



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

# Transportation Management Area Planning Certification Review

Federal Highway  
Administration

Federal Transit  
Administration

## **Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization *Boston, MA-NH-RI* Transportation Management Area**



BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION MUNICIPALITIES

**December 20, 2022**

**Final Report**





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## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On September 28 and 29, 2022, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conducted the certification review of the transportation planning process for the Boston, MA-NH-RI urbanized area (UZA), as conducted by the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (BRMPO), Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), and the providers of public transportation. FHWA and FTA are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process for each UZA over 200,000 in population at least every four years to determine if the process meets the Federal planning requirements.

### 1.1 Summary of Current Findings

The current review found that the metropolitan transportation planning process as conducted in the Boston Region MPO area of the Boston, MA-NH-RI UZA substantially meets the Federal planning requirements subject to the resolution of one corrective action.

As a result of this review, FHWA and FTA are conditionally certifying the transportation planning process conducted by BRMPO, MassDOT, and transit providers. There are also recommendations in this report that warrant close attention and follow-up, as well as areas that the region is performing very well in that are to be commended.

#### Corrective Actions

##### 1. MPO Organizational Structure

The process for sharing information to develop the annual list of obligated projects must be documented in an MOU, in accordance with 23 CFR 450.314(a). These provisions must be incorporated by September 30, 2023.

#### Recommendations

##### 1. MPO Organizational Structure

An update to the 2011 MOU for the MPO can make useful revisions and adjustments to the document. It could be rewritten in a way that sufficiently covers the necessary provisions but allows for details to be developed, and updated more regularly, in an operations plan or bylaws. Additionally, updating the MOU provides an opportunity to formally establish how the MPO intends to have the interests of the RTAs represented, which the Federal Review Team encourages the MPO to accomplish.



## **2. MPO Organizational Structure**

It is strongly recommended that the MPO complete an annual review of the MOU as required in the document or otherwise adhere to any new review cycle policy that is developed in an MOU update.

## **3. Transportation Management Area and Regional Coordination**

The MPO should consider establishing a regular schedule (at least once-a-year) for northern and southern regional coordination meetings, beyond the timeframe surrounding the development of the MTP. This would enable the MPOs to share ongoing planning efforts and to coordinate and share ongoing planning needs and trends, such as changing traffic demand findings, new projects in the area, or updated performance management efforts.

## **4. Transportation Improvement Program and Project Selection**

The MPO should look for opportunities to identify and advance additional locally and regionally developed projects to fund using their regional target funds. Opportunities to find good projects may include reviewing completed MPO studies, conducting regional modal planning and gap analysis, utilizing the MPO congestion management process, and leveraging MassDOT information. The MPO should continue to explore opportunities to maintain a list of projects that can be programmed quickly in the current year; this would enable the MPO to take advantage of new funding opportunities and to fill gaps in the TIP should project schedules or funding availability change.

## **5. Transportation Improvement Program and Project Selection**

The MPO should explore innovative ways to fund projects to ensure they are making use of their regional target funds. Examples of innovative ways to fund projects include providing MPO target funding to municipalities for the oversight of project development activities including design, environmental, and right-of-way, which are all eligible for federal funding. Additional options could be explored in partnership with the State, like carrying over unprogrammed balances of regional target funds to future years, for example.

## **6. Transportation Improvement Program and Project Selection**

To support a thoughtful and inclusive decision-making process, including project selection decisions, the MPO should consider implementing a timeframe by which



information is shared with board members for review prior to an MPO meeting or prior to an action going to a vote.

#### **7. Public Outreach and Involvement**

The MPO should continue to strengthen the variety of engagement strategies outside of virtual and electronic communication, ensuring that the MPO's engagement program is fully inclusive and accessible, and offers meaningful opportunities for the public to learn and provide input into the metropolitan transportation planning process. When scheduling meetings and engaging with the public, the MPO should consider the needs of the target audience, including work schedules, childcare, and digital literacy.

#### **8. Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA)**

The MPO should develop a formal process and document how RTAs interests are represented on the Board.

#### **9. Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA)**

The MPO's Title VI webpage should be updated to reflect their most recent Title VI report. An updated Title VI Report can benefit the MPO in multiple ways. It is an accurate reflection of the organization's goals and accomplishments. It is also an excellent tool to publicize the MPO's mission and/or intent to engage traditionally underserved populations.

#### **10. Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA)**

The MPO should fully assess its LEP approach when the new Census data is released in 2022 to ensure the current approach is meeting the needs of Limited English Populations.

#### **11. Non-motorized Planning**

The MPO should consider updating or developing a regional bicycle and pedestrian plan or needs assessment that complements the statewide plans and focuses on the specific needs and goals of the Boston region. This process could be done in partnership with MassDOT and other regional planning partners to avoid redundancy and leverage existing data to work toward shared goals and recommendations.

#### **12. Environmental Mitigation, Consultation and Resiliency**

The MPO should explore ways to engage and specifically target federal and state environmental resource agencies and stakeholders for their input during the next MTP update. The MPO should look also into ways they can engage environmental resource



agencies into the planning process on a regular basis, whether it be including them in the development of corridor studies or during the development of 3C planning documents, to ensure key voices are being heard.

### **13. Performance Based Planning and Programming**

The MPO's interactive performance dashboard could be a useful tool and should be updated to have current data and be regularly updated going forward. The MPO is also encouraged to incorporate the federal performance measures into the dashboard.

### **14. Performance Based Planning and Programming**

The MPO's *TIP Before-and-After Studies* are great efforts to better evaluate the effectiveness of its TIP projects on performance goals. To date, the MPO has only looked at MPO target projects, with limited data as a result. To better understand the full collection of regional investments on performance, the MPO should work with MassDOT and the RTAs to evaluate statewide and transit projects. The more data included in the evaluation, the MPO will be better informed to prioritize investment decisions that meet performance goals in the future.

