

# BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION



October 2014  
Amended April 2019

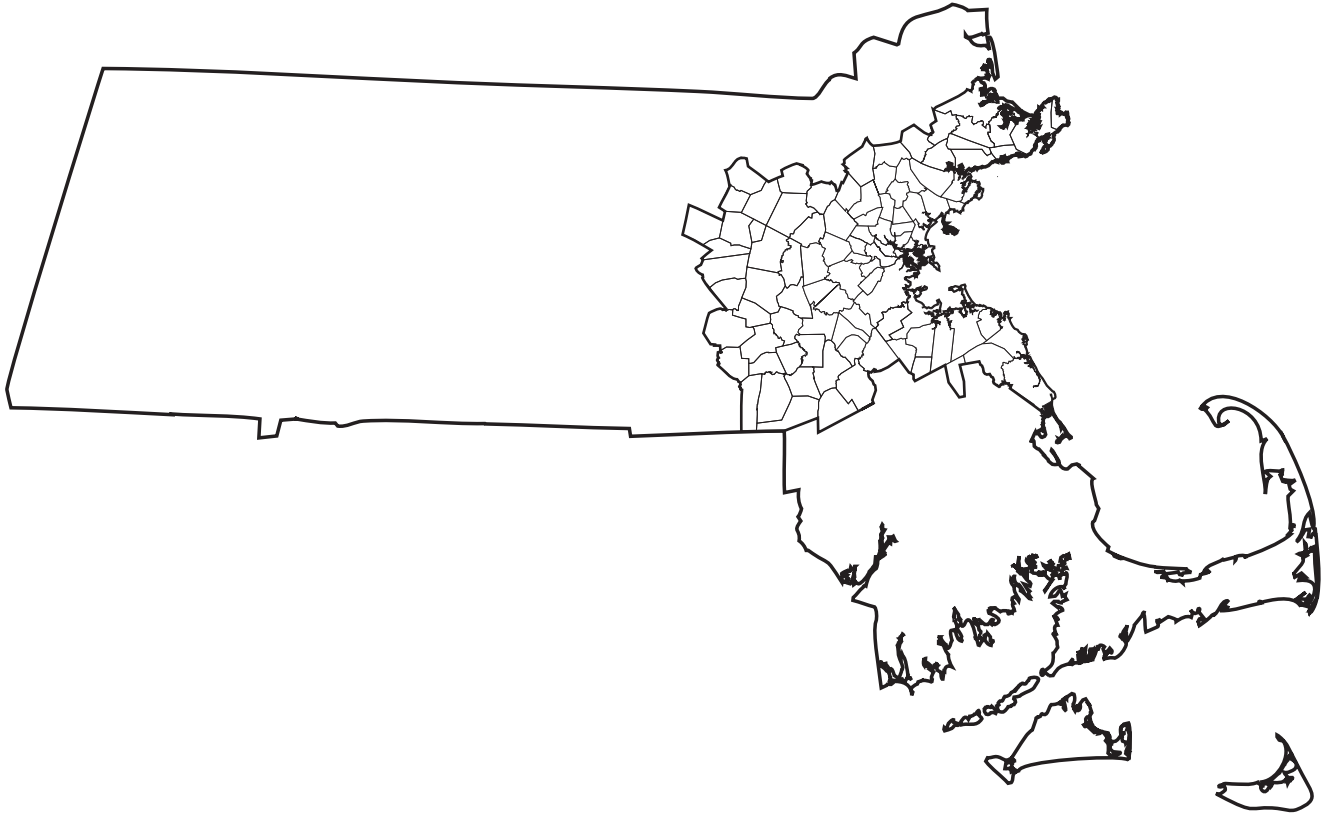
# Public Participation Plan

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Central Transportation Planning Staff  
Directed by the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization. The MPO is composed of state and regional agencies and authorities, and local governments.

October 2014  
Amended April 2019



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| TABLE OF CONTENTS  | PAGE |
|--|------|
| <b>Executive Summary</b> .....   | 11   |
| <b>Chapter 1—Introduction</b> .....  | 13   |
| <b>Chapter 2—The Boston Region MPO’s Vision, Function, and Structure</b> ..... | 15   |
| 2.1 Purpose of the MPO.....  | 15   |
| 2.2 The Boston Region MPO .....  | 16   |
| 2.2.1 The Boston Region MPO’s Central Vision .....                             | 18   |
| 2.2.2 Work of the Boston Region MPO .....                                      | 18   |
| 2.2.3 Composition of the Boston Region MPO .....                               | 22   |
| Current Membership .....   | 22   |
| MPO Staff: the Central Transportation Planning Staff .....                     | 23   |
| MPO Committees.....  | 23   |
| <b>Chapter 3—The MPO’s Approach to Public Participation</b> .....              | 27   |
| 3.1 Federal Requirements for Public Participation.....                         | 27   |
| 3.2 Updating the Public Participation Plan .....                               | 28   |
| 3.3 MPO Public Participation Vision and Guidelines .....                       | 28   |
| 3.4 Opportunities for Public Participation .....                               | 29   |
| 3.4.1 How to Be Informed .....   | 29   |
| 3.4.2 How to Be Involved.....  | 31   |
| MPO and MPO Committee Meetings .....   | 31   |
| Regional Transportation Advisory Council .....                                 | 32   |
| MPO-Sponsored Meetings .....   | 33   |
| Workshops .....  | 33   |
| General Information Sessions .....   | 34   |
| TIP and UPWP Information Sessions.....   | 34   |
| Forums.....  | 34   |
| Special Topic Discussions.....   | 35   |
| Other Opportunities for Public Participation.....                              | 35   |
| Surveys .....  | 35   |
| Public Information Email.....  | 35   |
| Website Comments .....   | 35   |



|  |   |    |
|--|---|----|
|  | MAPC Subregion Meetings and Coordinated Activities .....                        | 35 |
|  | MPO “Invite Us Over” .....  | 36 |
| 3.4.3  | Notice of MPO Activities .....  | 36 |
| 3.4.4  | Access to MPO and MPO-Sponsored Meetings .....                                  | 38 |
|  | Transportation and Physical Access .....  | 38 |
|  | Language Access .....   | 38 |
| 3.4.5  | Recent Opportunities for Public Involvement .....                               | 38 |
| 3.4.6  | FTA Public Hearing Requirements .....   | 39 |
| <b>Chapter 4—Public Participation Schedule and the Transportation Planning</b> |   |    |
|  | <b>Process</b> .....  | 41 |
| 4.1  | Public Participation Schedule for the TIP and UPWP .....                        | 41 |
| 4.2  | The LRTP .....  | 43 |
| 4.3  | Public Participation Schedule for Changes to Certification Documents .....      | 43 |
|  | 4.3.1 Amendments to Certification Documents .....                               | 44 |
|  | 4.3.2 Administrative Modification of Certification Documents .....              | 47 |
| 4.4  | Public Participation Schedule for Longer-Time-Horizon Planning Activities ..... | 47 |
|  | 4.4.1 Federal Recertification Reviews .....                                     | 47 |
|  | 4.4.2 The Transportation Equity Program .....                                   | 47 |
|  | 4.4.3 Development of the Public Participation Program and Plan .....            | 48 |
|  | Original 2014 Plan .....  | 48 |
|  | Current Plan Update .....   | 49 |

## FIGURES

|          |  |    |
|----------|--|----|
| Figure 1 | Purpose and Functions of the MPO .....   | 17 |
| Figure 2 | Relationship of MPO Certification Documents to other Transportation Planning Documents ..... | 20 |
| Figure 3 | Massachusetts MPO Regions .....  | 21 |
| Figure 4 | Boston Region MPO Area, MPO Municipal Members, and MAPC Subregions .....                     | 25 |
| Figure 5 | Boston Region MPO Members .....  | 26 |
| Figure 6 | Ways to be Informed and Involved .....   | 37 |
| Figure 7 | Annual MPO Planning Cycle for Development of TIP, UPWP, and Public Participation .....       | 46 |

## APPENDICES

- Appendix A Federal Public Participation Mandates
- Appendix B MPO Memorandum of Understanding
- Appendix C MPO-Sponsored Meetings and MPO Meetings Outside of Boston
- Appendix D Definitions of Acronyms, Initialisms, and Abbreviations
- Appendix E Public Comment Letters and Responses



# Executive Summary

This public participation plan documents the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Public Participation Program, which comprises the various outreach activities that the MPO engages in to ensure that all members of the public—including populations that are described as traditionally underserved by the transportation system and/or have lacked access to the decision-making process—are given the opportunity to participate in the metropolitan transportation planning process that shapes the Boston region.

This plan provides information about the outreach activities in which the MPO engages, and the ways in which various federal civil rights mandates are incorporated into outreach activities to ensure inclusive participation. The plan includes in-depth descriptions of the various ways the public may be involved, the transportation planning and programming processes, and MPO meetings and activities. Also covered is the annual public engagement schedule for the MPO's three certification documents: Long-Range Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and Unified Planning Work Program.

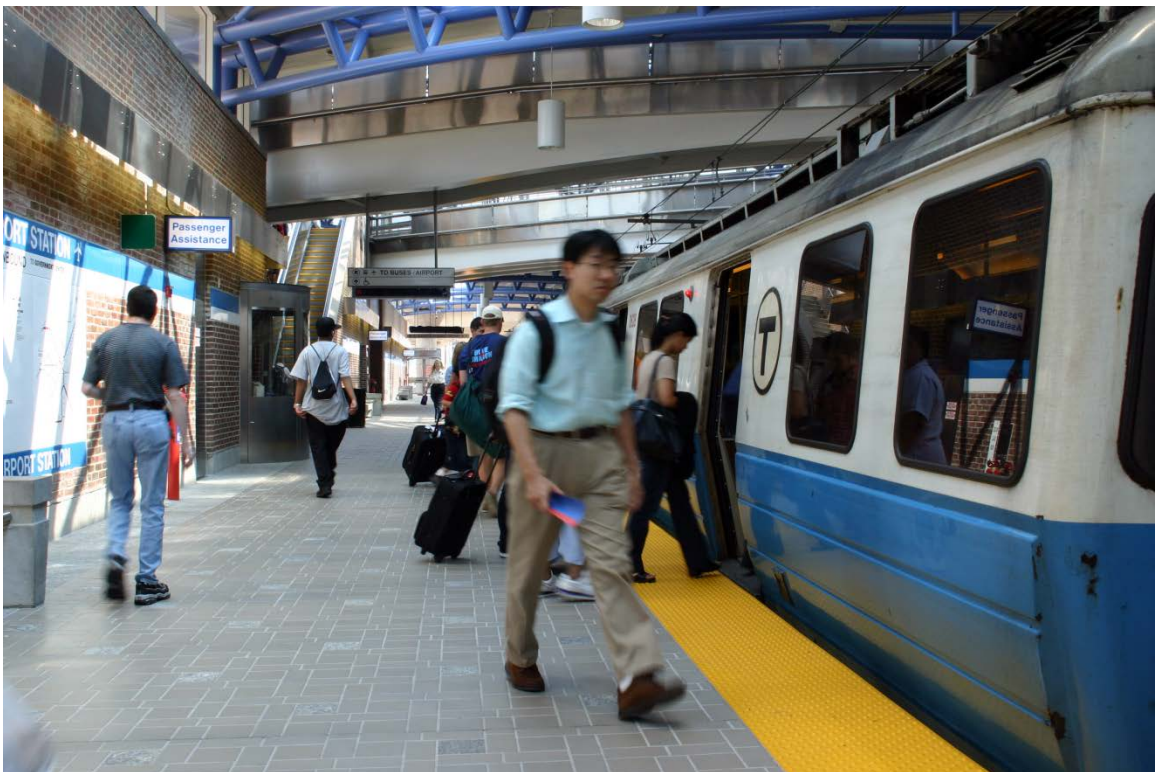
This update reflects recent changes in information and communication technologies and public participation practices, and a change in the public review period for the TIP from 30 to 21 days. It was endorsed by the MPO on April 25, 2019, after a 45-day public review process.



# Chapter 1—Introduction

The purpose of this Public Participation Plan (the Plan) is to describe the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Public Participation Program (the Program), which comprises the various outreach activities that the MPO engages in to ensure that all members of the public—including populations that have been underserved by the transportation system and/or have lacked access to the decision-making process—are given the opportunity to participate in the metropolitan transportation planning process that shapes the Boston region. The Plan guides the MPO's efforts to offer early, continuous, and meaningful opportunities for the public to help identify social, economic, and environmental impacts of proposed transportation policies, projects, and initiatives.

The Plan incorporates federal and state requirements (listed in Appendix A) for encouraging and ensuring community participation.



This most-recent update reflects recent changes in information and communication technologies and public participation practices, and a change in the public review period for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) from 30 to 21 days.



## Chapter 2—The Boston Region MPO’s Vision, Function, and Structure

In accordance with federal laws and regulations, MPOs are established in urbanized areas across the nation to implement the federally required continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative (3C) transportation planning process. To be *continuing*, MPO work is conducted on an ongoing basis; to be *comprehensive*, the work covers all transportation modes, populations, and areas of the region, and addresses their individual needs; and to be *cooperative*, the work is performed in close communication and consultation with all of the region’s municipalities and a broad base of agencies, organizations, and interest groups.

*The MPO decides what transportation projects will receive federal money and conducts planning to support those decisions.*

### 2.1 PURPOSE OF THE MPO

The purpose of the MPO is to decide how to allocate federal funds for transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian projects in the region it represents. The MPO also is responsible for setting the region’s transportation vision, goals, and objectives, and for completing the long- and short-range planning needed to program federal transportation funds.

Nationwide, there are more than 380 MPOs that conduct transportation planning in urbanized areas of more than 50,000 people. Each MPO has six core functions:

- Establish and manage a fair and impartial setting for effective regional decision making in the metropolitan area
- Identify and evaluate alternative transportation-improvement options and other information needed for MPO decision making through planning studies that are described in the MPO’s Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- Prepare and maintain a Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the metropolitan area, with a minimum of a 20-year horizon, that fosters mobility and access for people and goods; efficient system performance and preservation; and a good quality of life, among other goals



*The MPO plans for all surface transportation modes in the region and seeks to engage people, communities, and organizations in its planning process.*

- Develop a TIP, the short-range (four-year) program of capital improvements needed to implement the LRTP and make other investments to achieve the area's goals
- Involve the general public by offering all interested persons, including affected constituencies, opportunities to participate in all the decision-making functions of the MPO, including those listed above
- Conduct performance-based planning by establishing goals and focusing on certain objectives and targets designed to achieve the chosen goals

The end products of the MPO's work are represented in studies, reports, technical memoranda, data on transportation issues in the region, and the three federally required certification documents discussed above: the LRTP, TIP, and UPWP. Because each MPO in the country must produce these three major documents to be certified by the federal government as eligible to program federal transportation funds, they are called certification documents.

