

Draft Memorandum for the Record Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee Meeting Minutes

November 6, 2025 Meeting

1:00 PM–2:42 PM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

Jen Rowe, Chair, representing the City of Boston

Decisions

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee agreed to the following:

- Approve the minutes of the meeting of September 4, 2025

Materials

Materials for this meeting included the following:

1. September 4, 2025, TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Meeting Minutes ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

J. Rowe welcomed committee members to the meeting of the TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee. See attendance on page 9.

2. Public Comments

There were none.

3. Action Item: Approval of September 4, 2025, Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes was made by the Inner Core Committee (Brad Rawson) and seconded by the Metrowest Regional Collaborative (Dennis Giombetti). The motion carried.

4. Reconstruction of Route 107, Western Avenue Update—Aaron Clausen and Rich Benevento, City of Lynn, and Justin Curewitz, Tighe & Bond

R. Benevento and A. Clausen described the project limits of the Reconstruction of Route 107 (Western Avenue) project in Lynn. The corridor includes several signalized intersections as well as two unsignalized intersections under consideration for signal installation.

Intersection Control Evaluation Stage 1 was submitted in January 2022, with Intersection Control Evaluation approval in April 2024. The pre-25 percent design stage took place between August and December 2024. The 25 percent design package was submitted in August 2025. Public engagement has been a part of the project development. Project proponents held a public workshop in June 2022 and a public information meeting in May 2025.

The project proponents evaluated three design alternatives during the pre-25 percent design state. The first alternative was buffered bicycle lanes, the second alternative was a shared-use path, and the third alternative was grade-separated bicycle lanes. Key design considerations included Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) bus stop design, utility relocations, on-street marking, green space and landscaping, and safety recommendations from road safety audits.

The third alternative was selected as the preferred choice. The design included bike lanes grade-separated from traffic and buffered by utility poles and landscaping. Most of the on-street parking was retained, though floating bus stops replaced on-street parking in some locations. As the street is a major transit corridor, the design also included bus shelters at every stop.

The project limits include approximately two miles of Western Avenue and three miles of total roadway, as well as 13 signalized intersections, 174 relocated utility poles, and 60 consolidated utility poles. The proponents plan to have a 25 percent comment resolution meeting in January 2026, a utility coordination meeting in February 2026, and a Design Public Hearing in May 2026. They will begin the final design process in June 2026 and submit a 75 percent design package in the Spring of 2027. The project is scheduled to advertise in the Spring of 2029, to begin construction in the Summer of 2029, and to conclude construction in the Spring of 2032.

A. Clausen reiterated the goal of transforming Western Avenue into a multimodal corridor.

Discussion

B. Rawson asked if the project limits and scope had changed over the course of the planning and design process.

R. Benevento answered that the project limits had not changed since Project Review Committee approval in 2018. He stated that there had been some uncertainty with the scope and cost of utility relocation, but that the current presentation represents the best estimate. He stated that they will continue to inform the MPO board of any changes.

J. Curewitz stated that the 25 percent design cost estimate includes the utility pole relocation reimbursements.

B. Rawson asked if it was the City of Lynn's intent to continue to be the project proponent or if the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) would be handling the project.

R. Benevento stated that the City of Lynn remains as the project proponent and did not plan to hand the project over to MassDOT. He added that the City of Lynn is aware of the responsibilities of the project proponent.

L. Diggins asked about the details of the bus stop consolidation process. He asked how the planned bus stop spacing compares to the original spacing and who paid for the consolidation. He noted that there was resistance to bus stop consolidation in Arlington.

J. Curewitz answered that the process was a culmination of back-and-forth coordination with the MBTA. The MBTA saw an opportunity to implement some of the principles of the Bus Network Redesign project alongside the Western Avenue project. Some stops were as close as 500 feet apart, and other stops had as few as five daily boardings. Receiving the ridership information for each stop helped the City of Lynn decide which stops to consolidate. The MBTA agreed to bear the costs of eventual snow removal and maintenance for the bus shelters if the City of Lynn installed the shelters.

A. Clausen stated that the public engagement process involved informing transit users of the safety improvements that would accompany the bus stop consolidation.

