

# Draft Memorandum for the Record

## Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

### Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Update Committee Meeting Summary

#### July 10, 2024, Meeting

1:00 PM–1:41 PM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

Tom Bent, representing the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) and Mayor Katjana Ballantyne

### Decisions

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Update Committee agreed to the following:

- Approve the minutes of the meeting of March 6, 2024

### Meeting Agenda

#### 1. Introductions

See attendance on page 6.

#### 2. Public Comments

There were none.

#### 3. Action Item: Approval of March 6, 2024, MOU Meeting Minutes *Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar*

1. MOU Meeting Minutes of March 6, 2024 ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

#### *Vote*

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 6, 2024, was made by the City of Boston (Jen Rowe) and seconded by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Lenard Diggins). The following committee member abstained: MBTA Advisory Board (Hanna Switekowski). The motion carried.

#### 4. Looking Ahead—Work Planning—*Dave Hong, MPO Staff*

Dave Hong, MPO staff, presented a draft of the 2024 MOU Work Plan and key dates:

- July 17, 2024 (MOU Update Committee)
  - Review Operations Plan updates

Committee to Update the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) 2  
Meeting Minutes of July 10, 2024

---

- Vote to bring MOU progress update to the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) board
- August 1, 2024 (MPO Board)
  - Chair Report: Notify board that we will bring a vote on August 15
  - Presentation: Update of work modules and preview of next steps
- August 7, 2024 (MOU Update Committee)
  - Committee updates on any public comments
- August 15, 2024 (MPO Board)
  - Action Item: Vote to release MPO MOU Update for 21-day public review period
- September 19, 2024 (MPO Board)
  - Action Item: Vote to endorse MPO MOU

### ***Discussion***

Eric Bourassa, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), asked if committee members would see all the updates to the MOU today, or if there will be forthcoming updates to review.

D. Hong responded that there is an updated MOU document with all the revisions to date linked on the meeting calendar, and between July 10, 2024, and July 17, 2024, there will be an opportunity for members to review that document and make comments.

### **5. Advisory Council Role Progress Update—*Stella Jordan, MPO Staff***

Stella Jordan, MPO staff, presented an overview of previous Advisory Council discussions and the revised language related to the Advisory Council in the updated MOU.

S. Jordan highlighted three Advisory Council discussions related to MOU language. In the first discussion on March 13, 2024, the Advisory Council determined the following topics as priorities for the revised MOU language:

- Membership
- Education and capacity to participate in technical discussions
- Board seat
- Advisory role
- Evaluating impact

In the second discussion on April 10, 2024, the Advisory Council reviewed draft language for the MOU document. The Advisory Council provided feedback related to the role of the Advisory Council.

In the third discussion on May 8, 2024, the Advisory Council discussed the draft, and several key themes emerged, including the following:

- Importance of Advisory Council's board and committee membership
- Importance of education in the Advisory Council
- Importance of advisory role and providing advice on specific topics and ideas

S. Jordan stated that these discussions resulted in revisions to drafted MOU language based on Advisory Council feedback, which included the following:

- Emphasize the Advisory Council's advisory role
- Narrow the definition of the advisory role (to discuss specific issues rather than facilitate broad conversations)
- Emphasize accountability as a key function of the advisory role
- Clarify the language regarding membership on the board and committees

S. Jordan stated that the revisions are not radically different from previous language and the revisions seek to better emphasize the areas of priority, mainly the importance of the Advisory Council's role.

### ***Discussion***

Lenard Diggins, Regional Transportation Advisory Council, expressed appreciation for MPO staff's work on the language and stated that they encapsulated the concerns of committee members well.

E. Bourassa asked if any revisions to the MOU language change the description of the organizations that participate in the Advisory Council. E. Bourassa stated that when the Advisory Council was created it was a space for municipalities but evolved into a space for any organization or person that wanted to be more engaged.

S. Jordan responded that the revisions focus more on the function and role that the Advisory Council plays in relation to the MPO and its work. The revisions are less focused on the details related to the composition of the Advisory Council and day-to-day functions. S. Jordan stated that making the Advisory Council a space for anyone who wants to participate and learn about the MPO is still a goal.

Jen Rowe, City of Boston, stated that the revised language discusses bringing greater accountability and greater transparency to encourage MPO decision-making to be consistent with the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). J. Rowe suggested a revision to this section that would clarify who and what is the Advisory Council holding accountable, and if this extends beyond the LRTP.