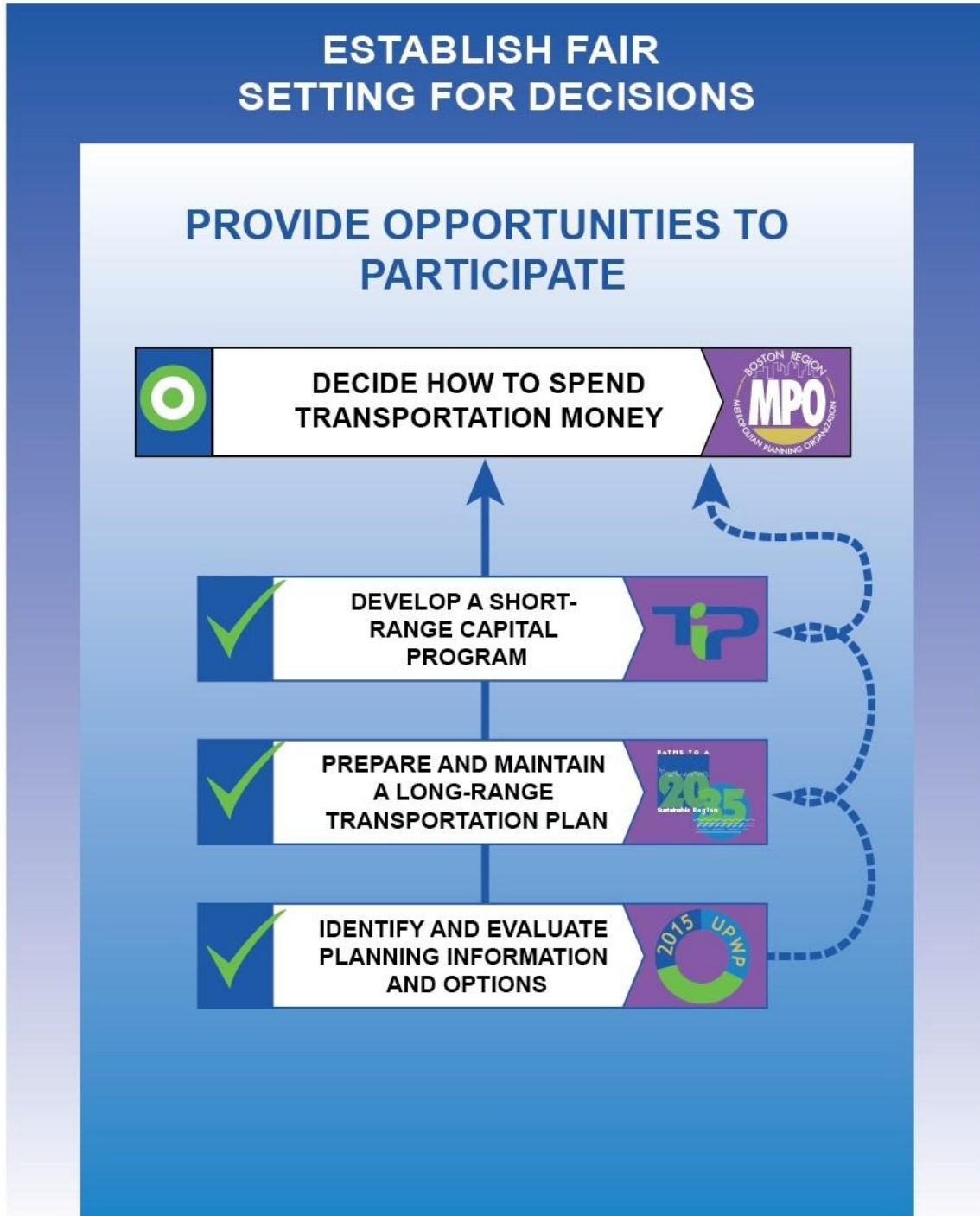
Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between the purpose of the MPO and the six functions listed above.

These functions and other responsibilities of MPOs are described in federal laws and associated regulations. Transportation planning requirements and, specifically, the 3C process described earlier, date to the Federal-aid Highway Act of 1962 and are revised regularly. The most recent federal transportation legislation is Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act).

## 2.2 THE BOSTON REGION MPO

Although all MPOs operate under the same federal guidance, there is great variability among MPOs, based on the geographic and political characteristics of the state and region in which they are located. Each is free to establish its own membership structure and define many other aspects of how it accomplishes its work. The following sections discuss the framework of Boston Region MPO specifically.

**Figure 1  
Purpose and Functions of the MPO**



### 2.2.1 The Boston Region MPO's Central Vision

The MPO's central vision, as stated in the MPO's Long-Range Transportation plan, *Charting Progress to 2040*, both anticipates the future and responds to current needs. This vision has evolved over many years' engagement in metropolitan transportation planning—a process that includes technical analyses and other studies of transportation needs and soliciting and incorporating the public's views. Its central vision guides the MPO in all of its work, and paints a picture of the desired, future state for the region and its transportation network:

The MPO's vision for the system's future is a modern transportation system that is safe, uses new technologies, provides equitable access, excellent mobility, and varied transportation options—in support of a sustainable, healthy, livable, and economically vibrant region. The MPO understands that transportation is not a simple end in itself. People use various transportation modes because they want to move themselves and/or their goods from one place to another to accomplish innumerable purposes. These may be for commuting between work and home, home and school, or between home and other economic, health, administrative, or recreational activities or services. In brief, the function of transportation is to enable social interaction, commerce, and personal development and fulfillment. However, there are obstacles to serving these functions. Foremost is the combined lack of adequate funding and aging transportation infrastructure. In addition, the socio-demographic and economic patterns of the region are in transition. Because of the region's aging population over the next 25 years, and forecasted in- versus out-migration, the region's mobility and accessibility needs are evolving. The MPO is forging consensus about which projects are priorities for development and the density of their related economic and residential land uses. The MPO's challenge is to maintain the transportation network to meet existing needs, and adapt and modernize it for future demand, while working within the reality of constrained fiscal resources.

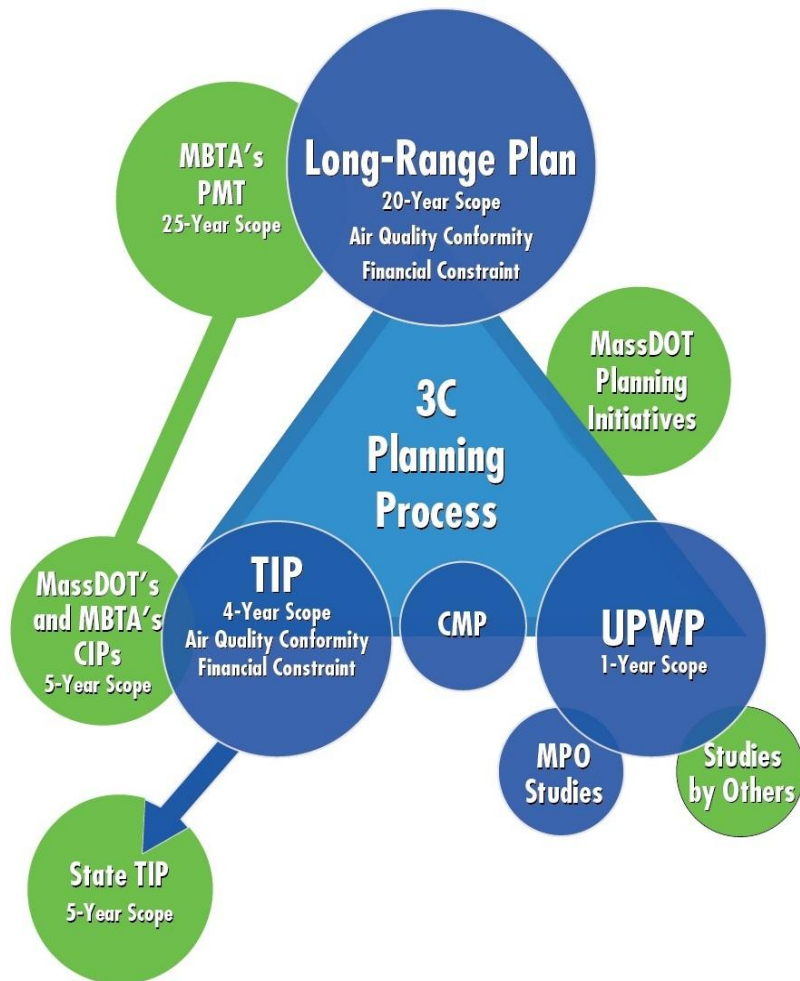
### 2.2.2 Work of the Boston Region MPO

As discussed above, the Boston Region MPO is responsible for carrying out the federally required 3C planning process and accomplishing core MPO functions, including development of the three certification documents—the LRTP, TIP, and UPWP.

Figure 2 depicts how these three documents are interrelated and how they connect with other processes and documents developed by the MPO (shown in blue) and to those of state and regional agencies (shown in green), such as the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA). Other MPO documents and processes include the Congestion Management Process (CMP), Performance-based Planning and Programming, and studies that are

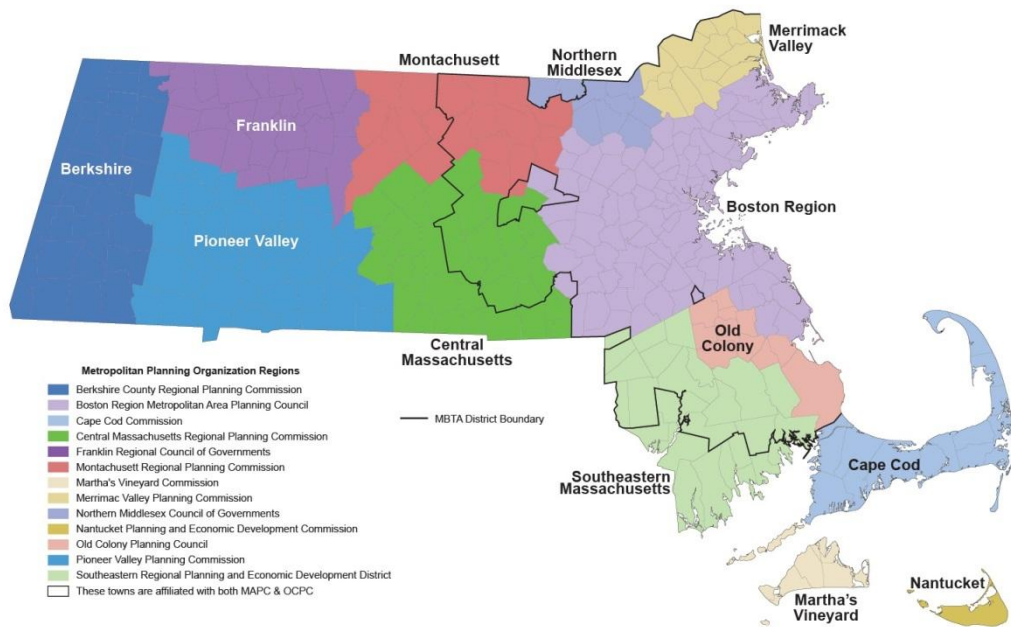
programmed in the UPWP. Other state and regional planning initiatives include the MBTA's Program for Mass Transportation and Capital Investment Program (CIP); Massachusetts Department of Transportation's (MassDOT) CIP, State Transportation Improvement Program, and other planning initiatives; and transportation studies conducted by others.

**Figure 2**  
**Relationship of MPO Certification Documents to other Transportation Planning Documents**



3C = Continuing, Comprehensive, and Cooperative. CMP = Congestion Management Process. MassDOT = Massachusetts Department of Transportation. MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. MPO = Metropolitan Planning Organization. PMT = Program for Mass Transportation. TIP = Transportation Improvement Program. UPWP = Unified Planning Work Program.

### Figure 3 Massachusetts MPO Regions



In addition to the work previously described, the Boston Region MPO coordinates transportation planning with six other Massachusetts MPOs in the Boston Urbanized Area: the Central Massachusetts, Merrimack Valley, Montachusett, Northern Middlesex, Old Colony, and Southeastern Massachusetts metropolitan planning organizations. This work is accomplished through periodic meetings of the MPOs in the Urbanized Area. Figure 3 shows the areas served by Massachusetts' 13 MPOs. In addition, all MPOs in Massachusetts meet with MassDOT and the federal transportation agencies approximately once a month to coordinate on statewide and MPO transportation planning activities.

### 2.2.3 Composition of the Boston Region MPO

A board of 22 state, regional, and municipal members who work cooperatively to make decisions about regional planning and funding priorities comprises the Boston Region MPO. The MPO has voted to add a seat to enhance the representation of public transportation providers on the MPO board. The MPO region encompasses 97 municipalities and approximately 1,360 square miles, stretching from Boston to Ipswich in the north, Marshfield in the south, and to approximately Interstate 495 in the west. It is home to more than three million people and approximately two million jobs. The diverse communities in the MPO area range from relatively rural communities, such as Dover, to the urban centers of Boston and Cambridge. Transportation planning must take into account demographic, cultural, environmental, and mobility diversity.

A Memorandum of Understanding establishes the MPO's membership, composition, structure, committees, processes for developing its certification documents, voting rules, and more. The MPO will update this document once the details regarding transit representation have been determined.

#### *Current Membership*

Currently, the MPO's membership includes the following voting members:

- MassDOT (three votes)
- MBTA
- MBTA Advisory Board
- Massachusetts Port Authority
- Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
- Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Advisory Council)
- Public Transit Provider Representative (to be added)
- The City of Boston (two votes)
- Twelve other municipalities from the region, which are elected for three-year terms

- Four at-large municipalities (two cities and two towns)
- Eight municipalities (no city or town designation), each from one of the eight MAPC subregions
- Agency representatives serve as ex officio members, and municipal members are elected; each year, a portion of the 12 elected members are chosen by the chief elected officials of all municipalities in the region; the MAPC and the MBTA Advisory Board jointly administer the election

Figure 4 shows the municipalities that belong to each of the eight MAPC subregional groups, and highlights the municipalities that currently hold seats on the MPO.

The MPO board also includes two nonvoting members:

- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

The Secretary of Transportation (or a designee) chairs the MPO; the vice chair is currently the Executive Director of MAPC (or a designee).

Figure 5 shows the proportion of MPO seats held by different types of entities, such as transportation agencies and municipalities. It includes a place for the future transit representative.

### ***MPO Staff: the Central Transportation Planning Staff***

Created in 1974, the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) serves as a comprehensive, multimodal transportation planning staff to the MPO. As such, it is responsible for carrying out the work of the 3C transportation planning process under the direction of the MPO. This includes authoring planning studies and other analyses identified in the UPWP, producing certification documents, and developing and maintaining technical tools, such as a travel demand model set, that help the MPO conduct its work.