D. Giombetti asked if the project faced any right-of-way issues and if the proponents had received any feedback from landowners.

R. Benevento answered that the project includes more than 400 temporary easements in addition to a significant number of permanent easements. He stated that they are

trying to eliminate as many easements as they can, but they will not be certain of the total number until the project has moved further along in the design process. He noted that if there were significant takings, the proponents would meet with the property owners in advance.

A. Clausen added that the City Councilors have participated in the conversations about permanent and temporary easements related to the project.

5. Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2027-31 TIP—*Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff*

E. Lapointe discussed the timeline for the development for the FFYs 2027–31 TIP. Project applications for the TIP close on January 2, 2026. MPO staff will score projects during the months of January and February. Subregional Readiness Days will be held in January, and the statewide TIP Readiness Days event will be held in early February. The TIP is scheduled to be endorsed in the first week of June. Scenario development will occur in March and April 2026.

E. Lapointe explained the structure of scenario development for the past few TIP development cycles. First, MPO staff would create a “readiness scenario” reflecting the updated allocations of TIP project funding based on recommendations from TIP readiness days. Then, MPO staff would present initial scenarios that built upon the Readiness Scenario, incorporating new projects and new project cost estimates. The board would vote on an initial scenario. Then, the TIP Committee would contribute recommendations developed during committee meetings. Lastly, the board would select a final scenario.

E. Lapointe explained how the FFYs 2027–31 TIP scenario development process would differ. First, the TIP readiness guidelines could be enforced in the development of the readiness scenario. In addition, there will be an additional MPO meeting between the development of the initial scenario and the approval of the final scenario where the MPO board will refine the scenario based on recommendations from the TIP Committee. Lastly, the TIP Development process would be longer this year. Instead of releasing the draft TIP for public comment at the end of April, the MPO board would vote to release the TIP for public comment at the beginning of May.

E. Lapointe stated that the TIP Committee will retain its role in working to develop recommendations and priorities for the TIP program. However, these committee recommendations would take place after the MPO board had already taken a vote to advance a scenario for further discussion. The additional board meeting is meant to ensure that the board retains final decision-making capability on all scenarios without

compromising or diluting the critical role that the TIP Committee has. E. Lapointe encouraged the committee to champion the TIP readiness policy and enforce the guidelines.

Discussion

B. Rawson agreed with E. Lapointe on the importance of defining the roles and the identity of the TIP Committee to avoid misunderstandings during the TIP development season.

E. Chute suggested that E. Lapointe and J. Rowe meet with the Chair and Vice Chair of the MPO board before the full board meetings in TIP development season to avoid any surprises.

6. TIP Readiness Policy Update—*Ethan Lapointe and Adriana Jacobsen, MPO Staff*

A. Jacobsen discussed how the TIP readiness policy would affect the current TIP program. The predictions use the MassDOT project schedules and assume that every project that is scheduled to achieve a new milestone by the TIP development season in March will do so on time. These projects that have not yet met a milestone but are scheduled to do so are included in the “Risk” column in Table 1. For example, FFY 2027 has approximately \$86 million in surplus. The projects scheduled to have a 100 percent design submission by March equal \$25 million. If none of these projects achieve this design milestone by March, the FFY 2027 program will have an additional \$25 million in surplus.

Table 1
TIP Budget Surplus and Risk by FFY with the TIP Readiness Policy Applied

FFY	Standard	Anticipated Surplus	Anticipated Risk
2026	Final Design	\$31,899,562	\$32,556,266
2027	100% Submission	\$86,048,872	\$25,155,213
2028	75% Submission	\$37,849,693	\$41,186,243
2029	Design Public Hearing	\$75,601,120	\$0
2030	25% Submission	(\$63,423,371)	\$54,512,127
2031	Pre-25% Submission	\$13,999,835	\$30,800,165
2032	None	\$35,983,862	\$0

FFY = Federal Fiscal Year. TIP = Transportation Improvement Program.

