

# Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Operations Plan

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# Introduction

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Operations Plan is a supplement to the MPO's Memorandum of Understanding, last approved in 2011. The 2011 Memorandum of Understanding Relating to the Comprehensive, Continuing, and Cooperative Transportation Planning Process in the Boston Metropolitan Area required the Boston Region MPO to create an operations plan to address administration and finance, programming, policy, and technical products. The MPO's Administration and Finance (A&F) Committee, chaired by Brian Kane of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Advisory Board, worked with MPO staff to develop this operations plan. The operations plan was approved by the MPO policy board in June 2023.

## Section 1—Elections Process

The process for electing the Boston Region MPO's municipal board members, described below, is overseen by Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and the MBTA Advisory Board, as noted in the 2011 MOU for the Boston Region MPO. At the MAPC Fall Council meeting, held each year in late October, the results of elections shall be announced for four of the 12 elected municipal seats.

### 1.1 ELIGIBLE NOMINATIONS

- I. The elected municipal MPO seats are held by the municipality. The chief executive officer (CEO) or their official designee shall represent the municipality throughout the municipality's term of office. CEOs are considered to be the following:
  - A. In cities, the CEO is the mayor or, if the city does not have the office of mayor, the chair of the council, with the exception of Plan E cities, in which case the CEO shall be the city manager.
  - B. In towns, the CEO is the chair of the select board.
- II. A nominee for an open municipal seat must receive three (3) nominations made by any CEO from the Boston region, regardless of which subregion they are from. A CEO may nominate their municipality and that nomination shall count as one of the three nominations needed to place a municipality on the ballot. Each CEO may only nominate one municipality per open seat.

- III. The MPO shall accept the select board chair's nomination of a candidate whether or not the full select board has voted for the nominee.

## 1.2 NOMINATIONS PROCESS

- I. In advance of the MAPC Fall Council meeting, MAPC staff shall send a correspondence inviting nominations with information about the process and deadlines. This correspondence shall be sent typically in early August.
- II. Nominations shall be submitted electronically to MAPC staff by early October. Nomination papers shall include a statement of candidacy from the municipality. The statement shall not exceed 250 words.
- III. MAPC staff shall contact the nominating municipal CEOs by phone or email to confirm their nomination.

## 1.3 ENGAGEMENT WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CANDIDATE COMMUNITIES

MAPC and the MBTA Advisory Board shall provide an appropriate opportunity for the electorate to meet representatives of candidate communities in the month of October, after nominations are submitted. This may be accomplished by holding a virtual Candidates Forum.

## 1.4 ELECTIONS PROCESS

- I. The election shall be held through the submission of ballots electronically to MAPC. A ballot shall be prepared by MAPC and the MBTA Advisory Board based on the certification of nominations. The ballot shall contain a list of the nominated municipalities. Candidate communities shall appear on the ballot in an order drawn by lot by designated officers of MAPC and the MBTA Advisory Board. The subregion of each of the communities shall be identified on the ballot. Electronic ballots shall be emailed from MAPC to the CEO of each municipality in the Boston Region MPO area with correspondence explaining the ballot submittal process and deadlines. Ballots shall be sent in mid-October and shall be due the day before the MAPC Fall Council meeting (in late October).
- II. Only municipalities in the subregion with an open seat shall cast a ballot for that seat. All municipalities may vote for the at-large open seats.
- III. The ballot shall be submitted electronically to MAPC by the municipal CEO.

- IV. The designated officers of MAPC and of the MBTA Advisory Board shall certify the results of the election to the chair of the MPO and their designee by 12 noon on the Monday following the election.

## 1.5 APPOINTING DESIGNEES AND ALTERNATES

- I. Within 30 days of the completion of the election, new board members must submit in writing to the chair of the MPO their official designee and alternate, if desired, for that designee. A designee can be the CEO or a representative of the municipality or agency that they represent. Alternates may vote in MPO board meetings on behalf of the designee when the designee is not present. In writing, the CEO should address the chair, copying the chair's designee, and provide the name, title, and contact information of the designee and alternate.
- II. If, at any time, the CEO or designee leaves their position, a new letter must be submitted to the chair, copying the chair's designee, identifying the new designee and alternate. The letter shall be submitted within 30 days of the position being vacated.
- III. If a representative other than the official designee or alternate attends a board meeting in representation of the seat, it is at the chair or their designee's discretion whether that representative may participate and vote with other board members.

## Section 2—Boston Region MPO Board Officers

The MOU states: “The Chair of the Boston Region MPO shall be the Secretary of MassDOT or the Secretary’s designee. The vice chair shall be a municipal representative or an official of one of the two regional agencies (MAPC or MBTA Advisory Board) and shall be elected to a one-year term by the MPO members by majority vote. In any case requiring a majority vote, should there be an even number of members voting, a majority vote shall be calculated as half of the voting members, plus one. This election shall take place at the first meeting after the election of Boston Region MPO elected municipal representatives.”

### 2.1 CHAIR

- I. The chair of the Boston Region MPO board is the secretary of transportation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, ex officio. Their term on the Boston Region MPO board, and as its chair, begins upon their official first day of employment as secretary of transportation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
- II. The secretary shall preside at all Boston Region MPO board meetings at which they are present. If the secretary cannot preside at a board meeting, their designee shall preside in their stead.
- III. The chair or their designee is responsible for signing any official acts, orders, or proceedings of the board, such as the following:
  - A. Letters
  - B. Resolutions
  - C. 3C documents, including the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
- IV. The chair or their designee shall collaborate on agenda setting with the vice chair and MPO staff. In collaborating on agenda setting, the chair or their designee shall represent MPO board members to ensure adequate discussion of topics of interest to the board. Any MPO board member, including the chair or their designee, may request an item be added to a future meeting’s agenda.
- V. The chair or their designee shall to the best of their ability respond to requests for information relevant to board business at least 48 hours in advance of a meeting during which the board votes on a topic, in alignment with the requirements of the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.