### ***MPO Committees***

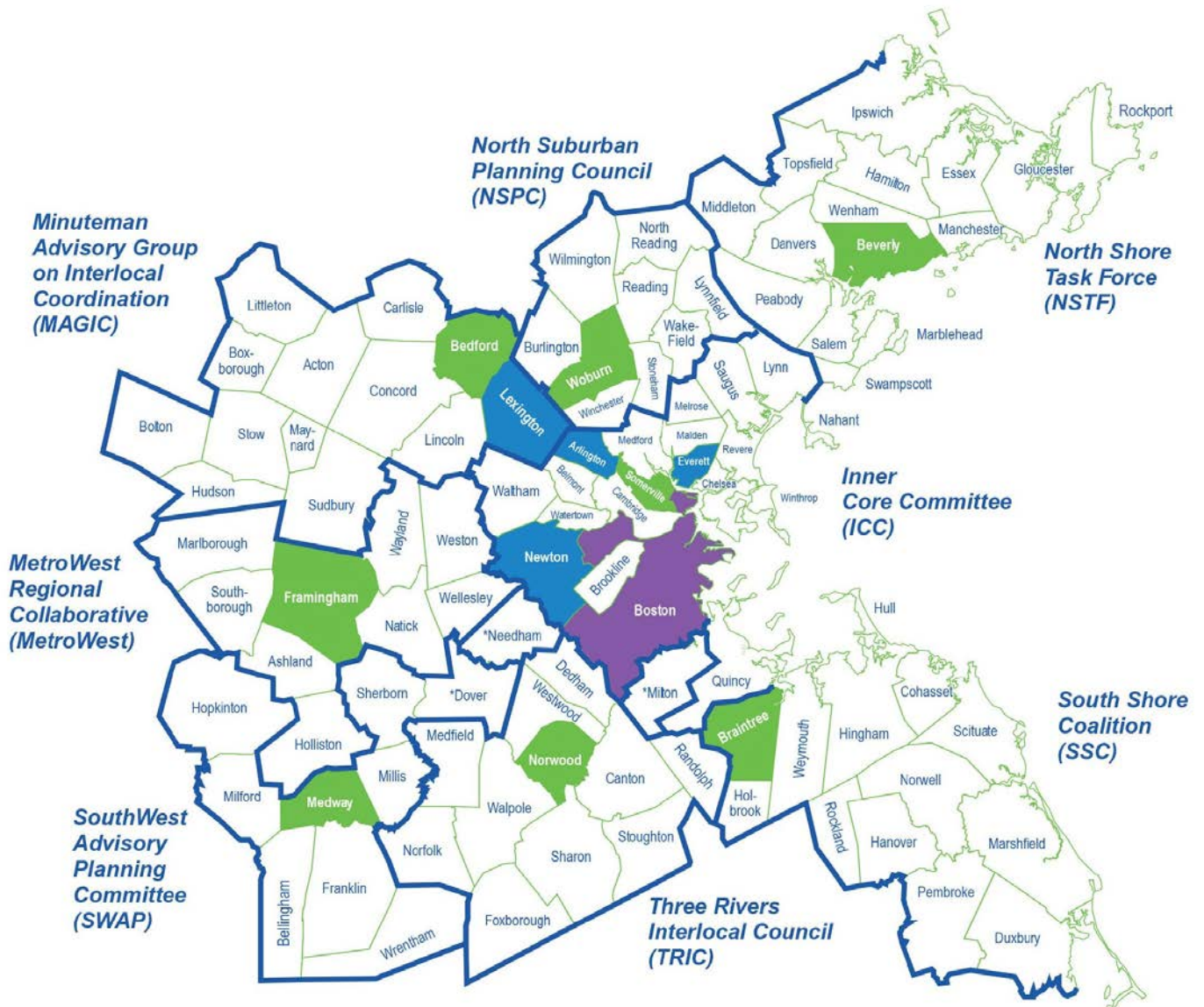
Currently, the MPO has three standing committees that it relies on to fulfill specific functions. The MPO Chair appoints representatives to the committees from among MPO members. Each of the committees reviews issues within its area of responsibility and makes recommendations to the MPO for necessary actions.



- Administration and Finance Committee (A&F)—Reviews the MPO's operating budget, staffing, and spending
- CMP Committee—Discusses congestion in the region and makes recommendations of certain improvements to traffic flow that would reduce congestion and improve mobility and air quality
- UPWP Committee—Works with staff on recommendations for developing the UPWP, which includes selecting studies to be funded. The committee also reviews the MPO's quarterly financial reports, as well as progress reports of the various planning studies underway



**Figure 4**  
**Boston Region MPO Area, MPO Municipal Members, and MAPC Subregions**

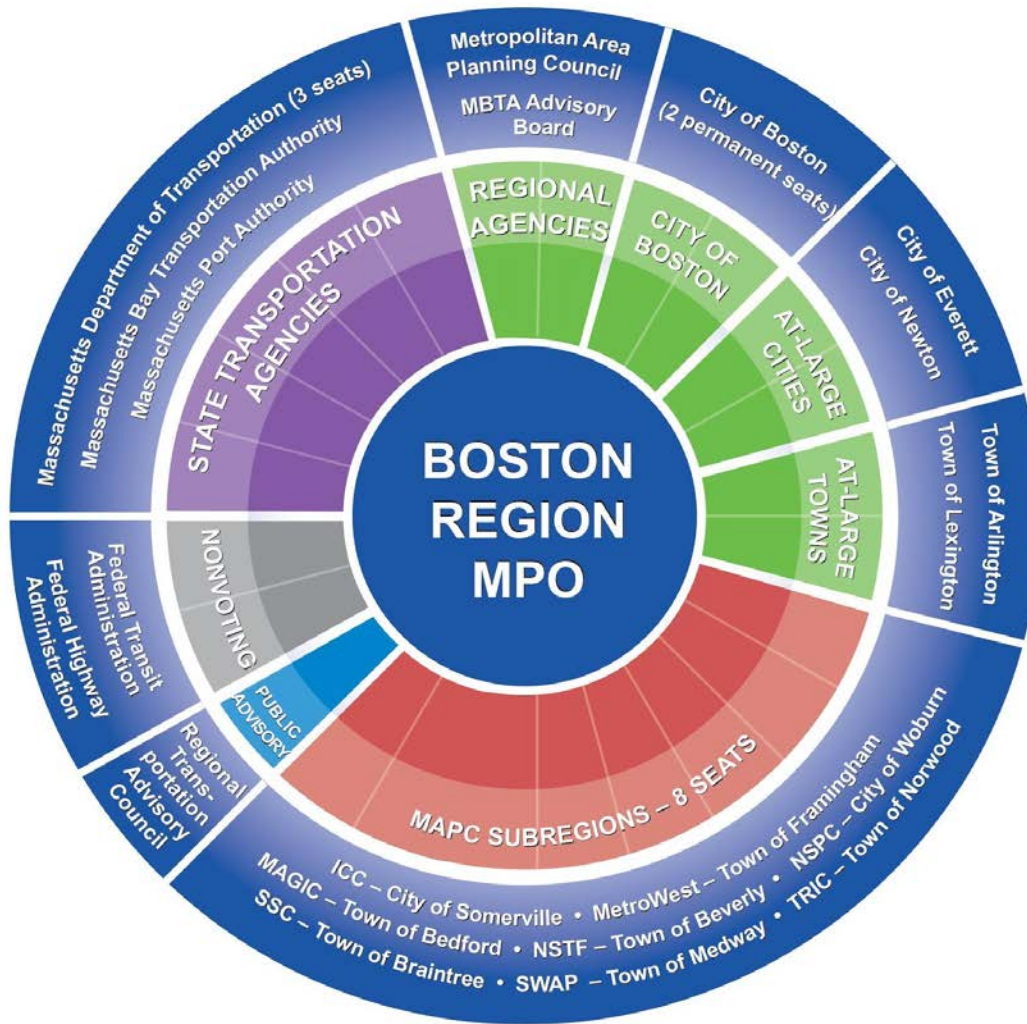


\*Community is in more than one subregion: Dover is in TRIC and SWAP; Milton and Needham are in Inner Core and TRIC.

- MAPC subregion boundary
- MPO representative from subregion
- MPO city or town at-large representative
- Boston has two permanent MPO representatives



**Figure 5  
Boston Region MPO Members**



2014 Membership

ICC = Inner Core Committee. MAGIC = Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination. MetroWest = MetroWest Regional Collaborative. NSTF = North Shore Task Force. NSPC = North Suburban Planning Council. SSC = South Shore Coalition. SWAP = SouthWest Advisory Planning Committee. TRIC = Three Rivers Interlocal Council.

# Chapter 3—The MPO’s Approach to Public Participation

The Boston Region MPO firmly believes that meaningful public participation should be integral to the organization’s transportation planning work. Public participation improves decision making by helping to illuminate many of the social, economic, and environmental benefits and drawbacks of transportation decisions.

As indicated in the introduction to this document, the MPO’s Program comprises activities that the MPO undertakes and materials that it produces to facilitate consultation on its planning and programming with all interested parties and members of the public. The Plan is the document (with text and graphics) that explains the Program and provides information about how to become involved in the MPO’s transportation decision-making process through Program activities.

## 3.1 FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

As discussed above, public participation is one of the six core functions of an MPO. Federal metropolitan transportation planning rules require MPO public participation plans to:

- Define details about how the MPO provides opportunities to be involved in its planning process, including methods used and the goals set
- Establish strategies for outreach to all interested parties, including the general public and particular groups (such as “representatives of the disabled”)
- Undergo periodic reviews and updates, along with involvement of the public, who are provided at a minimum a 45-day review and comment period before the updated plan is adopted by the MPO

Other federal legislation, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, also have public participation requirements that MPOs must implement to ensure access to the planning process for protected populations (please see Appendix A for a list of federal legislation). To meet these requirements, the MPO takes steps to include people with disabilities, minority and low-income populations, and those with limited English proficiency (LEP), as discussed throughout this Plan.

### 3.2 UPDATING THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

As indicated above, MPOs develop and update their public participation programs and plans in consultation with members of the public and other interested parties. Staff performs updates as needed to reflect changes in federal guidance, requirements and regional needs, and improvements in the state of the practice.

The Boston Region MPO approved its public participation plan in 2014. This update reflects recent changes in information and communication technologies and public participation practices, and a change in the public review period for the TIP from 30 to 21 days.

To ensure that the Program continues to evolve and reflect the most current and effective methods, MPO staff will adopt a regular, frequent and more rigorous process for gathering data and evaluating the MPO's outreach practices, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative techniques include tracking the level of attendance at events, number of comments received, and use of the website. Qualitative measures include soliciting feedback from members of the public through surveys (both online and at meetings) about their satisfaction with process and outcome, and sense of fair treatment.

### 3.3 MPO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION VISION AND GUIDELINES

The MPO's vision for public participation in the region is to hear, value, and consider—throughout its planning and programming work—the views of and feedback from the full spectrum of the public, and use this input in its decision making.

In order to accomplish its vision, the MPO has established a number of public participation guidelines, which have been updated to reflect the insights gained through its recent research. The MPO makes every effort to:

- Provide a predictable, easy-to-understand process
- Offer information that is clear, concise, current, and easily available
- Make great use of visualization techniques to enhance understanding
- Cast a wide and inclusive net to invite participation of interested parties and the general public: bolster outreach to minority, low-income, elderly, and youth communities, the LEP population, and persons with disabilities
- Respond to participants' interests, views, and need for information
- Arrange convenient, timely, and meaningful opportunities for involvement

- Respect the views offered by members of the public; use these opinions, and other information offered, in programming and planning
- Promote respect among all participants
- Create a framework that encourages constructive contributions by members of the public to the work and decisions made by the MPO
- Allow flexibility in the Program
- Remain open to adopting new avenues of communication
- Explore strategies for connecting with people who do not use or don't have ready access to computers
- Maximize effectiveness by coordinating with partner agencies and their outreach activities
- Embrace, as feasible, new technologies with which to engage the public in an interactive way

### 3.4 OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

*The MPO's website, [www.bostonmpo.org](http://www.bostonmpo.org), is a rich source of transportation information.*

The MPO's activities and programs are designed to meet the preferences and needs of the public. Activities and programs might include presentations, discussions, various venues for meetings and forums, information on the MPO website, flyers, and emails and other notification media.

#### 3.4.1 How to Be Informed

A powerful tool in use by the MPO for outreach strategies is its website, which provides comprehensive information about all of the MPO's work and planning activities, such as the following activities:

- Studies, statistical reports, technical memoranda, and other documents related to metropolitan transportation planning process
- Information about structure and composition of the MPO
- MPO meeting agendas and minutes
- Contact information for project managers of the MPO's major programs
- Tweets that highlight MPO activities, programs, and results of MPO studies and reports—to capitalize on the Twitter feed's prominent location

on the website (the home page) the MPO recently has increased its frequency and scope of topics covered

- TRANSreport, the MPO's blog, which covers timely MPO activities and transportation issues around the region—new posts are announced via email to approximately 3,200 recipients, including public libraries, which can print it to make available to all visitors
- A comment section on the website, where people can express their views to the MPO and receive a response from staff
- Online surveys to collect public input periodically on important issues—going forward, staff will regularly evaluate potential for additional surveys

Staff also uses graphics to provide public information, such as flow charts, visualization techniques, and text boxes in narratives, in addition to and to augment written information.

To ensure web access for people with low or no vision who use screen readers, all documents are posted in both PDF and HTML versions. In addition, the MPO makes every effort to make data presented in tables fully navigable by a screen reader and provides alternative text to describe tables, figures, and images that cannot be read by a screen reader.

To make information more accessible for people with limited English proficiency, the website features a translation function for more than 100 languages other than English, including Chinese (simplified and traditional), French, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. In addition, vital documents are professionally translated into the three most frequently spoken languages other than English in the MPO region (Spanish, Chinese, and Portuguese), and these translated versions are posted on the website. The MPO also posts professionally translated executive summaries of the MPO's three major transportation-planning documents—the LRTP, TIP, and UPWP—on the website. Staff reevaluates annually whether additional MPO documents should be identified as “vital documents,” to be translated into the languages of policy. Documents currently defined as vital include the following:

***All documents on the MPO website are available in PDF and HTML versions for those with low or no vision. Materials also may be translated into other languages.***

- MPO Notice to Title VI Beneficiaries
- MPO complaint procedures and form
- Summaries of key materials—a description of the MPO transportation-planning process and the certification documents, LRTP, TIP, and UPWP
- Meeting notices—generally prepared for out-of-Boston MPO meetings, and all MPO-sponsored meetings, workshops, forums, and other similar input-sessions

MPO staff posts audio recordings of MPO meetings on the website so that those who cannot attend meetings can listen to the discussions at any time. These recordings also provide easy access to meeting content for individuals with low or no vision or with low literacy.

The MPO also uses a variety of other tools to inform the public, including an email update, MPOinfo, with a contact list of more than 3,200 interested individuals and entities. The MPO also has email lists for Transportation Equity, the Advisory Council, and other interested parties. In general, MPOinfo updates focus on major MPO milestones, such as certification document amendments or announcements of public comment periods.

### 3.4.2 How to Be Involved

***Everyone is welcome to attend MPO and MPO committee meetings. They are held in Boston and in other municipalities around the region.***

The MPO hosts a number of meetings and event types at which the public can learn about current MPO activities. Among these are the meetings of the MPO itself, meetings of MPO committees, and various public participation opportunities. One purpose of these meetings is to present and discuss information, solicit feedback, or gather input from the public on specific topics or plans to inform transportation planning and programming decisions for the region. The other purpose is to provide

an open and constructive context in which those decisions are made by MPO members.