## **Commendations**

### **1. Public Outreach and Involvement**

The process that led to publication of the PEP and the PEP Guidebook and establishment of a Communications and Engagement Team is noteworthy. MPO staff responded to recommendations from a strategic planning process and communications audit to rebrand its engagement program that is more transparent and equitable, has clear and concise messaging as a result of a plain language working group, and has an interdisciplinary team made up of communications, editorial, graphics, and equity staff to frame its work.



## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Background

Pursuant to United States Code (U.S.C.), specifically the laws under 23 U.S.C. 134(k) and 49 U.S.C. 5303(k), FHWA and FTA must jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning process in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) at least every four years. A TMA is an urbanized area (UZA), as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, with a population of over 200,000. After the 2010 Census, the Secretary of Transportation designated 183 TMAs – 179 U.S. Census UZAs over 200,000 in population plus four UZAs that received special designation.

In general, the review consists of three primary activities: a site visit, a review of planning products (in advance of and during the site visit), and preparation of a Certification Review Report that summarizes the review and offers findings. The review focuses on compliance with Federal law and regulations, challenges, successes, and experiences of the cooperative relationship among the MPO(s), the State DOT(s), and public transportation operator(s) in the conduct of the metropolitan transportation planning process. Joint FHWA/FTA Certification Review guidelines provide agency field reviewers with latitude and flexibility to tailor the review to reflect regional issues and needs. As a result, the scope and depth of the Certification Review reports will vary significantly.

The Certification Review process is only one of several methods used to assess the quality of the regional metropolitan transportation planning process, compliance with applicable statutes and regulations, and the level and type of technical assistance needed to enhance the effectiveness of the planning process. Other stewardship and oversight activities provide opportunities for this type of review and comment, including Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) approval, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Statewide and Transportation Improvement Program (S/TIP) findings, Air Quality (AQ) conformity determinations (in nonattainment and maintenance areas), as well as a range of other formal and less formal interactions provide both FHWA/FTA an opportunity to comment on the planning process. The results of these other processes are considered in the Certification Review process.

While the Certification Review report itself may not fully document those many intermediate and ongoing checkpoints, the “findings” of Certification Review are, in fact, based upon the cumulative review effort.

The review process is individually tailored to focus on topics of significance in each Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA). Federal reviewers prepare Certification Reports to document the results of the review process. The reports and final actions are the joint responsibility of the appropriate



FHWA and FTA field offices, and their content will vary to reflect the planning process reviewed, whether or not they relate explicitly to formal “findings” of the review.

## 2.2 Purpose and Objective

Since the enactment of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, the FHWA and FTA, are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process in all UZAs over 200,000 population to determine if the process meets the Federal planning requirements in the U.S.C. and Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), specifically under 23 U.S.C. 134, 49 U.S.C. 5303, and 23 CFR 450. In 2005, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), extended the minimum allowable frequency of certification reviews to at least every four years. Such frequency has not changed in subsequent Federal transportation legislation, and the latest Federal law, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, signed in 2021, continues this requirement for certification reviews.

The BRMPO serves a portion of the Boston, MA-NH-RI UZA. MassDOT is the responsible State agency and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), Cape Ann Transit Authority (CATA), and MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) are the primary public transportation operators serving as planning partners with BRMPO for this UZA. The Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) provides transportation planning staff to the MPO. The geographic area for the BRMPO includes 97 municipalities, covering approximately 1,400 square miles representing about three million residents.

Certification of the planning process is a prerequisite to the approval of Federal funding for transportation projects in the area. The certification review is also an opportunity to provide assistance on new programs and to enhance the ability of the metropolitan transportation planning process to provide decisionmakers with the knowledge they need to make well-informed capital and operating investment decisions.



## 3.0 SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Review Process

The last review was conducted in 2019. A summary of the status of findings from the previous certification review is provided in Appendix G: Previous Findings and Disposition. This report covers the 2022 review, which consisted of a formal site visit and public involvement opportunities. The formal site visit was conducted on September 28 and 29, 2022. Opportunities for public comments were provided at the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (RTAC) Meeting on September 14, 2022, and at the BRMPO Meeting on October 4, 2022. Written comments were accepted via postal mail and email. Additionally, an online feedback form was sent to members of the MPO Policy Board to solicit further input.

Participants in the on-site review included representatives of FHWA, FTA, MassDOT, BRMPO, CTPS, MBTA, and MWRTA. A full list of participants is included in Appendix A.

A review of current documents was completed prior to the site visit. In addition to the formal review, routine oversight mechanisms provide a major source of information upon which to base the certification findings.

The certification review covers the transportation planning process conducted cooperatively by the MPO, State DOT, and public transportation operators. Background information, current status, and key findings are summarized in the body of the report for subject areas identified by FHWA and FTA staff for the on-site review. Any topic not explicitly addressed in this report has been found to be in compliance by FHWA and FTA.

The certification review report is organized around key transportation planning topic areas discussed during the on-site review. Each planning topic section presents the legal and regulatory basis for the review topic area, summarizes the observations of the Review Team, and lists the key findings, if applicable. Findings may include corrective actions, recommendations, or commendations. Corrective actions describe items that do not meet the requirements of the transportation statute and regulations, along with the actions that must be taken to attain compliance. Recommendations identify steps that should be implemented to improve processes and planning products that already meet minimum Federal requirements. Commendations describe processes and products that are considered notable and identified as best practices. For planning topics without any findings, including those topics not included in this report, the Federal Review Team determined that the transportation planning process was consistent with the Federal requirements.



## **4.0 PROGRAM REVIEW**

### **4.1 MPO Organizational Structure**

#### **4.1.1 Regulatory Basis**

23 U.S.C. 134(d) and 23 CFR 450.314(a) state the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall cooperatively determine their mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. These responsibilities shall be clearly identified in written agreements among the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator serving the MPA. Per 23 CFR 450.314(a), these written agreements shall include specific provisions for the development of financial plans that support the MTP and the TIP, and the development of the annual listing of obligated projects.

