the MAPC is interested in continuing to serve as vice-chair and stated that MAPC works to make the transportation planning process more transparent and brings a strong sense of regionalism to the board.

11. Solicitation of Committee Members—*Committee Chairs*

D. Mohler stated that committee chairs will speak briefly about each committee. Members interested in joining a committee should reach out to the committee chair and MPO staff by November 9, 2023.

D. Krevat stated that the UPWP Committee meets to deliberate on the development of the UPWP, a budgetary document that contains all planning studies in a given FFY.

J. Rowe stated that the TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee acts as an additional forum to better understand project developments and deliberate process improvements.

John Romano, MassDOT, stated that Jay Monty chairs the Congestion Management Process Committee, which meets to guide the federally required process, most recently providing feedback on the Learning from Roadway Pricing discrete study.

Brian Kane, MBTA Advisory Board, stated that the Administration and Finance Committee oversees the finances of the staff to the MPO including the budget and most recently, developed the Operations Plan.

12. Lynn Intersections Study—Seth Asante, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. Lynn Intersections Study ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

S. Asante stated that the intersections of Washington Street (Route 129) at Hanover Street and Beacon Hill Avenue and Freeman Square (Union, Buffum, Baldwin, and Silsbee streets) were selected as the intersection study locations based on safety conditions, transportation equity, and implementation potential.

Community engagement for the study involved coordination with the City of Lynn and stakeholders. In-person surveys and personal interviews were conducted. Posterboards, including Spanish translations, were provided with aerial views of the intersection and participants were offered gift cards as an incentive to engage in the study. Themes highlighted in the engagement process include the need to

- improve infrastructure for pedestrian crossings,
- remove parking at the intersections,
- slow traffic entering the intersections,
- improve visibility of stop signs and crossings,
- improve bus frequency and add shelters at stops,
- increase driver awareness,
- create a rotary, and
- add more flowers and trees.

From 2016 to 2021, 50 crashes occurred at the intersection of Washington and Hanover streets. Four of these crashes involved people in crosswalks, 36 percent involved injuries, and 34 percent occurred in dark conditions.

During the same period, 70 crashes occurred in Freeman Square, primarily along Union Street. In March of 2018, one fatality occurred. There were 12 personal injury crashes, eight of which occurred in crosswalks. Twenty-seven percent of crashes occurred in dark conditions.

Issues and concerns for both intersections include

- high speeds of vehicles,
- high number of crashes,
- poor infrastructure conditions,
- disregard of traffic controls,
- interest in shelters at bus stops,
- long wait at intersections, and
- distracted or aggressive driving.

Short-term, low-cost improvements at Washington Street at Hanover Street include repainting high-visibility crosswalks and adding painted pedestrian zones with vertical separations. Additional improvements include prohibiting parking at the intersection to improve visibility and installing mid-block pedestrian request crossing signals on Washington Street.

Short-term improvements at Freeman Square include repainting crosswalks, prohibiting parking, installing pedestrian warning signals, and creating painted pedestrian zones.

Two alternatives are presented for each intersection's long-term improvements, which require design and engineering and have a larger budget. Alternative One at Washington Street at Hanover Street adjusts the intersection control to a flashing stop beacon, adds ADA-compliant curb ramps, tightens the turning radii with curb extensions, creates space for bus shelters, and raises the mid-block pedestrian crossing.

Alternative Two for Washington Street at Hanover Street propose a signalized intersection, curb extensions, no parking zones, no mid-block crossing, and the potential to add shelters to the 435 bus stop.

Alternative One at Freeman Square adds geometric modifications, curb extensions, a channelized island, and shared-lane pavement markings. Alternative Two proposes a roundabout retrofit to promote safer travel and reduce speeds, with similar additional improvements as Alternative One.

Discussion

Sandy Johnston, MBTA, asked if the MBTA consulted in the discussion of bus services.

L. Diggins asked if online surveys were conducted. S. Asante stated that surveys were only conducted in-person. Stella Jordan, MPO Staff, stated that staff at the City of Lynn recommended direct engagement to best reach the community, due to varying degrees of English proficiency and technology availability.

L. Diggins discussed pedestrian safety in roundabouts.

J. Rowe asked about safety and stormwater benefits with roundabouts. S. Asante discussed the five street layout of the intersection and benefits of reducing travel to only one direction.

B. Kane asked what outreach has occurred with the City of Lynn and if they have a preferred alternative. S. Asante stated that a preference has not been indicated yet, but the city is eager to move forward.

Eric Molinari, City of Everett, asked if the ongoing maintenance cost of the design is considered.

13. Members' Items

B. Kane stated that the MBTA Advisory Board is hosting a public meeting with Acting Secretary Monica Tibbits-Nutt on November 15 at 10:00 AM.

14. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane) and seconded by the Advisory Council (L. Diggins). The motion carried.

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Eric Molinari
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	John Alessi
At-Large Town (Town of Brookline)	Robert King
City of Boston (Boston Planning & Development Agency)	
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Jen Rowe
Federal Highway Administration	
Federal Transit Administration	Michael Burns
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)	Sandy Johnston
	Ali Kleyman
Massachusetts Port Authority	Sarah Lee
MBTA Advisory Board	Brian Kane
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Julia Wallerice
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)	Chris Dilorio
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Wrentham)	Rachel Benson
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce)	Tom O'Rourke Steve Olanoff

Other Attendees	Affiliation
Miranda Briseño	MassDOT
Julie Dombroski	MassDOT District Six
Larry Durkin	Town of Saugus
Daniela Espinosa	BPDA
Joy Glynn	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA)
Josh Klingenstein	MBTA
Raissah Kouame	MassDOT
Derek Krevat	MassDOT
Barbara Lachance	MassDOT District Five
Jackie LaFlam	Cape Ann Transportation Authority
Tracie Lenhardt	
Benjamin Muller	MassDOT
Chinta Nagabhushanam	
Dylan Rosa	
Julissa Rosa	
Cheryll-Ann Senior	MassDOT District Five
Jon Seward	
Derek Shooster	MassDOT
Tyler Terrasi/MWRTA	MWRTA
Andrew Wang	MassDOT

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Tegin Teich, Executive Director

Seth Asante

Rounaq Basu

Logan Casey

Abby Cutrumbes

Annette Demchur

Hiral Gandhi

Betsy Harvey

Ryan Hicks

David Hong

Stella Jordan

Marnie Kopec

Ethan Lapointe

Erin Maguire

Marty Milkovits

Rebecca Morgan

Srilekha Murthy

Gina Perille

Sarah Philbrick

Judy Taylor

Sam Taylor

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Title VI Specialist

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857.702.3700 (voice)

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