- VI. The chair or their designee, at their sole discretion, shall ensure that all members' questions are satisfied before calling votes.
- VII. The chair or their designee shall have such powers and perform such other duties as may from time to time be voted by the MPO board.

## 2.2 VICE CHAIR

- I. The vice chair or their designee presides at meetings in the absence of the chair or chair's designee.
- II. The vice chair may sign official acts, orders, or proceedings of the board as the chair's proxy, if the chair is not able.
- III. The vice chair or their designee shall collaborate on agenda setting with the chair and MPO staff. In collaborating on agenda setting, the vice chair or their designee shall represent MPO board members to ensure adequate discussion of topics of interest to the board. Any MPO board member, including the vice chair or their designee, may request an item be added to a future meeting's agenda.
- IV. The vice chair or their designee shall have such powers and perform such other duties as may from time to time be voted by the MPO board.
- V. Vice chair ~~nomination~~-~~election~~ process
  - A. Following the annual election of municipal representatives, the MPO board shall nominate a municipal representative or an official of one of the two regional agencies for a one-year term as the vice chair. ~~Nominations shall occur at the meeting prior to the meeting when the voting occurs. Voting shall occur at the subsequent meeting.~~
  - B. Only MPO board members representing municipalities or one of the two regional agencies may make a nomination. Nominations shall take place one meeting prior to the Boston Region MPO Annual Meeting.

## 2.3 OFFICER ELECTION—ANNUAL MEETING

Each year, the MPO shall hold an Annual Meeting, typically in November. The Annual Meeting shall come after the completion of the MPO elections (typically held at the end of October) and within 30 days of the new members' term (typically beginning November 1), either in concurrence with or in addition to an existing board meeting. At that meeting, the following shall occur:



- I. The secretary of transportation shall be invited to preside and address the board as the chair.
- II. The vice chair shall be elected by a majority vote.
- III. Designees and alternates for new members, and any new designees or alternates for continuing members, shall be introduced.

## **2.4 BOSTON REGION MPO PRESIDING OFFICERS**

- I. When the designee of the chair is not present or able to preside at the meeting, the vice chair or their designee assumes the presiding role at an MPO meeting. If the designees of both the chair and vice chair are not present to preside at an MPO meeting, the board membership may elect a presiding officer for the meeting by a majority vote.
- II. The presiding officer shall be responsible for calling the meeting to order, closing the meeting, and ensuring that the meeting generally follows Robert's Rules of Order, which can be overridden by processes in this Operations Plan. During a meeting, the primary functions of the presiding officer include recognizing board members who wish to speak and facilitating voting procedures. The presiding officer shall also recognize requests for agenda and discussion items from members of the board and of the public, facilitate meetings in a manner that encourages participatory dialogue that gives all parties a chance to be heard, and ensure that the board engages in timely and effective cooperative decision-making.
- III. At the direction of the presiding officer, discussions of agenda items can be facilitated by other board members or staff.

## **2.5 OTHER OFFICERS**

Other officers can be designated by majority vote of the Boston Region MPO board.

## Section 3—Board Member Responsibilities

### 3.1 MEMBER TERMS

- I. Permanent members: There are 10 permanent members of the Boston Region MPO as defined in the 2011 MOU:
  - A. Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)—Three seats, including the chair
  - B. Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)
  - C. Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport)
  - D. Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
  - E. MBTA Advisory Board
  - F. Regional Transportation Advisory Council
  - G. City of Boston—Two seats
- II. Elected members
  - A. There are 12 municipal elected members of the Boston Region MPO, which include two at-large cities, two at-large towns, and eight subregions. Members are elected to three-year terms.
  - B. Each fall, four of the 12 elected municipal seats are elected by CEOs of municipalities in the region for three-year terms.

### 3.2 ONBOARDING AND ORIENTATION OF BOARD MEMBERS

- I. Within 90 days of the start of a board member's term, new board members and recurring board members shall be invited to an overview orientation meeting with MPO staff to review the purpose of MPOs, the 3C process, the TIP, UPWP, and LRTP, public engagement, and other fundamental aspects of the operations of the MPO. New board members should work with staff to find a date for an orientation meeting within the 90 days. Orientation or reorientation is optional for returning board members.
- II. Within 90 days of the start of a board member's term, the board member shall be invited to a one-on-one conversation with the executive director of the MPO.
- III. Prior to the orientation of new board members, existing board members shall be contacted by staff to ask for volunteers to meet with and assist in orienting and mentoring new board members, also within the first 90 days.

- IV. At times, board members may also be invited to additional training modules organized by staff. These modules would focus more deeply on particular and timely topics, such as the primary 3C documents (the UPWP, TIP, and LRTP).

### 3.3 BOARD MEMBER EXPECTATIONS

In the following sections, “board member” also refers to designees and alternates when serving in place of designees.