#### **4.1.2 Current Status**

The MPO is governed by a Policy Board, supported by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (RTAC) and three standing committees- the Administration & Finance (A&F) Committee, the Congestion Management Process (CMP) Committee and the UPWP Committee. The Policy Board has 22 voting members including state agencies (MassDOT, MassPort, and the MBTA), municipalities, two regional agencies (MBTA Advisory Board and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council) as well as one seat for an RTAC representative. The Policy Board typically meets twice per month and has been meeting virtually since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The MPO is staffed by the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS).

The composition and operations of the MPO are governed by a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed in 2011, which established the current structure and was signed by the 14 members of the Policy Board at that time. The MOU includes several outdated references such as to 101 member municipalities in the planning area (which is now 97), stating that the MPO will meet at locations outside of Boston quarterly (the Board has met virtually via Zoom for the last two and half years), and it also includes some very specific information pertaining to previous investments in the region, namely the Central Artery/Tunnel project and MassDOT's Accelerated Bridge Program. The MOU includes a provision for the agreement to be reviewed every year by the signatories which has not been done. The MOU does include some provisions on the sharing of information for financial planning purposes, but it does not specifically address the development of the annual listing of obligated projects. Additionally, the sharing of information for financial planning is largely addressed for FHWA funding but is minimal for FTA funding.



The 2011 MOU also calls for an operations plan to be developed which, as of this review, has not been completed. The MPO initiated development of an operations plan earlier in 2022, following a recommendation made in the 2018 federal certification review. The A&F Committee is leading the development of the draft document. As it drafts the plan, the Committee is working through documenting practices, and in some cases modifying processes, that are not well documented elsewhere. These include things like election procedures for MPO municipal representatives (which were recently revised), MPO officer roles and responsibilities, member roles and responsibilities, establishing member agency designees and alternates, and so forth. While the MOU includes details on some aspects of the MPO's processes, many areas have not been fleshed out in any formal way before, and the operations plan is an opportunity for the MPO to set clear processes and expectations to guide their work.

There is interest expressed regularly by MPO members as well as stakeholders to better understand how the Boston Region MPO compares to other MPOs in Massachusetts and nationally. CTPS runs "MPO 101" sessions periodically to orient new members (as well as providing a refresher for interested existing members). A recent peer exchange was held with the Miami, FL MPO and board members were invited to participate although there were only a few that did so.

The 2011 MOU establishes the RTAC to "foster broad and robust participation... by bringing together concerned citizens, community-based organizations, Environmental Justice populations, business and institutional leaders, representatives of cities and towns, and state agencies." The RTAC maintains bylaws, originally adopted in 2002 but most recently amended in 2015. These bylaws outline broad eligibility for voting and non-voting membership, with the distinction between voting and non-voting primarily based on recent record of attendance at RTAC meetings. As both members and supporting staff have turned over in recent years, it appears that maintaining up-to-date records of RTAC membership has been a challenge. The RTAC is now being supported by staff within CTPS's Communications and Engagement unit. This new alignment was suggested to better utilize the RTAC for public outreach functions. The practical role of RTAC as part of achieving the MPO's public engagement goals has not always been clear. For instance, the RTAC has not historically been an early participant or contributor to initiating revisions to the public participation plans for the MPO. It was also noted that, given the typical meeting and comment schedules, the RTAC tends to have limited time to review, discuss, and prepare comments on the MPO's 3C documents for the MPO's consideration in decision-making. There is also opportunity to further explore the ways that RTAC can support the MPO in achieving its equity goals.

In addition to the 2011 MOU, a MOU between the State, MPO, CATA, and MWRTA was signed in 2012. The MOU outlines the roles and expected coordination among the agencies. MWRTA



has voiced concern for several years that neither it nor the other regional transit authority (RTA) in the BRMPO region, CATA, has a seat on the Policy Board. The MBTA, the primary public transportation provider in the region, does have a seat on the Board. Following a recommendation in the 2014 federal certification review encouraging the parties to seek a solution that ensured the needs of all transit providers were adequately met through the MPO structure, the MPO established a transit working group (TWG). The TWG does not have a formal structure and does not have a seat on the Board, although that was considered as a possibility when it was developed. The TWG was piloted as a more informal venue for the exchange of information between transit providers and other groups that have a particular interest in transit matters. There has not been any movement to formalize TWG, give it a vote on the Board, or otherwise change representation on the Board.

#### **4.1.3 Findings**

**Corrective Action:** The process for sharing information to develop the annual list of obligated projects must be documented in an MOU, in accordance with 23 CFR 450.314(a). These provisions must be incorporated by September 30, 2023.

**Recommendation:** An update to the 2011 MOU for the MPO can make useful revisions and adjustments to the document. It could be rewritten in a way that sufficiently covers the necessary provisions but allows for details to be developed, and updated more regularly, in an operations plan or bylaws. Additionally, updating the MOU provides an opportunity to formally establish how the MPO intends to have the interests of the RTAs represented, which the Federal Review Team encourages the MPO to accomplish.

**Recommendation:** It is strongly recommended that the MPO complete an annual review of the MOU as required in the document or otherwise adhere to any new review cycle policy that is developed in an MOU update.

## **4.2 Transportation Management Area and Regional Coordination**

### **4.2.1 Regulatory Basis**

In accordance with 23 U.S.C. 134 and 23 CFR 450, MPOs must carry out a planning process that is "continuing, cooperative and comprehensive" (3C). This includes establishing agreements to address the responsibilities and situations arising from there being more than one MPO in a metropolitan area.

More specifically, 23 CFR 450.314(e) states:



“If more than one MPO has been designated to serve an urbanized area there shall be a written agreement among the MPOs, the State(s), and the public transportation operator(s) describing how the metropolitan transportation planning processes will be coordinated to assure the development of consistent metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs across the MPA boundaries, particularly in cases in which a proposed transportation investment extends across the boundaries of more than one MPA. If any part of the urbanized area is a nonattainment or maintenance area, the agreement also shall include State and local air quality agencies. The metropolitan transportation planning processes for affected MPOs should, to the maximum extent possible, reflect coordinated data collection, analysis, and planning assumptions across the MPAs. Alternatively, a single metropolitan transportation plan and/or TIP for the entire urbanized area may be developed jointly by the MPOs in cooperation with their respective planning partners. Coordination efforts and outcomes shall be documented in subsequent transmittals of the UPWP and other planning products, including the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP, to the State(s), the FHWA, and the FTA.”