#### ***MPO and MPO Committee Meetings***

The MPO typically meets on the first and third Thursday of each month at 10:00 AM. Most meetings are held at the State Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza,



in Boston; however, quarterly, the MPO convenes its meeting off site in one of the MPO municipalities.

MPO meetings follow the general process below, which includes opportunities for public comment:

- The Chair (the Secretary of Transportation or a designee) leads the meetings, recognizing speakers and managing the flow of discussion
- Agendas include a public-comment time, in which any member of the public will be recognized to speak and present information
- At the discretion of the chair, members of the public also may be recognized to speak during discussions of other agenda items

The three MPO standing committees, UPWP, CMP, and A&F meet as needed. As with MPO meetings, these committee meetings usually are held at the State Transportation Building, either before or after an MPO meeting. However, when necessary, committee meetings may be held off site in conjunction with an MPO meeting. Committee meetings are also open to the public.

To extend the public's ability to provide input to the MPO, staff will research, and if feasible and useful, create a mechanism for submitting public comments on MPO agenda items in advance of meetings.

***The Regional Transportation Advisory Council is an independent body that brings public viewpoints and advice to the MPO.***

MPO staff addresses comments and responds to questions from individuals who attend MPO meetings or who contact them via telephone or email. Individuals with low or no vision or with low literacy are informed on the website and at meetings that they may submit comments via a recording or staff transcription of their spoken remarks before, during, or after MPO or MPO-sponsored meetings.

### ***Regional Transportation Advisory Council***

The Regional Transportation Advisory Council, also known as the Advisory Council, is an independent body that is a voting member of the MPO. The primary function of the Advisory Council is to advise the MPO on transportation policy and planning. Advisory Council meetings provide an ongoing avenue for public participation that invites informed involvement. The Advisory Council's members are municipalities, professional organizations, transportation advocacy

groups, and state and regional agencies. Members of the Advisory Council elect its own chair.

The Advisory Council provides advice to the MPO on a broad range of issues and may discuss topics that do not always exactly track those of the MPO meetings. Advisory Council meetings are designed to foster broad-based and robust discussions on transportation issues and topics related to planning and programming. Meetings are held monthly, generally on the second Wednesday, at 3:00 PM in the State Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza, Boston.

Advisory Council meetings adhere to the same general process as MPO meetings. Although the agendas do not routinely include a specific item for public comment, at the discretion of the Chair, members of the public who are not Advisory Council members are allowed to speak and ask questions.

To improve the public participation opportunities offered by the Advisory Council, MPO staff will work with the Advisory Council to hold jointly sponsored programs and forums on timely transportation topics; solicit the Advisory Council's views and ideas on specific, MPO-defined topics; and support the Advisory Council's membership outreach to low-income, minority, and LEP populations, persons with disabilities, and other traditionally underrepresented populations.

### *MPO-Sponsored Meetings*

As part of its Program, the MPO sponsors a variety of public-engagement opportunities, convened and managed by MPO staff. The purpose of these meetings is to provide information about MPO work underway and gather information and views from members of the public. Therefore, they are designed for as much interaction as possible among all in attendance. When appropriate, the transportation agencies are part of MPO-sponsored meetings.

The MPO often holds public meetings in areas with high concentrations of minority, low-income, and/or LEP populations to facilitate their inclusion. In addition, staff consults with personnel in host municipalities to learn about particular cultural or language issues that should be recognized and respected when planning and operating the meeting (for example, dates of community celebrations or observations and/or cultural preferences or restrictions).

### *Workshops*

MPO staff schedule workshop-type meetings in public venues in municipalities throughout the MPO region. These workshops are scheduled to coincide with the time period(s) when the MPO most needs input to its planning and when that input is most influential.

Workshops often include brief presentations followed by question and answer sessions. Subsequently, there are opportunities for one-on-one interactions between members of the public and MPO staff. Workshop formats may follow an exhibit-style format, with tables, staffed by program managers, set up for each major topic on the agenda. During these workshops, MPO staff invites participants to move from topic to topic as their interest guides. Materials may be available in a variety of media, such as print, large print, web based, PowerPoint slides, table-top display boards, and maps.

### General Information Sessions

The MPO staff regularly conducts informational meetings at its offices in the State Transportation Building in Boston, which is a central location for the region.

Session topics include current MPO activities, such as development of the certification documents and updates on other MPO ongoing programs, but also may include detailed presentations and discussions about the results of MPO studies and reports. The format generally consists of staff presentations about programs and projects, followed by questions and answers. Staff is available after the presentations for individual follow-up discussion with meeting participants.

### TIP and UPWP Information Sessions

MPO staff conducts meetings at which topics are geared to representatives who prepare their municipality's or other entity's official inputs to the TIP and UPWP development processes. For example, staff hosts conference calls for municipal TIP contacts. Staff presents on the current year's process and discusses any changes from previous years, followed by questions and answers. After the presentations, staff is available for a roll-up-the-sleeves style working session with individual participants.

***The MPO hosts various events throughout the year. Information about these is posted on the MPO website and distributed via email.***

### Forums

MPO staff collaborates with other entities to convene regional forums on important topics. Forums are focused on issues of interest to particular constituencies and generally feature a panel of expert speakers with time for questions and answers. These forums are sometimes followed by breakout sessions in which small groups of participants may have more intimate discussions. The purpose is to foster communication and cooperation among

disparate entities that deal with the issue under discussion, and to look for new solutions to existing problems. These meetings usually are held at the State Transportation Building.

### Special Topic Discussions

The MPO occasionally brings together agencies and other entities to seek their input on specialized aspects of important topics in the metropolitan transportation planning process. Past special topic discussions have dealt with transportation equity and environmental issues.

### *Other Opportunities for Public Participation*

In addition to the meeting opportunities discussed above, the MPO provides a number of other ways for the public to be involved in the planning process.

### Surveys

From time to time, the MPO conducts surveys to learn the views of members of the public on targeted topics. Respondents submit their ideas via survey tools on the MPO website. Staff presents the survey results to the MPO.

### Public Information Email

Members of the public can submit questions, comments, and ideas to the MPO and its staff via the [publicinfo@ctps.org](mailto:publicinfo@ctps.org) email address. Staff replies to these queries and uses information provided, as applicable. This email address is listed on meeting flyers and other MPO outreach materials.

### Website Comments

The MPO website features a general comment section that viewers can reach from any page on the site. Using this function, members of the public are invited to submit a comment on any topic. Comments are directed to the appropriate staff-level program or project manager, who will respond to the comments and use this input, as appropriate. Comments submitted during a formal comment period for a document under review, and their associated staff responses, are summarized and reported to the MPO.

### MAPC Subregion Meetings and Coordinated Activities

The MAPC has divided the municipalities in its area (which mostly coincides with the Boston Region MPO area) into eight subregions. The subregions convene their member municipalities regularly to discuss topics related to land use, urban and community planning, issues of general interest to local and regional planners, and transportation. MPO staff meets regularly with MAPC's subregional coordinators and shares monthly updates for inclusion in the *MAPC Matters* newsletter. MPO staff attends subregional meetings as needed to discuss

pertinent MPO activities, schedules, and issues and to gather the subregions' and their municipalities' views and priorities.

#### MPO "Invite Us Over"

MPO staff asks transportation advocacy groups, professional organizations, transportation-equity organizations, and other such groups to invite staff to attend their regularly scheduled meetings to discuss transportation issues that are important to them. MPO staff gives presentations, answers questions, and gathers comments at these meetings. Staff will work to increase the number of "Invite-Us-Over" speaker events in order to bolster the MPO's visibility and heighten the effectiveness of such events as an outreach strategy.

Figure 6 summarizes the various ways that members of the public can receive MPO information and be involved in MPO activities and decision making.

### 3.4.3 Notice of MPO Activities

The MPO provides notification of meetings through the calendar on its website. MPO, MPO Committee, and Advisory Council meeting agendas and materials are posted on the MPO's website one week in advance of the meeting, except in cases of emergency or other constrained circumstances.

MPO staff also posts information about MPO-sponsored meetings and sessions on the website calendar, and usually include a flyer announcing the day, time, and location of the gathering and the topics to be discussed. These flyers are translated into the three most commonly spoken languages other than English in the MPO region: Spanish, Portuguese, and Chinese. Links to related documents may be included under the meeting's entry.

**Figure 6  
Ways to be Informed and Involved**



MAPC = Metropolitan Area Planning Council. MPO = Metropolitan Planning Organization. TIP = Transportation Improvement Program. UPWP = Unified Planning Work Program.

Flyers (as described above) are sent via the MPOinfo and Transportation Equity email lists, and to Advisory Council members and contact lists of other interested parties.

#### 3.4.4 Access to MPO and MPO-Sponsored Meetings

The MPO strives to make all meetings accessible to all members of the public, regardless of their transportation alternatives, mobility limitations, or language skills. The *CTPS Nondiscrimination Handbook* also contains protocols to ensure physical access to meeting venues.

*The MPO strives to make its meetings accessible to everyone, and is attentive to transportation, physical, and language access needs.*

##### *Transportation and Physical Access*

All MPO-sponsored meetings are held in locations that are accessible to people with disabilities and are near public transportation.

To ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities, locations for meetings held outside the State Transportation Building are selected through a process that includes an on-site review of the meeting facilities. As part of this review, staff refers to an accessibility checklist with a list of physical characteristics necessary

to accommodate individuals with a variety of mobility limitations.

##### *Language Access*

When selecting meeting venues, staff consults the MPO's Language Assistance Plan (LAP), which was developed as part of the Title VI program. The LAP identifies location of LEP populations; provides information regarding languages into which materials may need to be translated, based on the meeting location; and describes the language services that will be provided.

#### 3.4.5 Recent Opportunities for Public Involvement

The MPO has prepared a summary of all public-involvement meetings since January 2016. This summary, found in Appendix C, includes MPO-sponsored public meetings and forums that were held specifically for the purpose of public participation and MPO meetings that were held outside of Boston, as of the end of December 2018.

Not listed are the regularly scheduled Boston meetings of the MPO, the three MPO standing committees, and the Advisory Council. All of these meetings are open to the public and provide opportunities for public input, as discussed above.



### 3.4.6 FTA Public Hearing Requirements

The MBTA, Cape Ann Transportation Authority, and MetroWest Regional Transit Authority, which are FTA Section 5307(c) applicants, have consulted with the MPO and concur that the public involvement process adopted by the MPO for the development of the TIP satisfies the public hearing requirements that pertain to the development of the Program of Projects for regular Section 5307, Urbanized Area Formula Program, grant applications, including the provision for public notice and the time established for public review and comment.







# Chapter 4—Public Participation Schedule and the Transportation Planning Process

Work for the metropolitan transportation planning process occurs year-round. This includes developing the certification documents and the other programs and studies conducted as part of the process. Development of the certification documents follows established cycles as depicted in Figure 7. Public outreach to support this work follows the same cycles. The MPO makes the public aware of the details of each year's public participation timeframes at the beginning of the federal fiscal year to assure predictability for those who wish to participate in the transportation planning process. Public participation opportunities for other MPO programs, such as Transportation Equity, and some studies occur throughout the year, as needed.

## 4.1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SCHEDULE FOR THE TIP AND UPWP

At the beginning of each federal fiscal year, the MPO develops and posts its schedule of certification activities, laying out its plans for developing the certification documents due in that year and for conducting the other planning work scheduled to be accomplished.

The development of the TIP and UPWP typically move forward in tandem on the following schedule.

### **October**

- MPO staff reviews and updates evaluation criteria for TIP projects and the emphasis areas used to help evaluate new UPWP studies. The development program for the documents—the approach to data collection, analyses to be conducted, and steps and activities to inform and involve the public—also is formulated.

### **November–December**

- MPO staff discusses the upcoming document development activities and schedules and any changes to the selection criteria with members of the public through various activities:
  - Briefing the Regional Transportation Advisory Council
  - Attending Metropolitan Area Planning Council subregional meetings
  - Conducting information sessions on the TIP, UPWP, and other topics

**January**

- MPO staff receives information on new TIP projects and develops ideas for possible studies to include in the UPWP universe of study proposals
- Staff begins evaluating TIP projects against selection criteria and UPWP study proposals against emphasis areas
- The MPO's UPWP Committee begins to discuss UPWP study proposals

*The MPO follows an annual schedule for development of the TIP and UPWP.*

**February**

- Staff completes evaluations of TIP projects and UPWP study proposals
- Staff collects and considers feedback from project proponents
- MassDOT specifies the amount of federal funding that will be available for projects in the TIP for the next four federal fiscal years and for studies in the UPWP in the next year:
  - Staff prepares a first-tier list of TIP highway projects as a resource for preferred projects for programming considerations
  - Staff prepares a recommendation about how to allocate the TIP target highway program dollars (the money available to the MPO for funding projects)
  - Staff develops a UPWP budget and recommendation for new studies
  - Staff generally conducts two information sessions in March to discuss the TIP and UPWP proposals and schedule for development of the final documents

**April**

- Staff presents its recommendations for programming UPWP funds to the UPWP Committee
- Staff presents its recommendations for programming TIP funds to the MPO

**April through May**

- The UPWP Committee reviews the staff recommendation and the budget and makes its own recommendation to the MPO

- The MPO discusses the staff recommendations and comments on both the TIP and the UPWP
- The MPO releases the draft TIP for a 21-day public review period and the draft UPWP for a 30-day public review period
- The public review for the draft documents is conducted; the MPO gathers feedback and input
- The MPO reviews and considers all comments and makes necessary changes to the documents

**May to June**

- The MPO endorses a final version of both documents; after they are finalized, the MPO submits documents to the federal agencies for their review and approval

**October 1**

- The approved documents go into effect at the beginning of the federal fiscal year

Figure 7 shows the MPO's annual process for producing the TIP and the UPWP and any related public participation opportunities.

## 4.2 THE LRTP

The LRTP is updated every four years, although some LRTP work is ongoing. A specific public participation plan is developed for each LRTP update. The most significant public participation takes place during the fourth year, leading up to endorsement of the LRTP update. Although the public participation schedule is different for the LRTP, it follows the same general sequence and set of outreach tools used for the TIP and UPWP, and if possible public participation activities for the LRTP are coordinated with TIP and UPWP outreach. The draft LRTP is released for a public comment period that lasts 30 days.

## 4.3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SCHEDULE FOR CHANGES TO CERTIFICATION DOCUMENTS

The certification documents are dynamic—they can be modified or amended to reflect changes made throughout the course of a typical federal fiscal year, for example, revisions to project scopes; changes in cost; new project schedules; new projects added or programmed projects removed. These changes are made through the processes of administrative modification or amendment.

For the TIP, consistent with federal guidelines, if a project is valued at \$5 million or less, the threshold for defining a change to the project as an amendment is a change of \$500,000 or more. The threshold for projects valued at greater than \$5 million is 10 percent or more of the project value. Changes below these thresholds may be considered administrative modifications. Any changes to the LRTP generally are considered amendments. Changes to the UPWP are infrequent; however, the addition or deletion of an MPO-funded study or program may trigger an amendment.

