



BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Phillip Eng, MPO Chair | Interim Secretary and CEO, Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Tegin Leigh Teich, Executive Director, MPO Staff

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 13, 2025
TO: Brian Kane, Chair of Administration and Finance Committee
FROM: Tegin Teich, Executive Director of Central Transportation Planning Staff to the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
RE: State Fiscal Year 2026 Goals and First Quarter Updates

In May 2025, I completed an annual performance evaluation with Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) representatives, following the process described in the MPO's Operations Plan. The evaluation team included the following:

- The Boston Region MPO's chair's designee: David Mohler, Office of Transportation Planning at the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
- The Boston Region MPO's vice chair: Marc Draisen, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
- The chair of the Boston Region MPO's Administration and Finance Committee: Brian Kane, MBTA Advisory Board

This memo includes the complete set of state fiscal year (SFY) 2026 goals established in the review, as well as a summary of progress towards goals completed in the first quarter and part of the second quarter (July through October 2025).

1 STATE FISCAL YEAR 2026 GOALS

My evaluation included the following SFY 2026 goals organized by the categories in the agency's strategic plan. These categories have been abbreviated compared to the description in the evaluation.

Identity and Awareness (combination of Sector Leadership and Marketing and Public Presentation)

- Continue to explore the feasibility of advancing a branding initiative and enhancing the agency's public presence.
- Maintain similar levels of participation in professional development opportunities (primarily, conferences).

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Programs and Services

- Continue the process of refining multi-year plans.
- Develop a draft agency action plan to help guide the development of the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).
- Advance the concept of a pipeline of planning to project funding through technical assistance and planning work.

Governance

- Continue to explore ways to expand board engagement in staff work.

Organizational Structure and Staffing

- Complete a full refresh of the compensation plan.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Support an internal working group in identifying improvements for staff recruitment and onboarding.

Funding and Operations

- Operate neither with a significant deficit or surplus (0-5 percent).
- Maintain stability for existing staff in the context of fiscal uncertainty.

2 JULY-OCTOBER 2025 UPDATES

The following is a summary of progress towards goals completed in the first quarter and part of the second quarter.

2.1 Identity and Awareness

While a formal branding process was postponed until a future year, efforts to organize and align the agency's external publications and communication continue. Communications, graphics, and editorial staff collaborated on standard approaches for developing visual identity packages for large planning initiatives, StoryMaps, and other publications. Staff teams are currently exploring updated accessibility practices for publications and discussing standards for white papers, briefs, and memos.

In addition, we have committed significant resources over the last four months to the website redesign, which is now scheduled for completion at the end of 2025. The website at bostonmpo.org is one of the primary ways the agency shares its work with the public. In 2026, we will launch the new website and utilize it as an opportunity to reintroduce ourselves to the public.

In addition to maintaining our investment in conference attendance, the summer and fall presented opportunities for more unique, collaborative events that enriched staff and elevated the work of the Boston Region MPO.

In August, I participated a peer exchange event hosted jointly by the Association for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Center for Environmental Excellence. AASHTO sponsored the attendance of an MPO leader and a state department of transportation (DOT) leader from each of about 10 states. The purpose of the exchange was to discuss strategies for improving collaboration between MPOs and DOTs on major projects.

September brought many professional development opportunities for me and for staff:

- I participated in a summit hosted by the Shared Use Mobility Center, which brought together change agents from across the country to build regional coalitions. With a number of colleagues from the Boston region, I participated in workshopping a common vision of a transportation future and brainstorming ways we can collaborate to reach that future.
- The majority of staff on the MPO's travel demand modeling team submitted proposals that were selected for presentation at the highly specialized Modeling Mobility Conference. Staff collaborated with other developers, programmers, and modelers in the transportation field to share best practices. We are leading the industry in experimenting with exploratory modeling to better inform decision-making about transportation policies and infrastructure.
- Twelve staff members attended AMPO's annual conference in Providence, Rhode Island. We learned about the evolving roles of MPOs, best practices in project planning and delivery, innovative strategies for engagement, and evolution of national policy. Staff also participated in a panel discussing our experience in piloting new approaches to funding projects to create first- and last-mile connections.
- Finally, a representative of the MPO's Communications and Engagement team attended the conference of the International Association for Public Participation, which focused on sharing methodologies for including varied perspectives, generating welcoming dialogue, and creating meaningful engagement.

Staff also have continued to attend Moving Together, MassDOT's annual conference. About 30 staff members attended the conference this October. This

year was the first year MPO staff have been invited to serve on a panel to discuss our innovative Vision Zero work.

2.2 Programs and Services

In August through October, leadership team members (myself, the deputy executive director, and directors) met almost weekly to plan for the further evolution of multi-year plans and the continued development of an agency action plan as we complete our five-year strategic plan this year.

One outcome was the kickoff of the 2025–26 updates to the agency's 13 existing multi-year plans (MYPs). MYPs define the vision, goals, and planned work for a program area for the next three to five years. The development of MYPs gives program managers a framework for looking beyond the required single-year work plan, raising awareness and visibility of planned work, increasing opportunities for collaboration and coordination across groups, enabling consistent leadership team feedback on work planning, and supporting resource allocation to work towards longer-term goals.