#### **4.2.2 Current Status**

The Boston Region MPO is the largest of 11 MPOs serving the Boston MA-NH-RI urbanized area (UZA), encompassing 97 cities and towns within Massachusetts in the MPO region. To coordinate with MPOs that serve regions outside of its own metropolitan planning area (MPA), the Boston Region MPO and MassDOT operate under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to administer the planning process for the UZA, in coordination with New Hampshire DOT and Rhode Island DOT, as well as the other 10 MPOs that serve municipalities in the region (across all three States) and 12 transit agencies. The Boston UZA MOU was last updated in 2018. In addition, the Boston Region MPO is a signatory to two MOUs serving the Providence RI-MA UZA and the Worcester MA-CT UZA respectively, both of which were signed in 2020.

At the on-site meeting for the Boston Region MPO Certification Review in 2022, representatives from eight of the neighboring MPOs shared comments about the coordination process with the Boston Region MPO. All comments were laudatory of the MPO and its coordination efforts, and many praised staff at the MPO for their regular efforts to coordinate on projects at the MPO borders or to share data and modeling efforts between regions. In preparation for the 2023 MTP update, Boston Region MPO staff hosted coordination meetings with the northern and southern portions of the UZA in October 2022, coordinating with MPOs serving the neighboring areas to discuss long-range planning goals, trends, and findings. These northern/southern UZA meetings had occurred on a regular basis in the past but had not been held recently. Staff of the MPO also actively participate in the Transportation Managers Group (TMG) meetings between regional planning agency staff throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.



Finally, the Boston Region MPO and its staff work diligently as both a central provider of data analysis tools and resources within the region and the Commonwealth and to coordinate data projections, modeling, and analysis within and around the region. The MOUs with each UZA define specific expectations for data sharing and collaboration across borders and UZAs, for example. In addition, MPO staff maintain a self-serve data portal to share data with others outside of the MPO and to make its analyses available to the public. Partners from other agencies or regions can submit ad hoc requests to MPO staff, who then track and analyze data request trends and coordinate the publication of additional information and planning resources. The MPO recently established a Data Strategist position. The data strategist works to coordinate data gathering and analysis through an internal coordination group and is working to develop policies and data standards to bring greater consistency and interoperability to the MPO's data resources.

Overall, the Boston Region MPO and its staff continue to serve as a strong point of coordination and leadership for transportation planning and analysis within the Boston UZA and its neighboring regions.

### 4.2.3 Findings

**Recommendation:** The MPO should consider establishing a regular schedule (at least once-a-year) for northern and southern regional coordination meetings, beyond the timeframe surrounding the development of the MTP. This would enable the MPOs to share ongoing planning efforts and to coordinate and share ongoing planning needs and trends, such as changing traffic demand findings, new projects in the area, or updated performance management efforts.

## 4.3 Unified Planning Work Program

### 4.3.1 Regulatory Basis

MPOs are required to develop Unified Planning Work Programs (UPWPs) in TMAs to govern work programs for the expenditure of FHWA and FTA planning and research funds (23 CFR 450.308). The regulation 23 CFR 420.111 governs work programs required for the expenditure of FHWA highway planning and research funds. MPOs are required to develop UPWPs in cooperation with the State and public transit agencies. (23 CFR 450.308(c))

### 4.3.2 Current Status



The MPO develops and adopts its UPWP on an annual fiscal year (FY) basis. The development process is overseen by the UPWP Committee, which is a subcommittee of the MPO board. The role of the UPWP Committee is to provide input and guidance throughout the UPWP development process, beginning with the initial process of identifying study ideas, including engaging stakeholders and members of the public. Members of the UPWP Committee also oversee the process of selecting studies and provide input on the scopes of selected studies. In FY 2022, the UPWP Committee met 10 times and discussions included the following topics: proposed budgets for ongoing and continuing activities, new study ideas and how to prioritize them, and improvements to the UPWP outreach and development process. The UPWP Committee does not have bylaws. The total federal funding programmed in the FY 2022 UPWP for the Boston region is \$6,955,046.

### **4.3.3 Findings**

The transportation planning process in the Boston region is consistent with the federal requirements for this topic area.

## **4.4 Transportation Improvement Program and Project Selection**

### **4.4.1 Regulatory Basis**

23 U.S.C. 134(c), (h) & (j) set forth requirements for the MPO to cooperatively develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Under 23 CFR 450.326, the TIP must meet the following requirements:

- Must cover at least a four-year horizon and be updated at least every four years.
- Surface transportation projects funded under Title 23 U.S.C. or Title 49 U.S.C., except as noted in the regulations, are required to be included in the TIP.
- List project description, cost, funding source, and identification of the agency responsible for carrying out each project.
- Projects need to be consistent with the adopted MTP.
- Must be fiscally constrained.
- The MPO must provide all interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP.

### **4.4.2 Current Status**

The MPO prepares a new TIP annually. The current TIP covers programming in the Boston Region MPO planning area for five years, from FY 2023-2027. The TIP describes programming in



the Boston region for an estimated \$1.8 billion in FHWA funding and \$3.9 billion FTA funding over the five fiscal years, and FHWA regional target funding over the five years to be a total program size of \$645 million, an average of \$129 million per year. The MPO prioritizes its regional target funding through six investment programs: Complete Streets, Intersection Improvements, Bicycle Network and Pedestrian Connections, Major Infrastructure, Community Connections, and Transit Modernization. These investment programs link the TIP and MTP. In the FY 2023-2027 TIP, the regional target funding was devoted primarily to enhancing mobility and safety for all modes through significant investments in Complete Streets projects (47.5 percent), followed by funding devoted to Major Infrastructure projects (21 percent) and for transit modernization projects (11.5 percent). The MPO left over \$20 million unprogrammed in FY 2024 and beyond, stating that they preferred to leave these funds available for programming in future TIP cycles.