#### I. General

- A. In order to successfully plan and implement projects of regional significance, all members of the MPO must be able to understand the larger picture of regional transportation planning. All board members are representatives for their agency, subregion, or municipality, and are invited to share their perspective while representing their organizations, municipalities, or subregions. However, all board members, when serving on the Boston Region MPO board, agree to act in the interests of the regional goals, even if representing different local interests.
- B. Board members are expected to follow the Communications Norms when participating in MPO activities.
- C. Board members shall declare any and all duality or conflicts of interests, material or otherwise, that may impede or be perceived as impeding the capacity to deliberate or act in good faith.
- D. Board members shall communicate in a manner that is compliant with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.

#### II. Representing the MPO

- A. Board members shall not speak on behalf of the MPO board outside of MPO board meetings unless approved by the chair or vice chair of the MPO board or their designees.
- B. If contacted by the press about the MPO or its activities, MPO board members should notify MPO staff by forwarding the request to [news@ctps.org](mailto:news@ctps.org).

- III. Board members, designees, or their alternates are expected to make every effort to attend all meetings of the board and the committees of which they are members. When unable to attend, board members shall notify MPO staff and should review minutes and video recordings after the meeting.

- A. Board meetings are generally held on the first and third Thursdays of the month at 10:00 AM.
- B. Board meetings are conducted generally in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, except to the extent the board acting as a body suspends application of such rules.
- C. Staff and board members shall strive to offer multiple forums for board meetings throughout the year, potentially including as many as four meetings held in different locations throughout the region, virtual meetings (if allowed by law), and in person meetings. If allowed by law, virtual meetings may replace any required meetings in other locations in the region.
- D. Meeting minutes are presented according to Massachusetts Open Meeting Law requirements within three meetings or 30 days, whichever is later.
- E. Staff shall strive to post audio and video recordings to the Boston Region MPO website as soon as possible after meetings.

#### IV. Informed participation

- A. Board members are expected to keep well informed of all MPO matters, including by reading advance materials for each meeting and asking questions about those materials in advance of and at board meetings. Board members may ask questions of the chair or their designee, vice chair or their designee, and staff.
- B. Staff shall strive to post meeting agendas and materials one week in advance of a scheduled meeting. At a minimum, the agenda shall be posted 48 hours in advance of a meeting as defined by the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.
- C. Board members present at meetings shall review each set of meeting minutes to ensure an accurate record of decision-making and so that they are able to vote on the approval of those minutes at following meetings.
- D. Board members are expected to participate in decisions by bringing to the attention of the board, its officers, and/or executive director any questions or comments of significance or relevance on matters of governance or policymaking.
- E. Board members are expected to raise topics from the entities that they represent that may have relevance for other stakeholders in the region during the "Members Items" period of the board meetings.

- F. Board members representing a city, town, or subregion are expected to participate in subregional meetings relevant for the entity that they represent to be able to share information about the operations of the MPO, promote opportunities to engage with the MPO, such as events and elections, as well as hear and understand transportation and related (land use, resiliency, etc.) issues in their subregion.
- V. Board members shall participate in ensuring that the Boston Region MPO carries out a comprehensive, continuing, and cooperative (3C) transportation planning process resulting in plans, programs and operations consistent with the planning objectives of the metropolitan area. The 3C process is defined in the 2011 MOU.
- VI. Board members shall develop transportation planning policies in support of the Boston Region MPO's vision and goals, consistent with the MPO's LRTP.
- VII. Board members shall recommend, participate in, review, and approve plans, projects and studies, consistent with the goals for the region.
  - A. At meetings throughout the federal fiscal year, board members shall review and approve work scopes for staff to conduct plans, projects, and studies. Ongoing MPO programs described in detail in the UPWP, such as the LRTP, TIP, UPWP, Equity, Air Quality, and Climate Resilience programs, do not require board members to approve a work scope, unless the board members indicate a desire to request and approve a work scope.
  - B. Board members shall engage with staff when appropriate to provide input and guidance when plans, projects, and studies are underway.
  - C. Board members shall review and approve final products of plans, projects and studies at meetings throughout the federal fiscal year.
- VIII. Board members shall annually prioritize and select projects to be included in the TIP. To do so, board members shall consider information from staff and project proponents as well as public comments.
- IX. Board members shall carry out MPO activities and decision-making while maintaining fiscal constraint. Promoting cost-feasible partnering to maximize opportunities for enhancing and maintaining an affordable, efficient transportation system should be encouraged.
- X. Board members shall participate in and create opportunities for public engagement and education on transportation issues, particularly for those affected in environmental justice areas, by attending staff-led events,

recommending ways to engage with local stakeholders, and participating in outreach and engagement to local stakeholders.

- XI. Board members shall annually review and approve the UPWP, including the annual programming of all federal planning funds, in consideration of the recommendation of the UPWP Committee.
- XII. Board members shall annually review and approve the Boston Region MPO's operating budget in consideration of the recommendation of the Administration and Finance Committee.

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## Section 4—Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

### 4.1 EXISTING MPO COMMITTEES AND PROCESSES

MPO committees are intended to supplement, not supplant, the work of the MPO board, which has final decision-making authority over all activities related to the board. Committees are intended to provide assistance, where desired by the board, in informing MPO board deliberations, when that would make board deliberations more informed and efficient.