A. Jacobsen noted that there is significant funding available in the first few years of the TIP but limited funding and deficits in the last few years. In addition, most of the funding in FFY 2032 has already been accounted for, even though that year is not part of the currently developing TIP.

A. Jacobsen stated that although the policy will induce surpluses in the first few years, these surpluses were bound to occur due to last-minute delays for projects in the first year of the TIP. With the TIP readiness policy in place, the MPO board will know about these funding opportunities earlier, and MPO staff will have time to solicit, score, and prioritize projects.

A. Jacobsen stated that this analysis did not account for new cost estimates in future years, future scope and schedule changes, or projects needing to resubmit a design package.

E. Lapointe noted that the budget for TIP programming will be reduced in FFY 2032 due to the return of Grant Anticipatory Notes (GAN), which are debt service payments made by the state. However, MPO staff do not know how much GANs will affect the TIP program. He stated that the TIP readiness policy is not intended to be punitive; instead, it is meant to respond to the root causes facing the TIP program.

Discussion

B. Rawson stated the importance of framing the TIP readiness policy not as an unfair moving of goalposts, but as a commitment to data-driven policymaking in a constrained fiscal environment.

E. Lapointe confirmed that all project proponents will be requested to submit a new project schedule, and, if possible, a new cost estimate. He noted that some projects may need to resubmit a design package, but MPO staff may not be aware of these delays in the project design process. He added that according to analysis done by A. Jacobsen, significant cost increases may be likely for several projects on the TIP program. He stated that MassDOT staff had a very substantial role in helping MPO staff conduct these analyses.

B. Rawson asked if a MassDOT representative could speak to the TIP Committee regarding examples of projects needing to resubmit design milestones.

J. Rowe asked E. Lapointe to explain the next steps for the TIP readiness policy development.

E. Lapointe answered that the policy memo is in development for discussion at the December 4 MPO board meeting. However, if the TIP Committee would rather discuss the memo in more detail beforehand, MPO staff could move the discussion to a later MPO board meeting.

L. Diggins stated that he would like more time to think about the policy.

E. Chute stated that she would like more time to understand the implications of the policy for the current TIP. She asked how the policy would address the wide scale of project scopes and provide accurate milestones for both small intersection projects and major roadway reconstructions.

E. Lapointe noted that there was a clause in the original 2021 TIP Project Cost Policy that required benchmarks akin to the 25 percent threshold for all five years of the TIP. He stated that the policy is meant to be iterative and adaptable over time. He noted that there are three projects in the current TIP program that are not scheduled to submit a pre-25 percent design submission before TIP development season in March and would therefore not be eligible for programming for any years of the FFYs 2027–31 TIP.

A. Jacobsen noted that the milestones are not based on projects on the scale of the Reconstruction of Western Avenue, the Reconstruction of Rutherford Avenue, or other large-scale projects because the MPO has never fully funded a project on this scale before.

J. Rowe stated that they would regroup with A. Jacobsen and E. Lapointe after the meeting and discuss doing outreach to individual committee members about the details of the policy.

7. Members' Items

There were none.

8. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the Town of Brookline (Erin Chute) and seconded by the Inner Core Committee (Brad Rawson). The motion carried.

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
City of Boston	Jen Rowe
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Brad Rawson
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	-
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)	-
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)	-
MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA)	Tyler Terrasi
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Acton)	-
Community Advisory Council	Caitlin Allen-Connelly
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	Lenard Diggins
At-Large Town (Town of Brookline)	Erin Chute

Other Attendees	Affiliation
Aaron Clausen	City of Lynn
Ben Muller	MassDOT
Dan Jaffe	City of Boston Resident
Elizabeth Mainini	Town of Milford
Jeff Coletti	MWRTA
Jim Tarr	City of Malden
John Romano	MassDOT
Justin Curewitz	Tighe & Bond
Karl Alexander	Mystic River Watershed Association
Matthew Hayes	-
Rich Benevento	City of Lynn
Tom Bent	City of Somerville

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Tegin Teich, Executive Director

Adriana Jacobsen

Annette Demchur

Dave Hong

Elena Ion

Ethan Lapointe

Ibbu Quraishi

Lauren Magee

Sean Rourke

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