In 2019, after the adoption of *Destination 2040*, the MPO's MTP, the MPO initiated the process for revising the TIP Project Evaluation Criteria to better align with the MTP. During this process, the MPO revisited the existing criteria, developed criteria for each of the MPO's investment programs, and adjusted the criteria weighting. In summary, the criteria were revised to correspond to the goal areas in the MTP, which include: safety, system preservation and modernization, capacity management and mobility, clean air/sustainable communities, transportation equity, and economic vitality. The MPO also summarized the process and the new criteria in [A Guidebook to the Boston Region MPO TIP Criteria](#) in January 2021, which has been made publicly available. The new criteria were used for the first time to score projects eligible for funding in the FY 2022-2026 TIP.

During the review, it became clear that there have been historic issues related to cost increases and delays on projects funded using the MPO's regional target funds. When this has occurred, the state has traditionally stepped up and offered up a project to fill the funding gap, as the MPO traditionally has not had locally sponsored substitute projects ready to go. As a result of this, in 2021 the MPO created a TIP Project Cost Ad Hoc Committee to explore the causes of project cost increases, delays, and to determine potential MPO policy changes to support more reliable project delivery. The committee consisted of nine MPO board members and met six times before advancing a set of policy recommendations to the full MPO board in September 2021. The policy changes were formally adopted by the MPO in November 2021 and were in effect for the development of the FY 2023-2027 TIP. Among other changes, the new policy requires more advanced design status (25 percent) and an updated cost estimate for projects before they become eligible for programming in the TIP. The committee is also exploring opportunities to identify smaller projects or quick-design projects that can be programmed if an opportunity for new projects arises during the year, such as when new funding is identified or when other projects are delayed.



More recently, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), was signed into law in November 2021 and provided significantly more transportation infrastructure funding than the MPO had estimated through its financial planning process. Discussion during the site visit confirmed that while the new funding that BIL provides allows for more opportunity, with it comes the challenge of not having enough projects immediately ready to go and program on the TIP, which, as mentioned previously, has been an issue for the MPO in the past. A recent example was noted in the FY 2023-2027 TIP, which states the “addition of approximately \$20 million in new BIL funding annually beginning in FFY 2023 compounded by programming delays for two projects already funded by the MPO (project # 606453 – improvements on Boylston Street and project # 606226 – Reconstruction of Rutherford Avenue, both in Boston)” resulted in a significant amount of unprogrammed funding in FY 2023 and FY 2024. For this scenario, the MPO again did not have any currently programmed regional target projects that could be accelerated to make use of this available funding. In this case, the MPO worked with MassDOT and the MBTA, and three projects were selected to fill this gap in 2023 and 2024: Lynn Station Improvements Phase II, Newton-Weston Bridge Rehabilitation (Commonwealth Avenue, Route 30 over Charles River), and Forest Hills Station Improvements. While the timely uses for the funding were ultimately identified, this is not an ideal scenario. The MPO could not make use of its regional target funds with locally sponsored projects, and the MBTA and MassDOT projects that were selected were not formally evaluated using the MPO’s project selection criteria prior to making funding decisions, as the MPO staff did not have sufficient time to score them prior to the deadline for MPO decision-making. Speaking more generally, the Federal Review Team also received input that the MPO board members are not always provided with sufficient time to digest and react to the information presented in front of them before being asked to vote. Some commenters noted that the MPO board meetings do not always feel like an inviting environment for everyone to speak up to voice thoughts or ask questions. Additionally, in the perspective of some commenters, the meetings function to publicly make official decisions that had already been made.

#### 4.4.3 Findings

**Recommendation:** The MPO should look for opportunities to identify and advance additional locally and regionally developed projects to fund using their regional target funds. Opportunities to find good projects may include reviewing completed MPO studies, conducting regional modal planning and gap analysis, utilizing the MPO congestion management process, and leveraging MassDOT information. The MPO should continue to explore opportunities to maintain a list of projects that can be programmed quickly in the current year; this would enable the MPO to take advantage of new funding opportunities and to fill gaps in the TIP should project schedules or funding availability change.



**Recommendation:** The MPO should explore innovative ways to fund projects to ensure they are making use of their regional target funds. Examples of innovative ways to fund projects include providing MPO target funding to municipalities for the oversight of project development activities including design, environmental, and right-of-way, which are all eligible for federal funding. Additional options could be explored in partnership with the State, like carrying over unprogrammed balances of regional target funds to future years, for example.

**Recommendation:** To support a thoughtful and inclusive decision-making process, including project selection decisions, the MPO should consider implementing a timeframe by which information is shared with board members for review prior to an MPO meeting or prior to an action going to a vote.

## 4.5 Financial Planning

### 4.5.1 Regulatory Basis

Financial planning is a systematic approach where a State, MPO, or transit operator manages its financial resources utilizing financial tools to determine how to fund the maintenance and operation of, as well as capital improvements to its transportation system over both the short-term (4-year TIP) and long-term (20-year MTP). The requirements for financial plans are contained in 23 CFR 450.324(f)(11) for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and 23 CFR 450.326(e-n), for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Separate financial plans demonstrate how the adopted MTP, and TIP can be implemented.

The financial requirements related to the MTP include the following, at a minimum:

- Revenue estimates are cooperatively developed by the State, the MPO, and public transportation operators.
- Revenue estimates include public and private sources that are committed, available, or reasonably expected to be available within the timeframe anticipated for implementation of the project.
- Revenue estimates may include recommendations for new funding sources, which should be supported by identified strategies for securing their availability.
- System-level estimates of operation and maintenance costs for Federally-supported facilities and services are taken into account to determine resources remaining available for capital expenditure.



- Cost and revenue estimates incorporate inflation rates reflecting year of expenditure (YOE) dollars.
- The quality of cost estimates is important in the MTP (and TIP). Cost estimates should be reviewed and the process and methods (and any assumptions) for determining costs should be documented.
- Cost estimates in the MTP should be reviewed and periodically updated, at least as frequently as each MTP update.