- I. Current standing MPO committees are the Administration and Finance (A&F) Committee, UPWP Committee, Congestion Management Committee, and TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee.
- II. Each committee is charged with the following:
  - A. The A&F Committee reviews the operating budget of the Central Transportation Planning Staff—the staff to the MPO—and annually recommends approval of that operating budget to the MPO board. The A&F Committee engages in periodic (typically quarterly) review of the fiscal health of the agency in collaboration with the executive director. The committee may also take on topics as requested by the MPO board related to the administration or finance of the Boston Region MPO and its staff.
  - B. The UPWP Committee oversees the development of the UPWP and monitors the progress of projects and programs funded through the UPWP. Annually, the committee recommends approval of the UPWP to the MPO board.
  - C. The Congestion Management Committee facilitates the development and implementation of the MPO’s Congestion Management Process (CMP) and recommends projects and programs that reduce congestion and improve mobility, safety, and efficiency.
  - D. The TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee facilitates discussion about the TIP development process and improvements that could be discussed with the full board. The committee provides an additional forum for board members and various project proponents and stakeholders to better understand project developments, which may include cost and readiness changes.
- III. Committee meetings are generally on an as-needed basis.

- IV. MPO staff shall strive to send/post agenda and materials one week in advance of a scheduled meeting. At a minimum, agenda and materials shall be shared 48 hours in advance of a meeting as defined by the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.
- V. Meeting minutes are presented according to Massachusetts Open Meeting Law requirements within three meetings or 30 days, whichever is later.
- VI. Staff strive to post audio and video recordings to the MPO website as soon as possible after the meeting.

## 4.2 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

- I. Selecting board members to serve on committees
  - A. Within 30 days of the start of a board member's term, new board members and recurring board members are encouraged to join at least one MPO committee.
  - B. Existing committee chairs shall develop a slate of existing and new committee members for each standing committee in advance of the MPO's annual meeting. The slates shall be submitted to staff and posted with MPO board meeting materials. At the annual meeting, the chair shall facilitate voting to approve or amend the slates.
  - C. Voting members may be added to a committee upon request of the committee chair and at the discretion of the MPO chair or their designee. The MPO chair or their designee shall announce added or removed committee membership in the "Chair's Reports" period of MPO board meetings.
  - D. Committee members shall be selected from among whomever volunteers to serve on a committee. The official membership of a committee should not equal or exceed the majority of the number of board members, unless those meetings are advertised as full board meetings.
  - E. Committee members shall be selected from all board members, their designees or alternates, and there shall be no requirement to have a specific "split" among state, regional, or municipal members.
- II. Quorum
  - A. A quorum is defined as a simple majority of the total number of members serving on the committee.
- III. Officers of committees



- A. After the approval of the slate of committee members at the Annual Meeting and before the first meeting of each committee, the chair of the Boston Region MPO board or their designee shall designate a chair for each committee. If a committee chair is not designated by the chair of the Boston Region MPO board or their designee by the first committee meeting, the previous committee chair will continue to serve in that role until the chair or their designee determines otherwise.
  - B. Chairs of committees are responsible for the following:
    - 1. Coordinating with staff on agenda setting for each meeting
    - 2. Coordinating with staff to ensure that information needed for informed decision-making is available for each meeting
    - 3. Facilitating presentations, discussions, and voting generally in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order
- IV. Onboarding of committee members
- A. Within 90 days of the start of a committee member's term, new committee members and recurring committee members shall be invited to an overview orientation meeting with MPO staff to review the purpose of the committee and the committee's role. New committee members should work with staff to find a date for the orientation meeting within the 90 days; the orientation is optional for returning committee members.
  - B. Prior to the orientation of new committee members, existing committee members shall be contacted by staff to ask for volunteers to meet with and assist in orienting and mentoring new committee members, also within the first 90 days.

### 4.3 COMMITTEE MEMBER EXPECTATIONS

The expectations for board members described in Section 3.3, parts I and II, apply to committee members. Additional expectations for committee members are as follows:

- I. To ensure that a committee is able to reach a quorum, committee members are asked to make every effort to attend each committee meeting. If a committee member is not able to attend a meeting, that member shall inform staff and the chair of the committee.
- II. If a board member or their designee cannot attend a committee meeting, an alternate may attend that meeting.

#### 4.4 AD HOC COMMITTEES

Through the recommendation of the MPO chair or their designee, or through a motion and majority vote, the board may establish ad hoc committees as needed to address topics that would not be addressed in the existing committees.

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## Section 5—Regional Transportation Advisory Council

The Regional Transportation Advisory Council provides a forum for members of the public, including representatives of municipal, business, and advocacy interests, to participate in the MPO's 3C planning process, via the following means:

- I. A voting seat on the MPO board
- II. Continuous communication with MPO staff developing programs and projects, including timely opportunities to provide input and participate in decision-making
- III. Opportunities for discussion about MPO work and regional issues

The Advisory Council is supported by MPO staff, who facilitate conversations and presentations and provide timely opportunities to engage with the MPO's planning process and work products. The Advisory Council is also a key stakeholder in the MPO's Public Engagement Program, collaborating with staff on strategies to support public involvement in the planning process. The Advisory Council maintains bylaws to define its operations.

## Section 6—MPO Work

### 6.1 MPO PRODUCTS AND PROGRAMS

The following are MPO work products and programs produced and operated by MPO staff that support the 3C transportation planning process for the Boston region.