S. Jordan responded that the intent of the revision was to specify the role that the Advisory Council plays in providing advice to MPO staff on ongoing work and being a voice on the MPO board and committees. S. Jordan stated that the overarching framework for the role focuses on the LRTP because the LRTP is the overarching framework for the MPO's work, and it provides a framework for the variety of viewpoints the Advisory Council represents.

L. Diggins stated that the Advisory Council represents multiple organizations that are all trying to keep the MPO board accountable, and that is where the accountability lies.

J. Rowe stated that the explanation of the language makes sense and expressed understanding of how the LRTP is used as the focus when referring to accountability. J. Rowe suggested adding language for context about how MPOs were formed when those deciding the allocation of federal funding were not held accountable to communities' needs, and referencing federal legislation or the 3C process.

L. Diggins responded that the Advisory Council does not report to anyone and the issue with accountability is that it implies enforcement, whereas MPO board members check in with each other and grade themselves on the MPO's goals. L. Diggins emphasized that the accountability comes from a friendly, intellectual space rather than enforcement and confrontation.

## **6. MOU Document Update: Progress Update—Erin Maguire, MPO Staff Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar**

1. MOU Draft Document Redline ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

Erin Maguire, MPO staff, presented comments that were shared prior, highlights of sections that were transferred from the MOU to the Operations Plan, and other revisions made to the document since the last committee review.

The first change to page one added the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) and Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA) to the list of signatories.

The following change presented moved a section from lower in Section One to higher up to help with the document's narrative and to make it easier to understand.

The following change on page five added a statement for the MWRTA and CATA referencing Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 161B.

The following change on page six in Section Two added the MWRTA and CATA to the list of Boston Region MPO entities. There is also the addition of an explanation of the added Regional Transit Authority seat.

In Sections 3A and 3B, text was relocated for narrative and legibility.

In Section 3D, there was a change to language related to the fiduciary agent agreement that provides clarity on the definition of the Central Transportation Planning Staff and its relationship with the Boston Region MPO.

The following revision is in Section 4B and consisted of a deletion of some information about the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) project information sharing and the development process, which will be relocated into the Operations Plan.

The final revision was in Section 5, which corresponds with the Operations Plan. This section was rewritten because the Operations Plan is now a separate document.

### ***Discussion***

J. Rowe asked to confirm that there would be an opportunity to review the revised document and make comments between this meeting and the next meeting on July 17, 2024.

E. Maguire confirmed that a revised MOU document will be sent out shortly after the meeting and members would have about a week to review the document.

D. Hong clarified that the MOU has already gone through an editorial process, but the Operations Plan has not, so it may take some more time to get sent out.

T. Bent asked for a deadline for members to submit comments by, and D. Hong responded that the deadline is at the end of the day on Monday, July 15, or Tuesday, July 16.

### **7. Members' Items**

There were none.

### **8. Adjourn**

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

## Attendance

---

<b>Members</b>	<b>Representatives and Alternates</b>
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
MBTA Advisory Board	Hanna Switekowski
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Derek Krevat
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	John Romano
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Len Diggins
City of Boston	Jen Rowe

---

---

<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Felicia Webb	Cape Ann Transportation Authority
Eduardo Marques	Cape Ann Transportation Authority
Josh Ostroff	MBTA
Isabella Mackinnon	MBTA Advisory Board
Jim Nee	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority

---

---

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

---

Tegin Teich, Executive Director  
Dave Hong  
Erin Maguire  
Lauren Magee  
Stella Jordan  
Sean Rourke

---

## CIVIL RIGHTS NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Welcome. Bem Vinda. Bienvenido. Akeyi. 欢迎. 歡迎.



You are invited to participate in our transportation planning process, free from discrimination. The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is committed to nondiscrimination in all activities and complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin (including limited English proficiency). Related federal and state nondiscrimination laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of age, sex, disability, and additional protected characteristics.

For additional information or to file a civil rights complaint, visit [www.bostonmpo.org/mpo\\_non\\_discrimination](http://www.bostonmpo.org/mpo_non_discrimination).

To request accommodations at meetings (such as assistive listening devices, materials in accessible formats and languages other than English, and interpreters in American Sign Language and other languages) or if you need this information in another language, please contact:

**Boston Region MPO Title VI Specialist**

10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150

Boston, MA 02116

Phone: 857.702.3700

Email: [civilrights@ctps.org](mailto:civilrights@ctps.org)

For people with hearing or speaking difficulties, connect through the state MassRelay service, [www.mass.gov/massrelay](http://www.mass.gov/massrelay). Please allow at least five business days for your request to be fulfilled.