The financial requirements related to the TIP include the following, at a minimum:

- Demonstrate and maintain financial constraint by year.
- Identify projects to be funded with current and available revenues.
- Identify estimated total project cost, which may extend beyond the four years of the TIP.
- System-level estimates of operation and maintenance costs for Federally supported facilities and services are taken into account when estimating resources remaining available for capital expenditure.
- Cost and revenue estimates incorporate inflation rates to reflect YOE dollars.
- The quality of cost estimates is important in the TIP (and MTP). Cost estimates should be reviewed and the process and methods (and any assumptions) for determining costs should be documented.
- Cost estimates in the TIP should be reviewed and periodically updated, at least as frequently as each TIP update.
- Only projects or phases of projects if full funding can reasonably be expected to be available for the project within the time period anticipated for completion of the project.

#### **4.5.2 Current Status**

The MPO's current MTP (also known locally as the long-range transportation plan- LRTP), *Destination 2040*, was adopted in August 2019 and integrates the financial plan, as required per 23 CFR 450.321, into the MTP itself under Chapter 3: Funding the Transportation Network. As stated in *Destination 2040*, the MPO anticipates the region receiving approximately \$8.5 billion in FTA formula funding and receiving and having discretion to program \$2.9 billion (federal dollars plus state match) in federal highway funds between 2020 and 2040; for federal highway funds this number assumes that federal appropriations to Massachusetts will increase by 2.2 percent per year starting in 2025 while differing growth rates were used for different FTA formula programs. *Destination 2040* assumes a limited increase in revenues per year and an



inflation factor of 4 percent per year; this results in a \$4.1 million gap between anticipated project cost growth (\$18 million through 2040) and anticipated available funding (\$13.9 million through 2040). In 2020, Boston's MTP was amended to provide consistency between the MTP, TIP and MassDOT's Capital Investment Program (CIP). Also in 2020, the MPO approved a set of new policies to redefine the MPO's Major Infrastructure Program, a listing of the specific major transportation infrastructure projects that the MPO plans to fund over the timeframe of the MTP. The new policy included, among other things, a change to the definition of a major infrastructure project from \$20 million to \$50 million. The Major Infrastructure Program is also capped at 30 percent of MPO discretionary funding. The MPO is in the process of developing their next MTP, called Destination 2050, anticipated to be adopted in 2023.

The MPO's FY 2023-2027 TIP integrates the financial plan, as required per 23 CFR 450.326, into the TIP document itself. The TIP describes highway and transit investments over five years, provides details of how funding is allocated to each programmed project, and explains the discretion given to the MPO over programming regional FHWA target funds. The MPO chose to fund 51 projects with its regional target funding in the FY 2023-2027 TIP, which included 11 projects funded through the MPO's Community Connections Program. The Community Connections Program, funded largely through the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), is administered as a grant program for communities within the MPO to fund "first- and last-mile solutions, community transportation, and other small, nontraditional transportation projects," with smaller project costs and a total annual budget of \$2 million per FY.

The TIP development process and financial planning for the TIP faced significant uncertainty in the year prior to this certification review. In particular, the development of the FY 2022-2026 TIP occurred at a time with no significant increase in Federal funding for multiple years, due to continuing resolution funding under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (2015). It was unclear at the time how much funding would be given to the states and MPOs and thus, the MPO used conservative assumptions about anticipated funding for the four years of the TIP. As stated in the FY 2022-2026 TIP, during its development, "the MPO was very limited in its financial capacity to fund new projects," largely due to the constrained nature of the transportation infrastructure funding. As a consequence of this planning approach, the MPO did experience some difficulties in fully utilizing the funding made available under the first year of the IIJA, as discussed in [4.4 Transportation Improvement Program & Project Selection](#). The MPO and its partners in financial planning may benefit from documenting any lessons learned from that experience in preparation for the next time they are between federal authorization bills.



### **4.5.3 Findings**

The transportation planning process in the Boston region is consistent with the Federal requirements for this topic area.

## **4.6 Public Outreach and Involvement**

### **4.6.1 Regulatory Basis**

Sections 134(i)(5), 134(j)(1)(B) of Title 23 and Section 5303(i)(5) and 5303(j)(1)(B) of Title 49 require an MPO to provide adequate opportunity for the public to participate in and comment on the products and planning processes of the MPO. The requirements for public involvement are detailed in 23 CFR 450.316, which requires the MPO to develop and implement a documented PPP that includes explicit procedures and strategies to include the public and other interested parties in the transportation planning process.

Specific requirements include: providing adequate and timely notice of opportunities to participate in, or comment on, transportation issues and processes; employing visualization techniques to describe MTPs and TIPs; making public information readily available in electronically accessible formats; holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times; demonstrating explicit consideration of, and responding to, public input; and periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the PPP to ensure a full and open participation process.

### **4.6.2 Current Status**

Since the last certification review, the MPO updated its Public Outreach Plan (POP), which was finalized in August 2021. The POP was rebranded as the Public Engagement Plan (PEP) after a member of the public commented that the term “engagement” is more inclusive than “outreach,” suggesting more of a dialogue over a one-sided conversation. The PEP development was thoughtful and strategic, focusing not only on timely updates to incorporate virtual public involvement (VPI) strategies, but ensuring information is presented clearly and addresses what the public needs and wants to know about engaging with the MPO. Further, the update also responded to a recommendation in the last certification review to refine its measures of effectiveness. As a result, the PEP includes both quantitative and qualitative measures, which will be formally reviewed and documented in an annual evaluation report. MPO staff discussed its process for tracking and responding to comments, making a point to follow-up with community members to acknowledge and share how their comment might have impacted a final decision. This transparency is notable, and should only be enhanced when its



new community engagement software platform is introduced, which will help more easily track contacts, comments, and the geographic distribution of input, among other capabilities.