Amendments to any of the three certification documents—LRTP, TIP, and UPWP—follow the same public process, as described below.

#### 4.3.1 Amendments to Certification Documents

When the MPO considers amending one of its certification documents, it votes to do so at an MPO meeting. MPO staff then posts the proposed draft amendment on the MPO's website and a public comment period begins. The public comment periods last 21 days for TIP amendments and 30 days for UPWP or LRTP amendments.

The MPO notifies the Advisory Council and affected municipalities and constituencies of pending amendments to inform them about the proposed changes, when and where decisions will be made, and how they can provide comments. The MPO informs members of the public by posting notices of pending amendments on the MPO website and distributes the notices through its email lists. The MPO also informs TIP contacts and proponents of affected projects.

***The MPO invites public input when considering amendments to the TIP, UPWP, LRTP, and Public Participation Plan.***

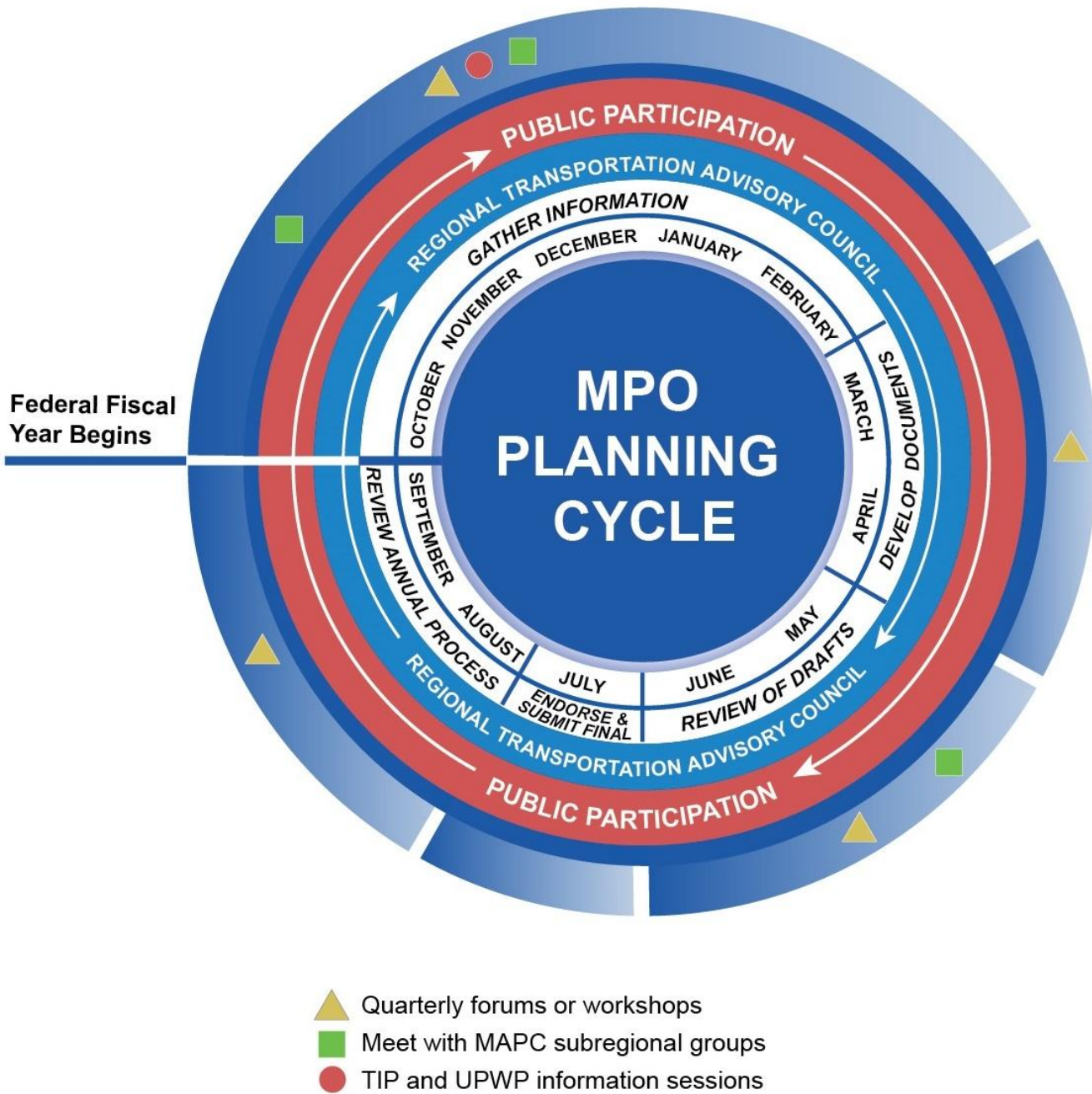
In extraordinary circumstances, such as an unforeseen regulatory requirement or funding deadline, the MPO may vote to shorten the public comment period to a minimum of 15 days. In emergency circumstances, such as the need to take immediate action to protect public safety or take advantage of an extraordinary funding opportunity, the MPO may wave the comment period.

The MPO may extend a public comment period an additional 15 days if a proposed amendment is significantly altered during the initial public comment period. If a significant alteration occurs after the close of the initial public comment period,

the MPO may schedule an additional comment period lasting 21 days for TIP amendments and 30 days for UPWP or LRTP amendments.

MPO staff collects public comments and relays them to the MPO in both summary form and full text as submitted. MPO members review and consider these comments as they decide what action to take regarding the proposed amendment.

**Figure 7**  
**Annual MPO Planning Cycle for Development of TIP, UPWP, and Public Participation**



### **4.3.2 Administrative Modification of Certification Documents**

Changes to certification documents that do not rise to the level of an amendment may be addressed through an administrative modification. The MPO may decide to make an administrative modification without issuing a public comment period, though one may be scheduled, at the MPO's discretion. If one is scheduled, public notification follows the same process that is used for amendments.

## **4.4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SCHEDULE FOR LONGER-TIME-HORIZON PLANNING ACTIVITIES**

There are many activities at the MPO that have longer or less predictable time horizons. The public participation schedules for these events, therefore, are tailored to the specific event and its timing.

### **4.4.1 Federal Recertification Reviews**

Federal recertification reviews are conducted every four years. At this time, the federal transportation agencies evaluate the programs and activities of the MPO to determine whether they are in keeping with the required 3C process. If so, the federal agencies certify that the MPO is operating as it should. A recertification review is conducted, typically over the course of a work week, in a series of public sessions. Members of the public are invited to attend and participate. They also are invited to submit written comments before and during the review sessions. The federal agencies may contact certain parties to hear their views on MPO programming and operations, including public participation. The material prepared for the recertification review and the report of the federal agencies is posted on the MPO's website. The most recent recertification review began in the summer of 2018.

### **4.4.2 The Transportation Equity Program**

The MPO's Transportation Equity program is ongoing. This program is the MPO's method of consulting people who identify as minorities, have limited English proficiency, are 75 years old or older, are 17 years old or younger, have a disability, or are members of low-income households. The MPO primarily engages with groups representing these populations' interests in order to identify the transportation needs of protected populations and promote their involvement in the planning process.

The program focuses on outreach to organizations serving communities with high shares of protected populations. These organizations and other community contacts are involved in, and knowledgeable about, the transportation issues and needs of their areas. Contacts include social-service organizations, community-development corporations, neighborhood organizations, civic groups, business



and labor organizations, transportation advocates, environmental groups, and environmental-justice and civil-rights groups. The MPO also communicates with the Statewide Mobility Management Program and its Regional Coordinating Council.

Transportation equity is also a frequent topic at MPO workshops and information sessions. In addition to soliciting public feedback at these events, staff conducts surveys to seek input from persons who identify as belonging to one or more protected populations and from organizations that represent those populations.

*The MPO works to gather input from low-income and minority residents and the elderly, youth, and those with limited English proficiency.*

#### 4.4.3 Development of the Public Participation Program and Plan

The MPO reviews the Program's progress and effectiveness on an ongoing basis, and updates both the Program and Plan accordingly. The MPO performs updates as needed to reflect changes in federal guidance, requirements and regional needs, and improvements in the state of the practice, and occur in consultation with members of the public and other interested parties.

##### *Original 2014 Plan*

Outreach for this Plan began in the spring of 2013 in tandem with MPO outreach of the draft TIP and UPWP; discussions were held at two public workshops and two "Be Informed, Be Involved Sessions" in 2013. In addition, in 2013, the MPO conducted surveys through its MPOinfo email list, TRANSREPORT, public workshops, and the website. Public input gathered through this process and from the MPO was incorporated into a draft Plan that was circulated for a 45-day public review process in August 2014.

During the public review process, the draft Plan was posted on the MPO website and discussed with the Advisory Council. In addition, four MPO public workshops were held to provide information and solicit feedback, and information was made available at the Fall Forum for the LRTP. The public was notified about the public review process via TRANSREPORT, MPOinfo emails, website News Flashes, a press release, and an MPO Tweet. As discussed elsewhere in this document, information from the public outreach process helped guide the changes reflected in this final document. The MPO approved this document on October 16, 2014.

### *Current Plan Update*

The MPO conducted a 45-day public review process for this Plan amendment from February to April 2019, during which the draft Plan was posted on the MPO website and discussed with the Advisory Council. The public was notified about the review process via MPOinfo emails, Tweets, a banner on the homepage of the MPO's website, updated web text, and notices in MAPC's monthly MAPC Matters email newsletter in both March and April. One official public comment letter was received regarding the amendment, which was presented to the MPO prior to endorsement. The letter and the official response from the MPO can be reviewed in Appendix E.



# Appendix A—Federal Public Participation Mandates

## A.1 TITLE 23, SECTION 450 CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATION (CFR)

### A.1.1 §450.316 Interested Parties, Participation, and Consultation

The federal regulations concerning public participation in metropolitan transportation planning decision making are specified in Title 23, Section 450.316, of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). These regulations require that public-involvement processes be proactive and provide complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and opportunities for early and continuing involvement; they leave the choice of methods for facilitating participation to the discretion of each MPO. The regulations specify that public participation processes must provide:

- Adequate notice of involvement opportunities and time for review and comment at key decision points
- Early and continuing opportunities for public involvement
- Timely information on transportation issues and decision-making processes
- Visualization techniques to describe the proposed plans and studies
- Reasonable access to technical and policy information
- Electronically accessible public information on the Web
- Public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and convenient times
- Procedures for demonstrating explicit consideration of and responses to public input
- A process for soliciting and considering the needs of traditionally underserved populations
- Periodic review and evaluation of the participation process
- A public-review period of 45 calendar days, which includes written comment on public participation procedures in the development of the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) before new procedures and any major revisions to existing procedures are adopted
- Coordination with the statewide transportation-planning public-involvement and consultation processes

**A.1.2 §450.318**

This section specifies the public participation requirements for MPO planning studies and project development.

**A.1.3 §450.322**

This section specifies the public participation requirements for the development and content of the MPO's LRTP.

**A.1.4 §450.324**

This section specifies the public participation requirements for the development and content of the MPO's TIP.

**A.1.5 §450.334**

This section specifies that MPOs certify at least every four years that the metropolitan transportation planning process is being carried out in accordance with all applicable requirements including:

- 23 USC 134, 49 USC 5303 regarding metropolitan transportation planning
- Nonattainment and maintenance areas, sections 174 and 176 (c) and (d) of the Clean Air Act, as amended (42 USC. 7504, 7506 (c) and (d)) and 40 CFR part 93
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 USC. 2000d-1) and 49 CFR part 21
- 49 USC. 5332, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age in employment or business opportunity
- Section 1101(b) of the SAFETEA-LU (Pub. L. 109-59) and 49 CFR part 26 regarding the involvement of disadvantaged business enterprises in USDOT funded projects
- 23 CFR part 230, regarding the implementation of an equal employment opportunity program on Federal and Federal-aid highway construction contracts
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC. 12101 et seq.) and 49 CFR parts 27, 37, and 38

- Older Americans Act, as amended (42 USC. 6101), prohibiting discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance
- Section 324 of title 23 USC. regarding the prohibition of discrimination based on gender
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC. 794) and 49 CFR part 27 regarding discrimination against individuals with disabilities

## **A.2 AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990 (ADA)**

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 states that “no qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity.” Therefore, ADA requires that locations for public participation activities, as well as the information presented, must be accessible to persons with disabilities.

## **A.3 TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964**

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, together with related statutes and regulations, provides that “no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” The entire institution, whether educational, private or governmental, must comply with Title VI and related federal civil rights laws, not just the program or activity receiving federal funds.

FTA C 4702.1B (2012), Title VI Requirements and Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients, provides guidance on promoting inclusive public participation. This circular recommends seeking out and considering the viewpoints of minority, low-income, and LEP populations when conducting public outreach and involvement activities. It identifies the following effective practices for fulfilling the inclusive public participation requirement:

- Schedule meetings at times and locations, that are convenient and accessible for minority and LEP communities
- Employ different meeting sizes or formats
- Coordinate with community- and faith-based organizations, educational institutions, and other organizations to implement public-engagement

strategies to reach out specifically to members of the affected minority and/or LEP communities

- Consider radio, television, or newspaper ads on stations and in publications that serve LEP populations (could also include audio programming on podcasts)
- Provide opportunities for public participation through means other than written communication, such as personal interviews, or audio and video recording devices

## **A.4 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

Executive orders and regulations regarding environmental justice (EJ) also include public participation mandates for recipients of federal funds and their subrecipients.

### **A.4.1 Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, 1994**

This executive order states that “each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.” Traditionally underserved groups such as low-income and minority populations must be identified and given increased opportunity for involvement in order to ensure effective participation.

### **A.4.2 Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, 2000**

This executive order requires that recipients of federal financial aid ensure that their programs and activities that are normally provided in English are accessible to persons with limited English proficiency.

### **A.4.3 FTA Circular 4703.1, Environmental Justice Policy Guidance for Federal Transit Administration Recipients, 2012**

The purpose of this circular is to provide recipients and subrecipients of FTA financial assistance with guidance in order to incorporate EJ principles into their plans, projects, and activities. The circular identifies full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process as one of the guiding principles of EJ. The circular provides strategies and

techniques for public engagement that are intended to help recipients and subrecipients identify the needs and priorities of EJ populations to inform the planning process and help balance the benefits and burdens of transportation decisions.