- I. MPO Certification Documents:
  - A. Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
  - B. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
  - C. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
  - D. Congestion Management Process (CMP)
  - E. Air Quality Conformity (AQ)
  - F. Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan)
  - G. Public Engagement Plan (PEP)
  - H. MPO Title VI Report
  - I. Language Assistance Plan (LAP)
  - J. Freight Plan
- II. MPO board agendas, presentations, and meeting minutes
- III. MPO committee agendas, presentations, and meeting minutes
- IV. MPO work scopes and final products
- V. Agency-funded work scopes and final products

### 6.2 MPO CERTIFICATION DOCUMENTS

Prior to bringing a work product to the MPO board, staff complete a number of quality assurance checks internally before sharing these products with the MassDOT MPO liaison (or appropriate MassDOT staff), who reviews and approves the product for presentation to the MPO board. Most product reviews are completed by the MPO liaison or specialized MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (OTP) staff. While three weeks are provided for this review, most products are turned around more quickly. The work products are as follows:

- I. MPO certification documents (specifically the LRTP, TIP, AQ, Coordinated Plan, PEP, Title VI Report, LAP and Freight Plan)
  - A. These certification documents are developed in consultation with and approved by the board.
  - B. Each document is led by a staff project or program manager.
- II. MPO certification documents (specifically UPWP and CMP)
  - A. The UPWP is developed in consultation with and reviewed by the UPWP Committee before approval by the full board.
  - B. The CMP is developed in consultation with and reviewed by the CMP committee before approval by the full board.
  - C. Each document is led by a staff project or program manager.

### **6.3 MPO BOARD AGENDA SETTING AND MEETING MINUTES**

- I. Agenda setting
  - A. Developing agenda items
    1. At any meeting of the Boston Region MPO or in communication with the chair or vice chair or their designees, a member of the board may request an item to be considered on a future board meeting agenda.
    2. At least four to six weeks before a scheduled board meeting, MPO staff solicit potential agenda items from other staff and include the items on a running list of potential future agenda items.
    3. At least three to four weeks before a scheduled board meeting, MPO staff solicit potential agenda items from the chair and vice chair or their designees
    4. MPO staff develop a draft list of agenda topics, including the following:
      - a) Standard items, such as MPO meeting minutes, introductions, chair's report, executive director's report, etc.
      - b) Items solicited from staff, the chair or their designee, and vice chair or their designee, as well as requests heard from board members over that time period
      - c) The time allowed for each item is set in coordination with the presenters

## B. Reviewing agenda items

1. MPO staff schedule agenda-setting meetings with the chair or their designee, as well as relevant review staff (currently the MPO liaison staff at MassDOT OTP) and the vice chair or their designee, where agenda items are reviewed and approved, typically 10 days before the MPO meeting.
2. Materials relevant to any agenda items are submitted to MassDOT OTP staff to allow time for them to review materials on behalf of the chair. These items include work scopes, reports, meeting minutes, etc.
3. Meeting agendas are determined during this meeting, and staff then proceed with internal processes to review and post agendas as decided at the planning meeting.

## C. Posting agendas

1. MPO staff shall follow Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, publishing the agenda and other meeting materials online and through email at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. MPO staff shall strive to publish meeting notices and any readily available materials one week in advance of the meeting.

## II. Presentations

- A. Staff shall prepare presentations based on a template. Where materials from individuals or agencies outside of MPO staff are to be incorporated into the staff-produced presentation slides, staff shall request the completed presentation slides be delivered at least 48 hours in advance of the MPO board meeting.
- B. Slides for each meeting shall include the following introductory slides to be read by the presiding officer of the meeting:
  1. Date of the meeting
  2. Notice of Nondiscrimination
  3. Participation Guidelines
  4. Accessibility Statement

## III. Meeting minutes

- A. MPO staff drafts meeting minutes in a timely fashion to comply with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.
- B. 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.

- C. Comments and feedback from the MPO liaison are then incorporated into the minutes.
- D. Staff shall strive to post MPO meeting minutes one week in advance of a planned MPO board meeting where they are presented for approval by the board.
- E. 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.

## **6.4 MPO COMMITTEE AGENDA AND MEETING MINUTES**

### **I. MPO committee agendas**

- A. Agenda topics are solicited and determined 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.
- B. MPO committee agendas are reviewed and approved by the designated MPO committee chair before being posted. Staff shall strive to post committee agendas at least one week before a scheduled meeting.

### **II. Presentations**

- A. Staff shall prepare presentations based on a template. Where materials from individuals or agencies outside of MPO staff are to be incorporated into the staff-produced presentation slides, staff shall request the completed presentation slides be delivered at least 48 hours in advance of the MPO committee meeting.
- B. Slides for each meeting shall include the following introductory slides to be read by the presiding officer of the meeting:
  - 1. Date of the meeting
  - 2. Notice of Nondiscrimination
  - 3. Participation Guidelines
  - 4. Accessibility Statement

### **III. MPO committee minutes**

- A. MPO staff drafts meeting minutes in a timely fashion to comply with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.
- B. MPO committee minutes are reviewed and approved by the committee chair.
- C. Staff shall strive to post draft minutes at least one week before a scheduled meeting where they are presented for approval by the committee.
- D. Like MPO board meeting minutes, committee 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.