As part of the PEP update, the MPO developed a standalone companion document called “The PEP Guidebook: Your Guide to the Boston Region’s MPO’s Public Engagement Program.” This document utilizes graphics, visuals, and plain language to provide information about the history and purpose of the MPO and specifically how to get involved. It is a concise, easily digestible resource that is being used by MPO staff to engage and present a consistent message with MPO stakeholders and the general public. Information about its PEP program is also available online, and translated into five languages: Spanish, Chinese (traditional and simplified), Portuguese, Haitian, and Vietnamese. While the RTAC did provide comments on the PEP documents, they were not involved in its development. The bylaws state that RTAC is the “principal public outreach and education arm of the Boston Region MPO.” With that, the RTAC should have had a more active role in the PEP development. See [4.1 MPO Organizational Structure](#) for more information on RTAC.

Since 2021, the MPO has been conducting a communications audit. This grew out of the MPO’s strategic planning process in 2020, that recommended the agency “develop, invest in, and implement communications and marketing strategies that articulate a clear, concise, and compelling mission, vision, and core values to existing and prospective partners and the field.” This work has been complementary to that of a Plain Language Working Group among MPO staff to respond to the MPO Board’s concerns around clarity on the MPO’s role in the region, its web presence, and how it communicates information. The PEP and PEP Guidebook are direct results of this work, and plain language emphasis is now institutionalized in the work of the MPO. Other examples include the “What is the TIP?” and “What is the UPWP?” publications that are graphically appealing and concisely explain what these documents are, what the MPO’s role is, and how to get involved. The strategic planning process also prompted the development of a Communications and Outreach Team, which includes new dedicated staff for public engagement. This has increased capacity to focus on broader engagement strategies as well as more intentional collaboration with communications/editorial staff and the MPO’s Transportation Equity Program Manager in how the MPO implements its PEP moving forward, with a focus on equitable access.

Regarding specific engagement strategies, the MPO utilizes a variety of methods to communicate information and collect input. This includes traditional public meetings and open houses, MPO committee and subregional meetings, targeted stakeholder and community group meetings, as well as a variety of electronic communication methods (i.e., website, social media, email). As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, engagement has predominantly been virtual since March 2020. The MPO adapted quickly, utilizing virtual meeting platforms since that time,



and quickly posting meeting recordings on its YouTube channel for the public to watch on-demand at their convenience. The MPO primarily uses electronic communication to share information and continues to rely heavily on VPI strategies for engagement.

Participation in meetings has generally increased because of the convenience of virtual options and the MPO's efforts to make these meetings interactive, but the MPO can benefit from more targeted outreach to members of the public with limited access to reliable internet or who do not utilize VPI tools for engagement. While virtual meetings and electronic communication generally have been a positive addition to public engagement, it is important that this continues to be one set of tools to complement a variety of strategies used by the MPO. Some public comments received during the TMA Certification Review echoed this. That said, the MPO staff have shared some efforts they are taking to address gaps they are seeing with virtual participation, which includes outreach to specific neighborhoods or groups that have limited representation in virtual meetings and electronic surveys. This is seen in the "Invite Us Over" program where staff are either invited, or more proactively offer the service, to attend a community nonprofit group or other community group meeting to facilitate discussions tailored to the community they are visiting. For example, MPO staff were invited to take a walk with a neighborhood association in the Blue Hills Reservation to discuss challenges with transit access, allowing them not only to build relationships and trust with community members but to witness the challenges firsthand. This is a valuable tactic that should be replicated.

The MPO staff discussed public engagement plans for its upcoming MTP update in 2023, with a key strategy to leverage feedback from existing meetings to serve as a data collection to assess needs in the region. MassDOT is also updating its long-range transportation plan (LRTP), so there has been close planning with Boston and other MPOs across the State to coordinate on specific engagement opportunities when appropriate, and to setup a tool to share findings that could benefit both planning efforts. This is a great example of interagency coordination that should continue.

#### **4.6.3 Findings**

**Commendation:** The process that led to publication of the PEP and the PEP Guidebook and establishment of a Communications and Engagement Team is noteworthy. MPO staff responded to recommendations from a strategic planning process and communications audit to rebrand its engagement program that is more transparent and equitable, has clear and concise messaging as a result of a plain language working group, and has an interdisciplinary team made up of communications, editorial, graphics, and equity staff to frame its work.

**Recommendation:** The MPO should continue to strengthen the variety of engagement strategies outside of virtual and electronic communication, ensuring that the MPO's



engagement program is fully inclusive and accessible, and offers meaningful opportunities for the public to learn and provide input into the metropolitan transportation planning process. When scheduling meetings and engaging with the public, the MPO should consider the needs of the target audience, including work schedules, childcare, and digital literacy.

## **4.7 Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA)**

### **4.7.1 Regulatory Basis**

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibits discrimination based upon race, color, and national origin. Specifically, 42 U.S.C. 2000d states 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.” In addition to Title VI, there are other Nondiscrimination statutes that afford legal protection. These statutes include the following: Section 162 (a) of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973 (23 U.S.C. 324), Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*). ADA specifies that programs and activities funded with Federal dollars are prohibited from discrimination based on disability.

Executive Order #12898 (Environmental Justice (EJ)) directs Federal agencies to develop strategies to address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs on minority and low-income populations. In compliance with this Executive Order, the USDOT and FHWA issued orders to establish policies and procedures for addressing EJ in minority and low-income populations. The planning regulations, at 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(vii), require that the needs of those “traditionally underserved” by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and/or minority households, be sought out and considered.

Executive Order #13166 (Limited English Proficiency (LEP)) requires agencies to ensure that LEP persons are able to meaningfully access the services provided consistent with and without unduly burdening the fundamental mission of each Federal agency.

### **4.7.2 Current Status**

The MPO demonstrated compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination based upon race, color, and national origin through a variety of approaches. Visitors to the MPO’s website can easily locate a link to a Title VI webpage which provides the legal definition, instructions on procedures to file a discrimination complaint, and how to



contact a member of the MPO staff to request accommodations. The instructions are provided in plain-language and translated into five Safe Harbor languages. The MPO also tracks the engagement of persons with LEP by analyzing data obtained from usage of the site's translation features.