# Appendix B—MPO Memorandum of Understanding

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING RELATING TO  
THE COMPREHENSIVE, CONTINUING AND  
COOPERATIVE  
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS IN THE  
BOSTON METROPOLITAN AREA**

**Approved by the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization  
July 7, 2011**

**Massachusetts Department of Transportation  
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority  
Advisory Board to the MBTA  
Massachusetts Port Authority  
Metropolitan Area Planning Council  
City of Boston  
City of Newton  
City of Somerville  
Town of Bedford  
Town of Braintree  
Town of Framingham  
Town of Hopkinton**

**Effective November 1, 2011**

## Table of Contents

|    |   |    |
|----|---|----|
| 1. | Introduction.....   | 1  |
| 2. | Composition and Roles of the Boston Region MPO.....                             | 3  |
|    | A. Officers.....  | 4  |
|    | B. Records.....   | 4  |
|    | C. Municipal Membership.....  | 4  |
|    | C. The Regional Transportation Advisory Council.....                            | 4  |
|    | D. Voting Rules.....  | 5  |
| 3. | Functions and Roles of the Boston Region MPO and its Committees.....            | 6  |
|    | A. Overview.....  | 6  |
|    | B. Planning and Programming.....  | 6  |
|    | C. Establishment of Committees and Task Forces.....                             | 7  |
|    | D. Central Transportation Planning Staff.....                                   | 7  |
| 4. | Transportation Improvement Program.....   | 8  |
|    | A. Overview.....  | 8  |
|    | B. Establishment of Financial Constraint and Development of<br>TIP Targets..... | 9  |
|    | C. Prioritization Criteria.....   | 9  |
|    | D. Transit.....   | 10 |
|    | E. Highway, Bridge, Bicycle, and Pedestrian.....                                | 10 |
|    | F. Improvement of TIP-Related Information.....                                  | 11 |
| 5. | Operations Plan.....  | 13 |
| 6. | Review of This Document.....  | 13 |
| 7. | Effect of Memorandum.....   | 13 |

# **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING RELATING TO THE COMPREHENSIVE, CONTINUING AND COOPERATIVE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS IN THE BOSTON METROPOLITAN AREA**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

WHEREAS, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), formerly the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction, has the statutory responsibility, under Chapter 25 of the Acts of 2009, An Act Modernizing the Transportation Systems of the Commonwealth, to conduct comprehensive planning for and to coordinate the activities and programs of the state transportation agencies and, under Chapter 161A of the General Laws, to prepare the capital investment program and plans of the MBTA in conjunction with other transportation plans and programs; and its Highway Division, formerly the Massachusetts Highway Department, has the statutory responsibility under this Chapter for the construction, maintenance and operation of state roads and bridges, and also has the responsibility under this Chapter for the ownership, administration, control, operation, and responsibility for maintenance, repair, reconstruction, improvement, rehabilitation, finance, refinancing, use, and policing of the Massachusetts Turnpike and the Metropolitan Highway System in the vicinity of Boston and the surrounding metropolitan area; and

WHEREAS, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (“MBTA”) under the provisions of Chapter 161A of the General Laws, has the statutory responsibility to design and construct transit development projects, to determine the character and extent of services and facilities to be furnished, as well as to operate the public transportation system for the area constituting the MBTA; and

WHEREAS, the Advisory Board to the MBTA (“Advisory Board”) established under Chapter 161A of the General Laws is composed of the chief elected official, or designee, from each of the 175 cities and towns within the MBTA district, and is the body authorized by statute to review and advise the MBTA on its annual operating budget and the Program for Mass Transit; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (“MAPC”) comprises representatives from each of the 101 cities and towns in the Boston Metropolitan Region, gubernatorial appointees, and representatives of various state, regional, and City of Boston agencies; has statutory responsibility for comprehensive regional planning under MGL Chapter 40B; is the designated Economic Development District under Title IV of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965; and promotes smart growth and regional collaboration in order to implement the current regional plan, *MetroFuture: Making a Greater Boston Region*; and

WHEREAS, the Massachusetts Port Authority (“Massport”) has the statutory responsibility, under St. 1956, c. 465 (Appendix to Chapter 91 of the General Laws), to plan, construct, own, and operate transportation and related facilities (including Logan

*Boston Region MPO Memorandum of Understanding*

Airport, Hanscom Field, Black Falcon Cruise Terminal, and the Conley Terminal), as may be necessary for the development and improvement of commerce in Boston and the surrounding metropolitan area; and

WHEREAS, the municipalities in the Region, including the City of Boston, as the central city in the Region, and all other municipal governments, have an essential role in transportation planning and programming decisions; and

WHEREAS, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU); or its successors and Federal Highway Administration (“FHWA”) / Federal Transit Administration (“FTA”) joint planning regulations (23 CFR Part 450 and 49 CFR Part 613) require metropolitan areas to have a comprehensive, continuing, and cooperative transportation planning process (“3-C”) that results in plans and programs that consider all transportation modes and supports metropolitan community development and social goals. These plans and programs shall lead to the development and operation of an integrated, intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient, economic movement of people and goods;

WHEREAS, the Objectives of the 3-C Process are:

- a comprehensive, continuing, and cooperative transportation planning process resulting in plans, programs and operations consistent with the planning objectives of the metropolitan area.
- comprehensive, including the effective integration of the various stages and levels of transportation planning and programming for the entire Region and examining all modes so as to assure a balanced planning effort. There is simultaneous analysis of various related non-transportation elements, such as land use, economic and residential development, demographics, sustainability, and equity within a total planning process.
- continuing, affirming the necessity to plan for the short and long range needs of the regional transportation system, emphasizing the iterative character of the progression from systems planning to project planning, programming, operations and implementation. Frequent updating and re-evaluation of data and plans is necessary.
- cooperative, requiring effective coordination among public officials at all levels of government, and inviting the wide participation of all parties, public or private, at all stages of the transportation planning process. A key objective of the process is to resolve issues and controversies by providing a forum for negotiation and consensus building. At the same time, the process is not intended to operate, and cannot operate, to dilute the ultimate authority or responsibility of those state, regional, or local public officials who, pursuant to statute or under contract, review and/or implement transportation plans, programs, and projects.

- intermodal, and are intended to help provide the Boston region with the ability to maintain, manage and operate a multimodal transportation system that provides a high level of mobility and safety for people and freight, consistent with fiscal and environmental resources;

WHEREAS, in response to the FHWA/FTA Transportation Planning Certification Review Final Report of April 2004; and

WHEREAS, the Signatories recognize that transportation planning and programming must be conducted as an integral part of and consistent with the comprehensive planning and development process, and that the process must involve the fullest possible participation by state agencies, regional entities, local governments, private institutions and other appropriate groups;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Signatories hereto jointly agree as follows:

## **2. COMPOSITION AND ROLES OF THE BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)**

The Boston Region MPO consists of the following entities:

- Massachusetts Department of Transportation, with three representatives appointed by the Secretary, at least one of which is from its Highway Division
- Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
- Advisory Board to the MBTA
- Massachusetts Port Authority
- Metropolitan Area Planning Council
- City of Boston, with two representatives
- Twelve other municipalities elected from the Boston Region:
  - four at-large (two cities and two towns), and
  - eight (no city or town designation) from, respectively, each of the eight Metropolitan Area Planning Council subregional groups, and
- The Regional Transportation Advisory Council

In addition, the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration are ex-officio, non-voting members.

Each elected municipality shall be represented by its chief elected official or their designee. The terms of office of the elected municipalities shall be three-years, except, in the initial implementation phase, for six members who will have one four year term (as specified in the Updated MPO Membership election Process, dated 6/30/11). The 101 municipalities of the Boston Region will elect the elected municipalities. Permanent member entities of the MPO are not eligible to run for an elected membership.

**A. Officers**

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 and shall be elected to a one-year term by the MPO members by majority vote. This election shall take place at the first meeting after the election of Boston Region MPO elected municipal representatives.

The Chair or his/her official designee shall: set agenda with the advice and input of the Vice Chair; call meetings; preside at meetings; and disseminate timely information to members. The Vice Chair or his/her official designee shall preside at meetings in the absence of the Chair or his/her official designee.

**B. Records**

The Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) shall be the official custodian of the Boston Region MPO records. These records will be prepared and maintained by the CTPS, and shall be accessible in a central location.

**C. Municipal Membership**

The City of Boston is a permanent member. The process for nominating and electing the twelve other municipal members shall be approved by the Boston Region MPO to fulfill the objective of having a diverse membership. The municipal nomination and election process shall be administered by MAPC working jointly with the Advisory Board to the MBTA.

Election procedures should allow all municipalities an opportunity to be elected to the Boston Region MPO. Any changes to the election procedures shall be presented to the Boston Region MPO for approval.

**D. The Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Advisory Council)**

To accomplish the objectives of the 3-C process, the Boston Region MPO has established a special advisory committee, known as the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Advisory Council). The Boston Region MPO shall support the Advisory Council by providing financial and staff support through the Boston Region MPO staff. The members of the Boston Region MPO shall support the Advisory Council individually by rendering institutional support and also by attending the Advisory Council meetings, as practical.

In setting policy and work priorities for said staff, the Boston Region MPO shall be advised by the Advisory Council and, subject to overall work priorities, shall



provide information and analysis to the Advisory Council to assist the Advisory Council in advising on issues arising out of the 3-C process.

The principal mission of the Advisory Council is to foster broad and robust participation in the transportation planning process by bringing together concerned citizens, community-based organizations, Environmental Justice populations, business and institutional leaders, representatives of cities and towns, and state agencies.

The Advisory Council will best serve the Boston Region MPO and the public by acting as a primary mechanism for public input to the transportation planning process. To accomplish the Advisory Council mission, the Boston Region MPO acknowledges that:

- the Advisory Council is defined as a principal public outreach and education arm of the Boston Region MPO;
- The Chair of the Advisory Council will also chair any Public Participation Committee of the Boston Region MPO; and
- The Advisory Council shall assist with the implementation of the public participation plan in cooperation with the agencies and staffs as designated in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Boston Region MPO staff will provide ongoing support to the Advisory Council Chair to:

- Implement the Public Participation Plan and
- Further educate members of the public regarding activities of the Boston Region MPO and critical transportation issues generally.

Any additional specific revised functions, duties, and membership of the Advisory Council, proposed by the Boston Region MPO, shall be determined in cooperation with the Advisory Council.

**E. Voting Rules**

Votes of the Boston Region MPO on all certification documents and amendments to these documents shall be a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting, provided that a quorum, at least twelve member representatives, is present. Other votes will be by majority, and require a quorum.

### **3. FUNCTIONS AND ROLES OF THE BOSTON REGION MPO AND ITS COMMITTEES**

#### **A. Overview**

The Boston Region MPO shall perform all functions as required by federal or state law including jointly adopting an annual unified transportation planning work program for the region, as well as such transportation plans, programs and conformity determinations as may from time to time be required of the Boston Region MPO by federal and state laws and regulations.

The Boston Region MPO shall be the forum for cooperative decision making by principal elected officials of general purpose governments in the Boston region, and shall endeavor to provide the federal government the views of “responsible local officials” of the Region where called for under federal law with respect to the initiation of certain transportation programs and projects.

In the resolution of basic regional transportation policy, the Boston Region MPO shall seek and consider the advice of the Advisory Council. In so doing, the Boston Region MPO shall provide the Advisory Council with information and analysis in the form of reports, briefings, and discussion concerning their plans, programs, and priorities so that the Advisory Council can carry out its functions in a timely fashion.

In addition to the advice of the Advisory Council, the MPO shall seek the involvement of members of the public and the many entities and organizations with interests and views relative to the Boston Region’s planning and programming. To facilitate this, the Boston Region MPO will post on its website, at least 48 hours in advance of meetings, all materials related to meeting action items, unless waived by unanimous consent of the Boston Region MPO. The Boston Region MPO will also meet quarterly at locations outside of the City of Boston.

The Boston Region MPO will consider geographic and demographic equity a goal when approving all certification documents. This means that after other factors, such as need, are used in evaluating and selecting projects, a final view toward geographic and demographic balance and fairness over the span of the document will be applied.

#### **B. Planning and Programming**

The Boston Region MPO is responsible for planning and programming financial resources for a multi-modal transportation system for the Boston region by conducting the federal metropolitan planning process (3C Process) for the region, as referenced in Section 1 of this Memorandum. This includes preparation of the fiscally constrained certification documents (Long-Range Transportation Plan, Unified Planning Work Program, and Transportation Improvement Program), and

the Congestion Management Program and other studies supporting MPO decision-making.

The Unified Planning Work Program identifies the transportation planning studies conducted in the region, along with their funding amounts and sources, during a given federal fiscal year.

The Long Range Transportation Plan is the comprehensive transportation planning document for the MPO. It defines transportation visions, establishes goals and policies, and allocates projected revenue to regionally significant programs and projects.

The Transportation Improvement Program lists projects programmed and expected to be funded over the immediate four-year period. It is developed annually.

The Signatories agree to the arrangements outlined in Section 4 for the allocation of federal and state funds. Nothing in this document shall preclude the Boston Region MPO's ability to use the provisions of SAFETEA-LU (and successors) to transfer funds between highway and transit uses.

**C. Establishment of Committees and Task Forces**

The Boston Region MPO shall appoint committees it determines necessary and task forces to accomplish its business and assign duties to them.

**D. Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS)**

The Boston Region MPO agencies shall contribute resources in the form of funds, staff, and other contributions, to support a unified inter-agency transportation planning staff, known as the Central Transportation Planning Staff ("CTPS"), to assist in carrying out the Region's 3-C process under the policy control of the Boston Region MPO.

CTPS shall provide planning services to the Boston Region MPO. From time to time, other parties may provide additional resources through the state planning program and through other resources. All work undertaken for the Boston Region MPO shall be in an approved UPWP. All work funded through federal financing for metropolitan transportation planning under 23 USC 104(f) and 49 USC 5338(g)(1) shall be approved by the Boston Region MPO in accordance with applicable rules provided that the cities and towns shall have a substantial role in the development of the UPWP particularly in the activities specified for metropolitan planning funds.

Since CTPS is not an agency, the Boston Region MPO retains a fiduciary agent for all of the Boston Region MPO's financial resources. MAPC is currently the fiduciary agent. While the CTPS staff shall be defined legally as employees of the fiduciary agent, they shall be administered according to policies established by the Boston Region MPO subject to applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations and to the availability of funds.

At any time during which the fiduciary agent is a member of the Boston Region MPO, the role and actions of the fiduciary agent are distinguished from its role and actions as a policy member of the Boston Region MPO in that the fiduciary agent shall be limited to implementing actions of the Boston Region MPO subject to the applicable federal, state and local laws, and regulations and to the availability of funds.

The Boston Region MPO shall indemnify and hold the fiduciary agent harmless from liabilities occurring out of actions taken under its normal administration of the Boston Region MPO's activities. The Boston Region MPO and the fiduciary agent shall enter into an agreement detailing the financial and legal obligations of each party as determined by the Boston Region MPO.

All work not subject to federal transportation rules governing metropolitan planning funds must be approved by the Boston Region MPO for inclusion in the UPWP. CTPS may be selected by the sponsoring agency or other parties to deliver transportation planning services using these funds. The Boston Region MPO shall approve such requests provided it determines that: 1) CTPS has sufficient resources to complete such work in a capable and timely manner; and 2) by undertaking such work, CTPS neither delays completion nor reduces the quality of other work in the UPWP.

#### **4. TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)**

##### **A. Overview**

The Boston Metropolitan Region, made up of urban, suburban and rural communities, requires a balanced approach to transportation investment. The Boston Region MPO shall endorse annually a multi-year spending plan for federal highway and transit funding. This Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) shall reflect a multi-modal transportation program that responds to the needs of the region.