## **6.5 MPO STUDY WORK SCOPES AND FINAL PRODUCTS**

- I. If some portion of an intended MPO work scope, such as research to develop a methodology, is needed before a work scope can be completed, as much as 10 percent of a project budget may be spent on a work scope.
- II. Staff draft work scopes and work products, complete internal reviews, and send work scopes and work products to the MPO liaison at MassDOT OTP for review, ideally three weeks before the MPO meeting. This timing allows for review within two weeks and one week advance posting for the MPO board. When appropriate, the MPO staff and liaison may identify relevant technical staff at MassDOT and/or the MBTA to review the material before submission to the MPO board.
- III. The MPO liaison at MassDOT OTP and other relevant MassDOT staff review and provide feedback to be incorporated before materials are finalized. While being reviewed, staff add the work scope or work product to the list of items to be considered at the agenda-setting meeting.
- IV. Determination as to whether and when each item is presented is decided at the MPO board agenda-setting meeting.
- V. Staff shall strive to post final work scopes or work products one week in advance of the MPO board meeting.
- VI. Board members discuss and vote to approve work scopes.

## **6.6 AGENCY-FUNDED STUDIES AND TECHNICAL ANALYSES**

Similar to MPO work scopes and final products, the process for agency-funded studies only differs as follows:



- I. Staff draft work scopes and work products, complete internal reviews, and send the materials to both the funding agency and the MPO liaison at MassDOT OTP for review, ideally three weeks before the MPO board meeting.
- II. The funding agency and MPO liaison at MassDOT OTP, and in some cases other relevant MassDOT staff, review and provide feedback to be incorporated before the materials are finalized.

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# Section 7—MPO Executive Director Hiring Process, Evaluation, and Compensation

## 7.1 MPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HIRING PROCESS

Upon the departure, retirement, dismissal, or other nature of exit of the executive director, the process for recruiting and hiring shall include the following steps:

- I. The MPO board members shall establish a search committee by majority vote. The search committee shall consist of the following representatives unless voted otherwise: the MPO chair, the MPO vice chair, a representative of the fiduciary agency (MAPC), the chair of the Regional Transportation Advisory Council, the chair of the Administration & Finance Committee, and two municipal or subregional representatives on the board, or any designees of those entities.
- II. The search committee shall meet, discuss, and produce a memo to the Boston Region MPO board with the following content:
  - A. Recommendation for designating an acting executive director(s) and the associated interim salary adjustment.
  - B. Description of the hiring process, which can include a recommendation concerning any deviations from or supplement to the process described in this Operations Plan.
  - C. Recommendation to solicit private consultants, or not.
  - D. Recommendation for any subset of the search committee members or their designees to carry out parts of the recommended process, including candidate screening as well as first and second interviews
    1. In making these recommendations, the search committee will prioritize diverse representation on interview teams.
  - E. Recommendation for designating a staff liaison to keep records, provide consistent communication with candidates, and inform staff of the process as appropriate.
- III. At the same time, the search committee or their designees shall draft a job description for the executive director.
  - A. At a minimum, the committee shall seek input from both MPO board members and MPO staff about desired qualities and qualifications via surveys implemented by the staff liaison or another method.

- B. The search committee shall include a salary range to be advertised that is in alignment with the agency's compensation plan.
- IV. The Boston Region MPO board shall discuss and vote to approve by majority vote the search committee's memo and executive director job description to be posted.
- V. The search committee or their designees shall revise the memo and/or job description as directed by the board and confirm the accuracy of the organizational chart.
  - A. The organizational chart shall be updated with support by the staff liaison if an acting executive director is named or other updates are needed.
  - B. A job announcement shall be prepared based on the agreed-upon content of the job description with the support of MPO staff if needed.
- VI. The search committee or their designees and fiduciary agent (MAPC) shall confer on the posting and advertising of the position, including the allocation of funds for paid advertisements and/or recruitment expertise. The committee shall work with the staff liaison to post the job on the Boston Region MPO website and circulate it to appropriate professional associations, academic institutions, and job websites throughout the country.
- VII. The search committee or its designees shall draft interview questions and evaluation forms to be utilized in two interview rounds. The questions and evaluation forms shall be submitted to the staff liaison for record-keeping.
- VIII. The staff liaison shall collect and disseminate applications through Neogov or the current software used by the fiduciary agent for managing job posting and recruiting. The search committee or its designees shall review all resumes and applications, including an initial screening to separate qualified and unqualified candidates, and select candidates to interview. The staff liaison shall catalog all applications received.
- IX. Interview Round 1:
  - A. The Round 1 interviewers designated by the search committee shall meet initially either in-person or virtually to discuss the upcoming interviews and confirm the interview questions and evaluation form.
  - B. With scheduling support from the staff liaison, the interviewers shall carry out the interviews either in person or virtually.

- C. The interviewers shall meet after the interviews to discuss recommendations for second-round interview candidates, which shall be shared with the full search committee.
  - D. The interviewers shall submit completed interview notes and evaluation forms to the staff liaison to support their recommendation.
- X. The search committee or its designees shall advise the staff liaison on providing process updates to MPO staff as feasible, including the expected timeframe for completing second-round interviews. The search committee or its designees shall work with the staff liaison to inform first-round candidates whether or not they were selected for a second round as well as to schedule the second round.
- XI. Interview Round 2:
  - A. The Round 2 interviewers designated by the search committee shall meet initially either in-person or virtually to discuss the upcoming interviews and confirm the interview questions and evaluation form.
  - B. With scheduling support by the staff liaison, the interviewers shall carry out the interviews in person. Finalists from out of state will be offered 50 percent reimbursement of travel and lodging costs for their trip to Boston, to be paid by the Central Transportation Planning Staff.
  - C. The interviewers shall meet after the interviews to discuss recommendations for second-round interview candidates. These recommendations shall be shared with the full search committee.
  - D. The interviewers shall submit completed interview notes and evaluation forms to support their recommendation to the staff liaison.
- XII. The search committee shall share its recommendation for finalist(s) with the MPO board and work with the staff liaison to schedule the finalist(s) attendance at an MPO board meeting. The full MPO board shall have the opportunity to interview the finalist(s). The MPO board shall make a hiring decision by majority vote after speaking with the finalist(s).
- XIII. The search committee shall share the MPO board decision with the staff liaison. The search committee or its designees shall work with the staff liaison to develop an offer letter and negotiate if necessary. The search committee shall report to the MPO board as needed if the offer is not accepted and an alternate finalist must be considered.