Two of our grant-funded research and planning projects have included second phases for implementing quick-build projects advancing planning to implementation this year:

- Phase 1 of our NO-HEAT Project concluded this past summer. This project identified risk locations and potential mitigation strategies to offset the effects of increasing extreme heat in our region, particularly for those who are vulnerable to the highest exposure. Using our newly created datasets and working closely with our municipal partners and community-based organizations, we are now in Phase 2 of our NO-HEAT project. Phase 2 involves designing and implementing pilot cooling strategies such as shaded routes to make walking and biking safer, more comfortable, and more accessible. These pilots will be implemented and tested in spring 2026.
- In 2025, the Boston Region MPO released its first regional Vision Zero Action Plan. This is a comprehensive plan with distinct, measurable, actionable steps for eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries in our region. This fall, we have been collaborating with our federal partners to launch a second awarded discretionary grant to pilot quick-build, traffic-calming projects paired with outreach and education to test how different strategies perform in urban and suburban contexts as a step toward more permanent implementations.

In support of building our project pipeline, we have spent the summer and fall working with the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee and the full MPO board to develop new policies for project rescoring (creating a consistent basis for comparing projects across all years of the TIP) and to create milestones in each year of the TIP. These policies, planned to be fully enacted by the end of calendar year 2025, empower staff and board members to identify project readiness and cost risks earlier, and to engage project stakeholders before it is too late to make adjustments. These new policies should contribute to reducing last-minute movements of projects between years, which has caused the MPO board to face difficult decision-making to address significant surpluses in near years of the TIP and little available resources to fund new projects in outer years.

We have coordinated these efforts alongside the more intensive kickoff of the long-range plan development process. In early November, it was announced that the next long-range plan will be due in 2028 instead of 2027, offering more opportunities to explore scenario planning and improve the plan.

2.3 Governance

Over the last several years, we have engaged the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Committee in a broader view of the work of the agency, including programmatic work. In recent months, we have elevated their awareness of the full scope of the MPO's work and proposed a more streamlined process for refining the existing extensive universe of ideas for discrete studies. Several meetings are planned in November and December to discuss four program areas and the PL-funded work that the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) carries out on behalf of the MPO. Our multi-year planning process enables program managers to create consistent documentation of vision, goals, and actions that they can use as a framework to discuss their work with the UPWP Committee and stakeholders.

I also continue to provide Executive Director reports to the full MPO board on the various activities staff engage in outside of regular MPO scopes of work. This includes reporting on insights gained from professional development opportunities, including the aforementioned AMPO annual meeting, the AMPO/AASHTO peer exchange, and the new Shared Use Mobility Summit.

In September, we held the first public meeting of the new Advisory Council, which is a special advisory committee required in the Boston Region MPO's Memorandum of Understanding with a voting seat on the MPO board. The intent is for the Advisory Council to represent diverse stakeholder input into the transportation planning process. Members of the restructured Community

Advisory Council include representatives of community-based organizations and advocates focused on a wide range of issues, including transit, walking/biking/rolling safety, housing, public health, and the environment. The first full MPO board meeting with the Community Advisory Council represented was in October.

I will report on the 2025 Annual Meeting, which has been rescheduled for December to enable the Interim Secretary of Transportation's attendance, in the next memo to the Administration and Finance Committee.

Finally, the fiduciary agent to the Boston Region MPO staff, MAPC, experienced a significant leadership change with the retirement of the executive director after about 20 years and the naming of Lizzi Weyant as the new executive director. As our relationship with MAPC evolves, we will continue to work on an updated fiduciary agent agreement that we aim to bring to the full board at later in SFY 2026.

2.4 Organizational Structure and Staffing

The ongoing compensation plan update has been extended to address further questions about the compensation structure. This retiming will allow us to engage the agency in updating job descriptions for all current positions. The updates are expected to take place in November, after which we will continue working with the consultant supporting our compensation plan update.

While not directly related to my stated goal, it is worth noting significant successes and challenges in Quarters 1 and 2 related to staffing and recruitment. After long recruitment processes, we filled two manager positions for the Model Development and Data Management teams. With these successes, we have a full management team. However, three staff members (two full-time and one part-time) announced their retirements planned for December. Since the beginning of the SFY, resignations also included a senior planner, human resource and operations coordinator, graphic designer, and program managers of our public engagement and performance-based planning programs. We have replaced a senior planner and are actively planning or engaged in recruitment processes for the other open positions.

2.5 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The beginning of SFY 2026 has been a highly active period for the agency's DEI work and the agency's Ideas Group, which supports that work. In the first and second quarters of the SFY, the Ideas Group was formalized and took on more leadership in advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) at the agency. The members finalized and activated their charter and were deeply

involved in the engagement of a consultant to develop an agency DEIA Action Plan.

After a rigorous selection process, YW was selected as the consultant to develop the first organization-wide DEIA Action Plan, which was completed in September. The process included intensive dialogue sessions with groups of staff, focus groups, and an equity review of policies and practices. As part of the follow-up on developing the action plan, all staff were invited to an afternoon workshop hosted by YW titled *Understanding Social Identity*. We look forward to formally kicking off the implementation of the DEIA Action Plan in Quarters 2 and 3. The Ideas Group will continue to be significantly involved as we build a road map to implement the action plan.

2.6 Funding and Operations

The agency continues to maintain a healthy status with minimal surplus or deficits each month. However, there have been some fiscal challenges in the new SFY. We continue to experience challenges in finalizing some of our competitive, discretionary, federal grant agreements with our federal partners. Also, our documented cash flow has been impacted by shutdowns of fiscal systems, preventing our fiduciary agent from being able to identify payments as attributable to the MPO. Some process challenges have occurred with communication in the context of staff outages and turnover. We are working diligently to improve communication flows and ensure that the MPO's income is appropriately recorded.

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