The TIP shall be the result of a cooperative, open, and informed process that balances local, regional, and state input and priorities and applies established Boston Region MPO policies and priorities in a fiscally constrained document. TIP development and programming shall be in full compliance with federal regulations and guidance. The TIP may include projects and programs addressing needs on the Interstate and National Highway Systems, repair of deficient bridges, support of inter- and intra-regional mobility, community projects, multi-modal facilities, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, transportation enhancements, clean air and mobility, operations and management, and all forms of transit. The state, regional, and municipal members of the Boston Region MPO shall work in a unified, timely, and cooperative manner to develop and establish priorities for the TIP.

The Boston Region MPO shall maintain two lists of unfunded projects: a First Tier Projects list and a Universe of Projects list. These lists shall be compiled by the Boston Region MPO for information purposes and shall be included annually in an appendix to the TIP.

**B. Establishment of Financial Constraint and Development of TIP Targets**

Development of the statewide federal aid and non-federal aid highway funding estimate shall be cooperative and shall be discussed with a statewide group representing regional planning agencies and other MPOs; currently the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) is this group.

An initial step in the financial constraint and TIP target development process shall be timely transmission to MARPA of federal funding information on obligation authority. In each TIP year, the state will propose its priorities for non-High Priority Projects, mega-projects, statewide infrastructure, change orders, planning, statewide CMAQ expenditures, and other items as needed. The estimated cost of these will be subtracted from the estimates of federal obligation authority of the state to show the estimated amount available for federal funding for MPO targets in the state. This amount and the state match for this funding will be allocated among the MPOs based on the MARPA formula. The Boston Region MPO share of available federal and non-federal aid has provided the Boston Region MPO with 42.97% of available funds since 1991. This will be termed the TIP Target. The resulting targets, federal and state funding levels, and projects and programs and their cost estimates will be discussed with the Boston Region MPO and other members of MARPA at a meeting early in the TIP development process of each year. Boston Region MPO Staff shall accompany MAPC to these MARPA consultation meetings. The state will be responsible for explaining the derived targets and providing additional information as requested.

The Boston Region MPO shall use these numbers as the estimate of available funding. The Boston Region MPO's portion of federal and non-federal aid will be programmed in its constrained TIP and MassDOT shall seek to advertise projects in the region in that amount.

**C. Prioritization Criteria**

The Boston Region MPO has developed criteria to be used to evaluate projects considered for programming. These criteria are a means to inform the MPO's decisions for all elements of the TIP. These criteria are consistent with and advance the visions and policies adopted for the latest Long-Range Transportation Plan. The criteria shall be reviewed each year and updated and improved as needed.

MassDOT and other member entities implementing federally-funded transportation projects shall consider MPO priorities when setting their priorities.

**D. Transit**

It is the responsibility of the Boston Region MPO, working with the MBTA, MassDOT Rail and Transit Division, and other transit providers in the region, to coordinate regional transit planning and funding with other transportation modes within the Boston region. This work shall be conducted in full compliance with federal and state regulations. It shall include programming for all federally-funded transit modes and programs, including the federal Job Access and Reverse Commute and New Freedom Programs.

The MBTA's authorizing legislation directs that every five years the MBTA shall prepare and submit to the Massachusetts General Court its Program for Mass Transportation (PMT), a long-range, fiscally unconstrained plan that outlines a vision for regional mass transit and a process for prioritizing infrastructure investments. Implementation of this plan is through the five-year fiscally constrained Capital Investment Program (CIP), which is updated annually.

Boston Region MPO regulatory requirements call for development every four years of a 25-year fiscally constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) that defines a comprehensive plan and vision for the region's surface transportation network. Implementation of the LRTP with federal transportation funds is through the Boston Region MPO's fiscally constrained TIP.

The Boston Region MPO and MassDOT and the MBTA will coordinate the parallel planning activities of the PMT/CIP and the LRTP/TIP and provide consistency between planned outcomes. This includes mutual consideration of visions and priorities articulated in each entity's transportation planning documents and project selection process. The MassDOT Rail and Transit Division will coordinate RTA investment with the MPO when setting priorities for programming.

**E. Highway, Bridge, Bicycle, and Pedestrian**

The TIP shall contain the Boston region's portion of all federal and state aid for each of the TIP's four federal fiscal years. It shall be prepared in accordance with federal regulation. It shall include programming for all roadway, bridge, bicycle, pedestrian projects and programs in the region, including costs for the Central Artery/Tunnel and the Accelerated Bridge Program. It shall include projects and programs that address the needs of truck and rail freight movement in the region.

**1. Central Artery/Tunnel Project**

The Boston Region MPO shall detail future federal aid payments for the Central Artery/Tunnel Project through FFY 2014 or until federal aid obligations to the project have been met.

**2. Accelerated Bridge Program**

The Boston Region MPO shall be informed of the commitments to Accelerated Bridge Program funding. All bridges leveraging federal aid via this program shall be listed in the appropriate TIP element. There shall continue to be a section in the TIP that details the amount of federal aid returning to the federal government for payment on this program until such time as full obligation repayment is received.

### **3. Road and Bridge Program**

The Boston Region MPO shall have the ability to program projects for federal and non-federal aid. The ability to include non-federal funds in a TIP does not in any respect imply the application of federal standards, regulations or related requirements to state-funded projects, programs or initiatives. The fiscal year shall be from October 1st to September 30th for both federal and non-federal aid.

MassDOT Highway Division shall be responsible for administering the road and bridge elements of the TIP, which includes meeting the requirements for implementing them. These requirements include acquiring right of way, obtaining necessary permits and completing design review before or during the federal fiscal year in which projects are programmed so that they can be advertised in the federal fiscal year in which they are programmed.

## **F. Improvement of TIP-Related Information**

### **1. Overview**

All members of the Boston Region MPO recognize the importance of delivering timely, accurate and reliable information on projects and on the levels of transportation funding expected to be available to the region. This information is critical for the development of the financially constrained TIP. This information also provides a valuable resource for planning by the cities and towns in the region as future funding levels help inform local decision making about whether, or when, to invest local resources in project design and development.

At the same time, the Boston Region MPO recognizes that funding levels may be affected by circumstances beyond its control, such as changes in state or federal authorizations or appropriations; increased need for emergency or security-related expenditures; legislative requirements; or other unanticipated events. While the Boston Region MPO recognizes these contingencies may affect funding, it nonetheless needs to deliver a regional transportation program based on good project information and a realistic assessment of available funds.

## **2. TIP Project Information and Dissemination**

The implementing agencies shall keep the Boston Region MPO informed of project status on a regular basis to support MPO planning and programming and to enable the Boston Region MPO to notify project sponsors of the outstanding issues that could cause the project to be deferred to a subsequent fiscal year. At least quarterly and on request, the implementing agencies shall submit this information to the Boston Region MPO Chair and staff for coordination and for distribution to the MPO members. This information shall include project status and other issues of interest to the MPO members and shall be compiled from all available resources, including municipalities, regional entities, state transportation agencies, and other sources. Boston Region MPO members shall provide needed and relevant information to Boston Region MPO staff for dissemination to the full Boston Region MPO. Staff shall utilize appropriate and up-to-date information systems for maintaining, processing, analyzing, and reporting information.

At the end of the federal fiscal year, the state agencies shall offer a full summary of how projects fared in the previous fiscal year before asking the Boston Region MPO to vote on the new TIP.

Boston Region MPO staff shall have primary responsibility for informing local governments regarding transportation funding and for collecting local input to the Boston Region MPO. All members of the Boston Region MPO, however, shall have a role in informing local governments about transportation aid and the programming process and in considering local input to the Boston Region MPO.

The Boston Region MPO shall discuss and decide on the TIP development process for the upcoming TIP in the first quarter of each federal fiscal year. The process shall be documented in the TIP Development Memorandum to the MPO. The process shall provide for the collection of current information about projects to be considered for programming; review and possible revision of TIP project-selection criteria; application of the criteria in project evaluations; and maintenance of certain lists of projects, such as the set in use at the signing of this Memorandum of Understanding, the “First Tier” set of projects. (The First Tier Project List is in addition to the set of programmed projects and serves as the first resource pool from which to identify projects for programming. This list is comprised of projects that earn a high score based on the evaluation criteria but that might not meet fiscal-constraint standards or immediate-readiness factors.)



## **5. OPERATIONS PLAN**

The Boston Region MPO shall adopt a revised operations plan, which shall detail the operations of the transportation planning system and the preparation of all certification documents for the Boston Region MPO. The Boston Region MPO shall be responsible for fully complying with all federal and state regulations governing the 3-C transportation planning process in the Boston metropolitan area.

The plan should, at a minimum, address the following functional areas:

- Administration and Finance;
- Programming;
- Policy; and
- Technical Products

## **6. REVIEW OF THIS DOCUMENT**

This document shall be reviewed every year, beginning in April, by the Signatories. Upon execution of this Memorandum of Understanding and in an effort to enhance municipal understanding of the Boston Region MPO process, the Boston Region MPO shall circulate this document to the municipalities of the Boston Region MPO. Proposed amendments will be circulated to the public prior to consideration by the Boston Region MPO.

## **7. EFFECT OF MEMORANDUM**

This Memorandum follows from: the Memorandum dated January 1973 and its Supplement dated March 1974; the Memorandum dated June 1976 and its Supplement dated May 1984; and the Memorandum dated November 1982; the Memorandum dated January 1997; and the Memorandum dated December 2001. However, in the event of any conflicts between this Memorandum and any previous Memoranda, this Memorandum shall prevail.

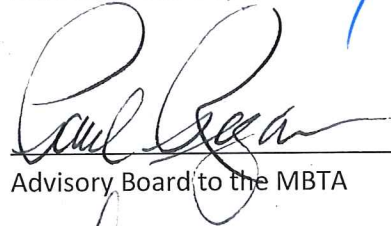
This Memorandum shall be effective as of November 1, 2011. Elected Municipal Signatories as of the date of the approval of this Memorandum shall serve in the new appropriate at-large or subregional designations established by this memorandum, until the end of their current term.

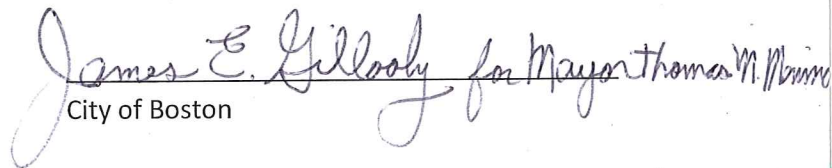
**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING RELATING TO THE COMPREHENSIVE, CONTINUING, AND COOPERATIVE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS IN THE BOSTON METROPOLITAN AREA**

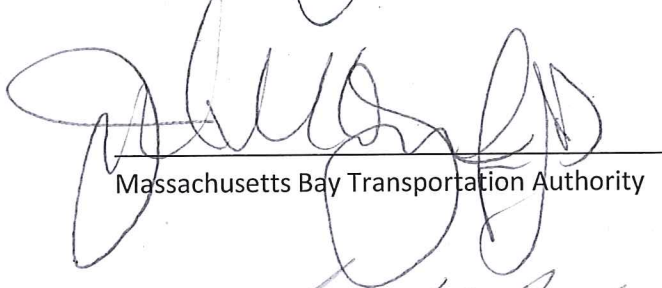
EXECUTED on the third day of November 2011, by member-entity representatives or designees.

  
Massachusetts Department of Transportation

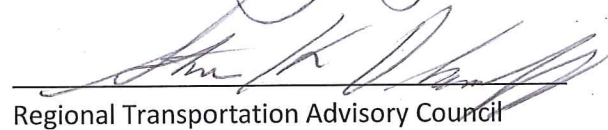
  
Metropolitan Area Planning Council

  
Advisory Board to the MBTA

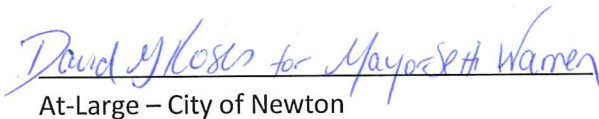
  
City of Boston

  
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

  
Massachusetts Port Authority

  
Regional Transportation Advisory Council

  
At-Large – City of Everett

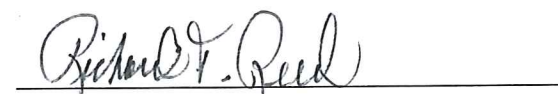
  
At-Large – City of Newton

  
At-Large – Town of Arlington

  
At-Large – Town of Lexington

  
Inner Core – City of Somerville

  
MetroWest Growth Management Committee –  
Town of Framingham

  
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal  
Coordination – Town of Bedford



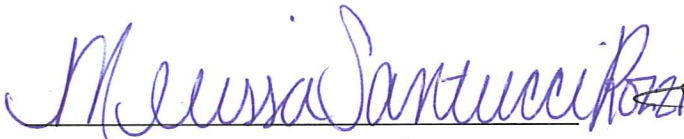
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North Shore Task Force – Town of Beverly



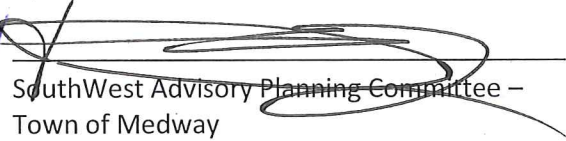
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North Suburban Planning Council – City of  
Woburn



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South Shore Coalition – Town of Braintree



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SouthWest Advisory Planning Committee –  
Town of Medway



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Three Rivers Interlocal Council – Town of  
Norwood