- XIV. The search committee shall work with the staff liaison to communicate with unsuccessful finalist(s) and inform MPO staff of the hiring decision.

## 7.2 MPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EVALUATION

The performance of the MPO executive director shall be evaluated annually, with an adjustment implemented on the same cycle as the rest of MPO staff, effective the beginning of the state fiscal year (SFY) on July 1.

- I. The process for performing an evaluation of the MPO executive director shall be as follows:
  - A. In May, the executive director shall complete an evaluation form consistent with the process used by MPO staff or as otherwise directed by the consensus of the chair, vice chair, and chair of the A&F Committee or their designees.
  - B. In May or June, the Executive Director shall meet with the chair, vice chair, and chair of A&F Committee or their designees to discuss the evaluation form, including the performance of the prior year and goal-setting for the coming year.
  - C. The Chair, vice chair, and chair of A&F Committee or their designees shall confer on a salary adjustment for the executive director, unless otherwise dictated by an employment contract. That recommendation shall be shared with the executive director, who shall then share with the director of finance for budgeting purposes, by June 15.
  - D. If this schedule is not feasible in a given year, any salary adjustment for the executive director shall be effective as of the start of the SFY, even if that date has passed.
  - E. The evaluation form and recommended salary adjustment shall be provided to the director of finance for record-keeping.
- II. The evaluation of the executive director shall assess progress towards goals established in the prior year's evaluation for the coming SFY.
  - A. The goals shall be established through the evaluation form submitted each year (typically in May) in advance of salary adjustments and reviewed and updated in consultation with the A&F Committee quarterly.
  - B. At each quarterly check-in, when the A&F Committee meets to discuss the operating budget of the staff to the MPO, the executive director shall report on their progress towards achieving goals and

objectives and offer any suggestions for revising or eliminating any of these goals.

- C. If needed, the A&F Committee may submit recommended updates to the annual goals identified in the evaluation form.

### 7.3 MPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMPENSATION

The range for compensating an executive director shall be based on compensation benchmarking updated every three years. Benchmarking may occur through a consultant-led process.

- I. Central Transportation Planning Staff has established a Compensation Plan establishing grades and associated salary ranges for all jobs at the agency, including the executive director. The Compensation Plan was initially published in 2022 based on a compensation consultant's 2021 market analysis and benchmarking of those jobs.
  - A. The salary ranges are typically updated every year by a small percentage based on a minimum assessment.
  - B. Upon hiring an executive director or at a minimum every three years after hiring an executive director, a more thorough benchmarking shall be conducted to update the Compensation Plan and ensure that the executive director, in addition to staff as a whole, are compensated fairly and competitively. The benchmarking may be based on the following:
    - 1. A consultant-led market analysis
    - 2. Surveying of relevant salaries by staff and board members
  - C. Every three years, staff shall develop a cost estimate and determine the viability for updating the benchmarking for all jobs or a subset at the agency, including the executive director. The estimate for the level of benchmarking shall be included in an annual operating budget approved by the A&F Committee.
  - D. At least every six years, benchmarking shall be conducted for all jobs at the agency.
- II. Staff performance shall be evaluated annually by their supervisors and adjustments recommended at the discretion of the executive director with any approvals required through contracting or other legal obligations. In addition, the executive director's salary shall be reviewed and adjusted after the benchmarking process as well as the evaluation process described in Section 7.2.

- A. The MPO board, as the appointing authority, may at the time of hiring or at any point in the future decide to offer the executive director a multi-year employment and compensation agreement, or opt to hire or maintain the executive director as an employee at will.
  - B. The executive director is FLSA-exempt.
- III. The recommended and approved (if required through contractual obligations) staff salary adjustments, including the executive director's adjustment, shall be shared with the A&F Committee during annual budget deliberations if feasible. If this timing is not feasible, this information will be shared with the committee when they have been approved for the SFY.

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## Section 8—Agency Information Sharing

### 8.1 GENERAL INFORMATION SHARING

- I. After approval of the TIP, MPO staff shall contact implementing agencies for all projects and communicate the process by which they shall keep the Boston Region MPO staff informed of project status on a regular basis. Project status information supports MPO planning and programming to enable the Boston Region MPO to identify issues that could cause a project to be deferred or extended into a subsequent fiscal year. On request, the implementing agencies shall submit this information to the Boston Region MPO chair or their designee and staff for coordination and for distribution to the MPO members by MPO staff. More information about this process is included in Section 8.2.
- II. MPO staff shall work with the implementing agencies and others to gather and proactively provide MPO board members with relevant financial information pertaining to the primary 3C-planning documents—the UPWP, TIP, and LRTP—to assist MPO board members in the 3C planning process.
- III. Board members shall not vote on items if relevant or requested information about the topic of the vote is not shared by relevant agencies, either directly or through MPO staff, at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting where the vote takes place. MPO staff shall ensure that such relevant information is shared with board members. If information is not adequate for board members to make a well-informed vote, the vote may be postponed until such information is provided. This policy is intended to ensure that board members and staff have enough time to review new information to inform questions and discussion at the next board meeting. As with public comment periods, the MPO may waive this requirement by two-thirds majority vote in emergency circumstances, such as when there is a need to take immediate action to protect public safety or take advantage of an extraordinary funding opportunity.

