



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: February 5, 2026

TO: Brian Kane, Chair of Administration and Finance Committee

FROM: Tegin Teich, Executive Director of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

RE: State Fiscal Year 2026 Goal Updates (November 2025 through January 2026)

This memo includes updates representing progress towards state fiscal year (SFY) 2026 goals established in my May 2025 self-evaluation as the Executive Director of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Because of the timing of the MPO's Administration and Finance (A&F) Committee meetings, these updates cover November 2025 through January 2026, overlapping with both the second and third quarters of the SFY. This memo does not include information about the review itself; the SFY 2026 goals set in my evaluation process were documented in a prior memo posted on November 13, 2025, for the November 20, 2025, A&F Committee meeting.

1 Identity and Awareness

Professional development: Two MPO staff members attended the Southern New England American Planning Association (SNEAPA) annual conference in Rhode Island, and two staff members attended the Transportation Research Board (TRB) annual conference in January.

In January, I attended my first Massachusetts Municipal Association annual meeting, called Connect 351. I found this to be a forum that I had not yet engaged in to see board members and meet leadership, elected officials, and staff from many of the municipalities in our region. I found it to be an excellent opportunity to increase awareness of the MPO's work in planning and funding projects.

Branding and agency presence: At the TRB annual meeting, the MPO's Director of Modeling and Analytics, Marty Milkovits, received the Zephyr Leadership Award, which recognizes an individual who advances transportation and land use decision-making for the public good. Marty was recognized for serving as the co-chair of the new Modeling Mobility conference, for his work to

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advance practices in Decision-Making Under Deep Uncertainty, and for his role in making the Boston Region MPO's travel demand model more transparent. Marty's success and recognition elevates the MPO, particularly in leading the industry in experimenting with exploratory modeling, a new way of defining and analyzing scenarios, providing even more insights for stakeholders from the MPO's forecasting tools.

Work continues on redesigning the MPO's website, which is where many people first encounter the MPO. After the conclusion of the consultant contract supporting the redesign, staff have continued to work on refining existing web content and developing new web content. We anticipate launching the new MPO website in the spring.

2 Programs and Services

Multi-year plans and agency action plan: In November, the MPO's leadership team reviewed and discussed updates to 13 multi-year plans (MYPs). Drafted and updated by the staff engaged in the work, these MYPs establish the vision for the program or body of work, as well as the goals and deliverables for the coming three to five years.

This year, we piloted a new coordination strategy for three of the MYPs. The goal was to model and test new forms of cross-agency coordination and communication to enhance work planning overall. In January, the leadership team met two times with the Freight, Transportation Impact Mitigation, and Congestion Management Process program managers and their supervisors to discuss connections across the work plans. The MYPs were then updated to reflect coordination opportunities in advance of drafting the programs' write-ups for the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). We met twice all together to discuss the coordination opportunities—the first to identify the opportunities and the second to finalize updates to the MYPs.

Pipeline of planning to project funding: In December, we launched the development of one of our identified strategic initiatives, which are cross-agency, priority areas of work for the coming years. We engaged two MPO managers in coordination with the leadership team to develop a project plan for a strategic initiative to enhance connections between our planning and design work and federally funded and constructed projects. This project plan lays out an approach for the next 12 months to identify gaps, propose solutions, and implement improvements that ensure that our planning work leads to constructed results that advance regional goals.

3 Governance

Expanding board engagement in staff work: The MPO's third Annual Meeting was held on December 11, 2025. Annual Meetings are a unique opportunity to engage the members and designees of the Boston Region MPO board more broadly in the work and topics that the MPO engages with throughout the year. The Interim Secretary and Undersecretary of Transportation attended and provided remarks. The agenda included highlights of the MPO's accomplishments over the past year, a multi-agency panel on coordination to accelerate project readiness, and the usual business of appointing committee slates and electing the vice chair. We are currently collecting feedback from board members on the event to further improve these meetings as opportunities for board engagement.