## Appendix C—MPO-Sponsored Meetings and MPO Meetings Outside of Boston

| <b>Date</b>               | <b>Location</b>     | <b>Equity Populations Focus?</b> | <b>Type of Event</b>      | <b>Participants</b>            | <b>Topics Discussed</b>          |
|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>January 12, 2016</b>   | Chelsea             | No                               | TIP and UPWP workshop     | General public                 | UPWP and TIP development         |
| <b>February 17, 2016</b>  | Cambridge           | No                               | 350MA member meeting      | 350MA                          | Introduction to the MPO          |
| <b>August 22, 2016</b>    | Boston              | No                               | MBTA ROC member meeting   | MBTA Rider Oversight Committee | Introduction to the MPO          |
| <b>November 9, 2016</b>   | Wakefield           | No                               | NSPC subregional meeting  | NSPC subregion                 | UPWP and TIP development         |
| <b>November 10, 2016</b>  | Holliston           | No                               | MWRC subregional meeting  | MWRC subregion                 | UPWP and TIP development         |
| <b>November 15, 2016</b>  | Norwood             | No                               | TRIC subregional Meeting  | TRIC subregion                 | UPWP and TIP development         |
| <b>November 15, 2016</b>  | Danvers             | No                               | NSTF subregional meeting  | NSTF subregion                 | UPWP and TIP development         |
| <b>November 16, 2016</b>  | Boston              | No                               | ICC subregional meeting   | ICC subregion                  | UPWP and TIP development         |
| <b>November 17, 2016</b>  | Hingham             | No                               | SSC subregional meeting   | SSC subregion                  | UPWP and TIP development         |
| <b>December 1, 2016</b>   | Boston              | No                               | MBTA ROC member meeting   | MBTA Rider Oversight Committee | UPWP and TIP development         |
| <b>December 13, 2016</b>  | Sherborn            | No                               | SWAP subregional meeting  | SWAP subregion                 | UPWP and TIP development         |
| <b>December 15, 2016</b>  | Natick              | No                               | MWRC subregional meeting  | MWRC subregion                 | UPWP and TIP development         |
| <b>January 5, 2017</b>    | Concord             | No                               | MAGIC subregional meeting | MAGIC subregion                | UPWP and TIP development         |
| <b>April 26, 2017</b>     | Boston (Park Plaza) | No                               | MPO Open House            | Public                         | TIP draft program                |
| <b>May 16, 2017</b>       | Boston (Park Plaza) | No                               | MPO Open House            | Public                         | UPWP draft program               |
| <b>September 19, 2017</b> | Norwood             | No                               | TRIC subregional Meeting  | TRIC subregion                 | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development |

| <b>Date</b>              | <b>Location</b>   | <b>Equity Populations Focus?</b> | <b>Type of Event</b>                                       | <b>Participants</b>                                | <b>Topics Discussed</b>                           |
|--------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|---|
| <b>October 10, 2017</b>  | Wrentham          | No                               | SWAP subregional meeting                                   | SWAP subregion                                     | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development                  |
| <b>October 26, 2017</b>  | Hingham           | No                               | SSC subregional meeting                                    | SSC subregion                                      | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development                  |
| <b>November 2, 2017</b>  | Concord           | No                               | MAGIC subregional meeting                                  | MAGIC subregion                                    | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development                  |
| <b>November 9, 2017</b>  | Reading           | No                               | NSPC subregional meeting                                   | NSPC subregion                                     | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development                  |
| <b>November 9, 2017</b>  | Peabody           | No                               | NSTF subregional meeting                                   | NSTF subregion                                     | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development                  |
| <b>November 14, 2017</b> | Natick            | No                               | MWRC subregional meeting                                   | MWRC subregion                                     | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development                  |
| <b>November 28, 2017</b> | Westborough       | No                               | 495 MetroWest Partnership Transportation Committee meeting | 495 MetroWest Partnership Transportation Committee | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development                  |
| <b>November 29, 2017</b> | Cambridge         | No                               | L RTP workshop   | LivableStreets Advocacy Committee                  | L RTP Needs Assessment                            |
| <b>January 3, 2018</b>   | Brookline         | Yes                              | L RTP workshop   | TRIPPS   | L RTP Needs Assessment                            |
| <b>January 17, 2018</b>  | Boston            | No                               | ICC subregional meeting                                    | ICC subregion                                      | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development                  |
| <b>February 15, 2018</b> | Boston            | No                               | MBTA ROC member meeting                                    | MBTA Rider Oversight Committee                     | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development                  |
| <b>March 27, 2018</b>    | Boston (downtown) | Yes                              | Boston Summit on Disabilities                              | People with a disability                           | Transportation needs for people with a disability |
| <b>March 28, 2018</b>    | Foxborough        | No                               | Bridging Transportation Gaps in Neponset Valley Forum      | TRIC region  | L RTP needs assessment                            |
| <b>May 1, 2018</b>       | Malden            | Yes                              | L RTP Workshop   | Boston North Regional Coordinating Council         | L RTP Needs Assessment                            |
| <b>May 21, 2018</b>      | Boston (Roxbury)  | Yes                              | DI/DB policy working group                                 | Project stakeholders and general public            | DI/DB policy                                      |

| <b>Date</b>              | <b>Location</b>  | <b>Equity Populations Focus?</b> | <b>Type of Event</b>                                       | <b>Participants</b>                                | <b>Topics Discussed</b>          |
|--------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|----------------------------------|
| <b>June 5, 2018</b>      | Boston (Roxbury) | Yes                              | DI/DB policy working group                                 | Project stakeholders and general public            | DI/DB policy                     |
| <b>June 26, 2018</b>     | Boston (Roxbury) | Yes                              | DI/DB policy public workshop                               | General public                                     | DI/DB policy                     |
| <b>July 17, 2018</b>     | Boston (Roxbury) | Yes                              | DI/DB policy working group                                 | Project stakeholders and general public            | DI/DB policy                     |
| <b>November 13, 2018</b> | Norwood          | No                               | TRIC subregional meeting                                   | TRIC subregion                                     | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development |
| <b>November 15, 2018</b> | Burlington       | No                               | NSPC subregional meeting                                   | NSPC subregion                                     | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development |
| <b>November 27, 2018</b> | Westborough      | No                               | 495 MetroWest Partnership Transportation Committee meeting | 495 MetroWest Partnership Transportation Committee | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development |
| <b>November 28, 2018</b> | Boston           | No                               | ICC subregional meeting                                    | ICC subregion                                      | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development |
| <b>November 29, 2018</b> | Natick           | No                               | MWRC subregional meeting                                   | MWRC subregion                                     | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development |
| <b>December 4, 2018</b>  | Norwood          | Yes                              | Neponset Valley RCC Meeting                                | Neponset Valley Coordinating Council               | Coordinated Plan development     |
| <b>December 11, 2018</b> | Milford          | No                               | SWAP subregional meeting                                   | SWAP subregion                                     | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development |
| <b>December 12, 2018</b> | Boston           | Yes                              | Boston Area RCC meeting                                    | Boston Area RCC                                    | Coordinated Plan development     |
| <b>December 18, 2018</b> | Danvers          | No                               | NSTF subregional meeting                                   | NSTF subregion                                     | L RTP, UPWP, and TIP development |

DI/DB = Disparate Impact and Disproportionate Burden. ICC = Inner Core Committee. L RTP = Long-Range Transportation Plan. MAGIC = Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination. MWRC = MetroWest Regional Collaborative. NSPC = North Suburban Planning Council. NSTF = North Shore Task Force. RCC = Regional Coordinating Council. ROC = Rider Oversight Committee. SSC = South Shore Coalition. SWAP = South West Advisory Planning Committee. TIP = Transportation Improvement Program. TRIC = Three Rivers Interlocal Council. TRIPPS = Transportation Resources, Information, Planning & Partnerships for Seniors. UPWP = Unified Planning Work Program.



## Appendix D—Definitions of Acronyms, Initialisms, and Abbreviations

3C process = continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative transportation planning process  
A&F = Administration and Finance  
ADA = Americans with Disabilities Act  
Advisory Council = Regional Transportation Advisory Council  
CFR = Code of Federal Regulations  
CIP = Capital Investment Program  
CMAQ = Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program  
CMP = Congestion Management Process  
CTPS = Central Transportation Planning Staff  
EJ = Environmental Justice  
FAST Act = Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act  
FHWA = Federal Highway Administration  
FTA = Federal Transit Administration  
HTML = Hypertext Markup Language  
ICC = Inner Core Committee  
LAP = Language Assistance Plan  
LEP = Limited English Proficiency  
LRTP = Long-Range Transportation Plan  
MAGIC = Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination  
MAPC = Metropolitan Area Planning Council  
MARPA = Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies  
MassDOT = Massachusetts Department of Transportation  
MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority  
MetroWest = MetroWest Regional Collaborative  
MOU = Memorandum of Understanding  
MPO = Metropolitan Planning Organization  
NSPC = North Suburban Planning Council  
NSTF = North Shore Task Force  
PDF = Portable Document Format  
PMT = The MBTA's Program for Mass Transportation  
RSS = Rich Site Summary  
SAFETEA-LU = The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users  
SSC = South Shore Coalition  
STIP = State Transportation Improvement Program  
SWAP = Southwest Advisory Planning Committee



TE = Transportation Equity  
TIP = Transportation Improvement Program  
TRIC = Three Rivers Interlocal Council  
UPWP = Unified Planning Work Program  
USC = United States Code  
USDOT = United States Department of Transportation

# Appendix E—Public Comment Letters and Responses

April 9, 2019

To: Annette Demchur  
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150  
Boston MA, 02116

From: LivableStreets Alliance

Re: Draft Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization Public Participation Plan

Dear Ms. Demchur,

Thank you for inviting public comment on this draft of the Public Participation Plan. For over 13 years, LivableStreets Alliance has advocated for streets that connect people to the places where they live, work and play.

Our current programs include advocating for:

- **Emerald Network:** our vision for a 200-mile system of greenways in Greater Boston
- **Vision Zero:** the effort to systematically improve traffic safety in cities and towns
- **Better Buses:** systemwide improvements to optimize and prioritize bus transit

We were happy to see the steps the Boston Region MPO has taken to improve opportunities for public participation. Based on the plan, the proposed changes are supported by online engagement tools aimed at keeping people up to date; including a new twitter presence, a blog, and improved information visualizations. Activating these channels is an important step to make the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) processes better known to the public, however, we are concerned that these improvements do not go far enough to justify shortening the comment period from 30 to 21 days. More intensive ways of collecting feedback are needed to ensure that people understand and are aware of these processes.

In 2017, the MPO presented a similar proposal to shorten the public comment period. However, community members and the MPO Advisory Board both raised concerns. Therefore, we were surprised to see this idea on the table again, with seemingly no additional changes. It is unclear what motivated this proposal.

One of our concerns is that the improvements do not improve access to the public in a meaningful way. The majority of the improvements are limited to those with online access. While online content is accessible for many, those who are the most vulnerable users, including low

income residents, many seniors, and some people with disabilities, may not have the skills or know-how to access these materials and comment in a meaningful way.

The perceived benefits of social media and emails are that they can reach large numbers of people quickly and provide information without the need to show up to meetings. However, with only 3,200 email addresses and 1,035 followers on Twitter, these numbers fall far below a meaningful percent of the population in the 97 cities and towns within the Boston MPO region.

We want to stress the importance of consulting within the communities when developing these various transportation funding plans. These are important opportunities for communities to be able to fund large capital projects but the language, metrics, and processes behind determining and allocating funding for these projects is neither written or presented in terms that will be easily understood by the average person. This severely limits the potential for the majority of people to comprehend and comment on projects within their communities. More meaningful engagement is needed in order to help people understand the process, why these projects matter, and share their comments.

Given the complexity of how these processes work, it is important to provide this information in person, in easily understood language for the general public, and allow opportunities for questions. The meetings highlighted in this plan as most directly related to the TIP and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) are information sessions. These information sessions are explicitly noted to be “geared to representatives who prepare their municipality’s or other entity’s official inputs” (p. 34). We are disappointed to see the meetings being presented only in this way. According to the Federal Public Participation Mandate, the onus is on the MPO to ensure that the public has early and continuing involvement. Given the location, timing, and content of these meetings, we do not believe these information sessions adequately address the needs of the public to be informed. We urge you to be more proactive in your outreach by going to the public, not requiring them to come to the MPO.

Due to the proposed adjustments to the comment period, we think it is necessary to make further improvements to the Public Participation Plan. We suggest adding specific metrics to ensure that the MPO is reaching an adequate number of members of the public and the ability to adjust processes based on successful public engagement and understanding. These metrics could include a specific percent of the population reached or the creation of representational guidelines, to ensure an equitable subset of the population is engaged.

In addition to having a wide enough reach, we also strongly suggest clarifying the purpose of the TIP, LRTP, and UPWP. We recommend simplifying the messaging to get across the main points, and presenting this material in a diverse set of ways to reach the largest number of people possible. While members of the public don’t need to weigh in on specific project budgets

or metrics for project determination, they can and should be able to understand the process, the various proposed projects, and share their input.

Thank you for considering our comments. We look forward to seeing an expansion of a robust and inclusive public participation process.

Sincerely,

Kristiana Lachiusa  
Community Engagement Coordinator  
LivableStreets Alliance



## BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Stephanie Pollack, MassDOT Secretary and CEO and MPO Chair  
Annette Demchur and Scott A. Peterson, Co-interim Executive Directors, MPO Staff

April 29, 2019

Ms. Kristiana Lachiusa  
Community Engagement Coordinator, LivableStreets Alliance  
70 Pacific Street  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Re: Comment On Draft Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Public Participation Plan

Dear Ms. Lachiusa:

Thank you for commenting on the 2019 draft amendment to the MPO's Public Participation Plan (Plan). The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) requested that all MPOs in the state reduce the public comment periods for their main certification documents—the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)—from 30 to 21 days. The Boston Region MPO approved this change only for the TIP; the public review period for the UPWP and LRTP remain at 30 days. This change to the TIP review period was requested for two main reasons:

1. To better align with the development of MassDOT's two main capital plans—the Capital Investment Plan and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), the latter of which is a compilation of all of the regional TIPs
2. To create a more efficient timeline for MPOs to approve project changes that need to be reflected in the STIP prior to the project being advertised for construction

If you would like more detail about this change and why it was requested, please do not hesitate to contact me.

As MPO staff, we have found that working to build relationships with stakeholder groups and encouraging them to engage early and often in the certification document development process is the most meaningful way to provide the public

with real opportunities to influence the content of the final LRTP, TIP, and UPWP documents. While the MPO welcomes input throughout the development process for each of its certification documents, we particularly encourage participation in the beginning stages of development. For the TIP and UPWP, this is in the fall and winter of each year, when staff conducts outreach to project and study proponents and evaluates projects. While the TIP and UPWP are on an annual cycle, the LRTP cycle is every four years. The LRTP uses input from the TIP and UPWP process in the first two years of the cycle, and staff ramps up its outreach for the LRTP Needs Assessment and final document in the final two years of the four-year cycle. The official public comment period for each document is important, however, comments submitted at that time are more likely to inform the next year or next plan's process rather than influencing changes to the individual document.

TIP amendments vary in their content and often do not impact projects funded by the MPO's regional target funds. Sometimes, they simply reflect the receipt of grants or the addition of information that was not available when the original document was finalized. As staff, we have found that for amendments, the difference between allowing 30 and 21 days for comment had no impact on the volume of comments we receive. We acknowledge that there are ways we could improve communications around the meaning and impact of TIP amendments.

MPO staff are currently in the process of hiring a new Executive Director as well as a Public Outreach Planner. Currently, one staff member works half the time on communications and the other half on administrative support to the MPO board. Our plan is to expand the work of public participation, engagement, and external communications as new hires fill these positions with new strategies and improved capacity to reach members of the public in their communities. These new and expanded efforts will be documented in our next Plan update.

In anticipation of updating the Plan, MPO staff are experimenting with new approaches such as the adoption of public comment management software to make it easier to measure the effectiveness of our efforts and help ensure that we are reaching a diverse cross-section of the population in our region. We are also pursuing collaboration with the public processes conducted by MPO member agencies like MassDOT and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. We are working to update our outreach materials, improve our website, and build relationships with agencies and advocacy groups that can magnify the impact we have. LivableStreets is a valuable partner in this work, and we look forward to collaborating with you to amplify public awareness and understanding of the MPO process.

Thank you for your feedback on this important document.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Annette Demchur". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Annette Demchur  
Interim Co-Executive Director  
Central Transportation Planning Staff