### 8.2 TIP PROJECT INFORMATION SHARING

- I. MPO staff shall attend or review notes from MassDOT Highway Division's weekly Priority of Projects (PoP) meeting to receive project readiness updates related to TIP projects advertising in the current fiscal year. MPO staff shall collect readiness status updates in a document that shall be shared with the MPO at least 48 hours in advance of quarterly updates to the board (or more frequently if requested by the board). At quarterly



meetings, where staff share project updates, implementing agencies shall be invited for the purpose of addressing any questions which may arise. Meetings shall take place by the end of each quarter (Q) of the federal fiscal year: by December 31 (end of Q1), March 31 (end of Q2), June 30 (end of Q3), and September 30 (end of Q4).

- A. At the end of the federal fiscal year in September (Q4), per the MOU, state agencies (primarily MassDOT and MBTA) shall provide staff with more detailed information on project status of all TIP projects that were programmed for completion in the prior fiscal year and may have been advertised for construction. MPO staff shall present this information and agencies shall be present to answer questions on information presented by MPO staff.
  - B. Before the board votes on the new TIP (typically in Q2 or early Q3), state agencies shall offer a full summary of how projects fared in the previous fiscal year. This summary shall be shared with MPO staff to be distributed to the MPO board. The state agencies shall be present to answer any questions on information presented by MPO staff. This summary must be provided before asking the Boston Region MPO board to vote on the new TIP.
- II. In addition to quarterly updates, MPO staff shall share relevant project and financial information with the MPO board on an as-needed basis.
  - III. As necessary, MassDOT OTP and Boston MPO staff shall coordinate to produce TIP Adjustments and Amendments for projects in the current or next fiscal year for MPO members' review and approval.
  - IV. MPO staff shall coordinate with project stakeholders and share relevant project information with related municipalities and stakeholders with the goal of preventing projects from being deferred to a subsequent fiscal year if not necessary.
  - V. MassDOT OTP and Boston Region MPO TIP program manager and capital programming planner (or other relevant staff) shall meet at least monthly to exchange financial and project readiness updates on projects in all years of the TIP.
  - VI. The TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee shall also play a role in reviewing and discussing additional information needed for the TIP as described earlier in this document.

### **8.3 FEDERAL FUNDING ASSUMPTIONS**

- I. MPO staff shall attend quarterly financial update meetings held by the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) and

MassDOT to obtain updates on federal funding assumptions. This includes the annual meeting of MARPA when the federal funding information on obligation authority is shared with MARPA. MPO staff shall use that information to develop the constrained TIP.

- II. MPO staff shall annually and as-needed share federal funding assumptions, narrative guidance, and financial program targets to MPO members regarding the primary 3C-planning documents. This information shall include, but is not limited to, the following:
  - A. Expected future federal highway funding for Massachusetts
  - B. Planned debt repayments
  - C. State matches for remaining federal highway funds
  - D. Funding for statewide highway, planning, and pass-through items
  - E. Formula for distributing remaining funds to regional planning agencies
  - F. Federal discretionary grant opportunities
  - G. Financial risk factors, such as inflation

## Section 9—Maintenance of Operations Plan

Every four years following the federal certification review process, or at the discretion of a majority vote of board members, the Operations Plan shall be reviewed in full and modified as needed. Revisions to this Operations Plan may be discussed in committee formats such as the A&F Committee, but revisions shall be reviewed by the MPO board and approved with a majority vote.

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The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) operates its programs, services, and activities in compliance with federal nondiscrimination laws including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and related statutes and regulations. Title VI prohibits discrimination in federally assisted programs and requires that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin (including limited English proficiency), be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity that receives federal assistance. Related federal nondiscrimination laws administered by the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, or both, prohibit discrimination on the basis of age, sex, and disability. The Boston Region MPO considers these protected populations in its Title VI Programs, consistent with federal interpretation and administration. In addition, the Boston Region MPO provides meaningful access to its programs, services, and activities to individuals with limited English proficiency, in compliance with U.S. Department of Transportation policy and guidance on federal Executive Order 13166.

The Boston Region MPO also complies with the Massachusetts Public Accommodation Law, M.G.L. c 272 sections 92a, 98, 98a, which prohibits making any distinction, discrimination, or restriction in admission to, or treatment in a place of public accommodation based on race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or ancestry. Likewise, the Boston Region MPO complies with the Governor's Executive Order 526, section 4, which requires that all programs, activities, and services provided, performed, licensed, chartered, funded, regulated, or contracted for by the state shall be conducted without unlawful discrimination based on race, color, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, creed, ancestry, national origin, disability, veteran's status (including Vietnam-era veterans), or background.

A complaint form and additional information can be obtained by contacting the MPO or at [http://www.bostonmpo.org/mpo\\_non\\_discrimination](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](mailto:civilrights@ctps.org)

**By Telephone:**

857.702.3700 (voice)

For people with hearing or speaking difficulties, connect through the state MassRelay service:

- **Relay Using TTY or Hearing Carry-over:** 800.439.2370
- **Relay Using Voice Carry-over:** 866.887.6619
- **Relay Using Text to Speech:** 866.645.9870

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