In December and January, we continued our work to expand the scope of the UPWP Committee meetings to include discussions about all the work the MPO staff is engaged in, expanding from the historical focus on discrete studies. In January, in addition to discussing the Transportation Impact Mitigation Program, the committee members also heard from and engaged staff of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) in their use of the PL funding that they receive and that is documented in the UPWP.

In December, we engaged our board's subregional representatives in a new Regionwide Transportation Planning Fall Meeting. We asked board representatives to facilitate breakout sessions about the transportation needs of their subregions. We found this to be an important supplemental event to the subregional meetings that MAPC hosts throughout the year, which often focus on topics other than transportation.

4 Organizational Structure and Staffing

Refresh of the Compensation Plan: In November and December, we worked to update all job descriptions across the agency. In January, we used the insights learned to update the base job templates for several career tracks to improve consistency in our job descriptions, provide clear differentiation between roles where needed, and to be more concise, and focused on what should be used to assess performance. This work, which included a workshop with our compensation consultant, has provided us with a new framework that can be used to support a more comprehensive update of the plan.

Given the scale of the work to update job descriptions and the short time remaining to update the plan in advance of the next evaluation cycle, we are narrowing our work in the coming month with the consultant to focus on the most impactful updates to the plan. This will likely include re-examining the way career

tracks are represented, better clarifying what is needed to advance in a track, and benchmarking certain positions. In parallel we will also engage the consultant to support staff-wide education on the plan development and implementation of the plan, as requested by staff. We will continue to assess and update the compensation plan in future years as needed.

5 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Supporting internal working group:

Over the last few months, we have engaged the MPO's Ideas Group in developing a work plan for their role in implementing the recommendations in the recently completed action plan and equity review of agency policy and practices. Unexpected staff absences delayed an official kickoff of this work, but the Ideas Group and leadership team are highly engaged and invested in implementing recommendations from these efforts.

6 Funding and Operations

Operate within 0-5 percent surplus/deficit: We have recovered from delays in receiving the annual Combined PL/5303 (3C) contract and secured the advance payment to maintain a significant, positive cash flow. We have worked with MassDOT and MAPC to refine and improve communication flows. We continue to partner with MAPC when needed if the MPO must advance payments that exceed the MPO's cash flow before being able to request federal reimbursements on competitive grants such as the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant. In recent months, the MPO's cash flow has been more than adequate to cover advance payments.

Stability in fiscal uncertainty: The federal government has released updated terms and conditions for competitive grants. At this time, the contracts for the already awarded Prioritization Process Pilot Program (PPP) and second SS4A grant are still in the process of being reviewed and finalized. The MPO applied for and was awarded a third SS4A grant of \$6.25 million to conduct further analysis and support safety education programs.

In the meantime, the MPO received updates about federal formula funding availability for FFY 2027 and beyond at the annual meeting of MassDOT and the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA). At this meeting in January, staff from the Office of Transportation Planning at MassDOT reported on the anticipated levels of funding for future years based on updated information on federal funding levels.

The Combined 3C formula funds make up the majority of the MPO's current annual revenue to support staff time and direct expenses (80 percent in SFY

2026). The contracted amount for the Boston Region MPO is expected to increase less than 2 percent in the next FFY, less than our typical average salary increases. Despite the small increase, changes in staffing over the year along with the additional funding the MPO is expected to receive from agencies and through competitive grants (such as SS4A and PPPP) put the MPO in a strong position for the coming FFY 2027 to maintain our existing staff and continue to fill open positions. In addition, in order to carry out the SS4A and PPPP activities, the MPO will likely need to recruit additional staff.

At the annual MassDOT/MARPA meeting, MassDOT also reported on the balances of both de-obligated and unobligated PL balances. De-obligated PL balances represent funding that had been contracted to be spent by MPOs in a given year that were not spent. Unobligated balances represent funding that was apportioned in a given year but never contracted to the MPOs due to assumed obligation limits established by Congress. MassDOT updated its guidance for enabling MPOs to access de-obligated PL balances for future work. We have begun drafting a request for contracting for de-obligated PL funds for FFY 2027 to spend down the \$931,263 balance that MassDOT reported as available for the Boston Region MPO.

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