The Federal Review Team received a request from MWRTA for full representation and voting authority with the MPO. MWRTA articulated their concerns during the on-site meeting and submitted written comments. Not having a clear process by which RTAs' interests are represented on the Board can create the appearance that the interests of transit users are not fully considered in the decision-making process. As noted previously, 42 U.S.C. 2000d states 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 MPO demonstrated compliance with Executive Order 13166 and planning regulations, at 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(vii) which require that the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and/or minority households, be sought out and considered. The MPO typically approaches disparate impact and disproportionate burden analysis in a prudent and proactive manner. The MPO's efforts include structuring transportation equity programs to go beyond federal requirements to mitigate historical inequities. The MPO has adopted an Equity in Policies approach modeled after American Public Health Association (APHA) – Health in all Policies touchstone which involves factoring data from sources such as education, housing, health, and transportation options into their decision-making process.

The MPO demonstrated compliance with Executive Order 13166 (Limited English Proficiency) and associated nondiscrimination statutes which afford legal protection. As referenced in the Title VI Section, the staff tracks data which includes the number of "hits" to translated material on their website. In addition, and as mentioned above, the Title VI information is translated into five Safe Harbor languages: Spanish, Chinese (traditional and simplified), Portuguese, Haitian, and Vietnamese. The staff determined the five Safe Harbor languages by using American Community Survey (ACS) data. According to the MPO's 2021 Language Assistance Plan, there are more than 35 languages which meet the safe harbor threshold as of 2020. The top five were selected which accounts for approximately 75% of the LEP community.

The MPO hosts meetings in locations which are accessible to people with disabilities in accordance with 28 CFR §§ 35.130(b)(2), 35.150, and 35.151; 49 CFR §§ 27.7, 27.19(a), and 27.71(e). The ADA also requires information must be available to people with vision or hearing disabilities. The MPO ensures that every policy document is created in an accessible format.



### 4.7.3 Findings

**Recommendation:** The MPO should develop a formal process and document how RTAs interests are represented on the Board.

**Recommendation:** The MPO's Title VI webpage should be updated to reflect their most recent Title VI report. An updated Title VI Report can benefit the MPO in multiple ways. It is an accurate reflection of the organization's goals and accomplishments. It is also an excellent tool to publicize the MPO's mission and/or intent to engage traditionally underserved populations.

**Recommendation:** The MPO should fully assess its LEP approach when the new Census data is released in 2022 to ensure the current approach is meeting the needs of Limited English Populations.

## 4.8 Transit Planning

### 4.8.1 Regulatory Basis

49 U.S.C. 5303 and 23 U.S.C. 134 require the transportation planning process in metropolitan areas to consider all modes of travel in the development of their plans and programs. Federal regulations cited in 23 CFR 450.314 state that the MPO in cooperation with the State and operators of publicly owned transit services shall be responsible for carrying out the transportation planning process.

### 4.8.2 Current Status

The MBTA, MetroWest Transit Authority (MWRTA), and Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA) are the primary providers of fixed-route transit service in the Boston region. The MBTA provides commuter rail, heavy rail, light rail, bus, ADA paratransit, and ferry service. MWRTA and CATA provide fixed-route bus and ADA paratransit services. There are several additional regional transit authorities (RTAs) that primarily serve neighboring regions which also provide service to portions of the Boston Region's metropolitan planning area. The region is also served by commuter rail service from the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority, several intercity bus operators, corporate shuttle services, and independently operated ferries.

Since the last certification review, the MPO convened the Transit Working Group (TWG) to improve coordination among transit providers in the region and represent transit interests in MPO activities and decisions in a more holistic manner. Aside from two invitation-only meetings, all TWG meetings were open to the public and accessible via Zoom. Topics discussed at TWG meetings included a general overview of MPO activities and resources, information



exchanges between transit providers, innovations in the transit industry, improving regional connections and closing gaps, coordination of human services transportation, and various other topics.

TWG also hosted a series of informal coffee chats to share best practices related to various topics such as driver recruitment strategies, fleet electrification, recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, travel demand management, and more. During one coffee chat on gaps in the transit network, participants had a very blunt and honest discussion about transportation needs between areas that currently have no connections. Staff was very pleased that all participants were able to engage in such a difficult conversation because it meant that they were building trust with participants.

TWG meeting agendas and discussion topics were developed by MPO staff. Staff were also responsible for integrating the TWG discussions into the rest of the planning process. Staff noted that they were surprised by the high number of attendees at meetings and coffee chats which could be attributed to the nature of meeting virtually. Staff is actively considering how to connect TWG with UPWP activities to invest MPO resources more efficiently while addressing the transportation challenges of the region.

The MPO is in the early planning stages of updating its Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan in conjunction with the Long-Range Transportation Plan. Staff indicated that public engagement activities for updates to both plans will be combined for a more streamlined and efficient planning process. Staff also noted that the relationships made with human service transportation providers during TWG meetings and coffee chats will be beneficial for engaging with those stakeholders. There will also be targeted engagement activities with groups such as councils on aging, hospitals, public health departments, and regional coordinating councils. For this update, the MPO is particularly interested in addressing transportation challenges and gaps between the outer edges of the region as transportation needs may have changed in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **4.8.3 Findings**

The transportation planning process in the Boston Region is consistent with the Federal requirements for this topic area.



## 4.9 Non-motorized Planning

### 4.9.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 217(g) states that bicyclists and pedestrians shall be given due consideration in the comprehensive transportation plans developed by each MPO under 23 U.S.C. 134. Bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways shall be considered, where appropriate, in conjunction with all new construction and reconstruction of transportation facilities.

23 CFR 450.306 sets forth the requirement that the scope of the metropolitan planning process "will increase the safety for motorized and non-motorized users; increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users; and protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life.

### 4.9.2 Current Status

The MPO dedicates a fair share of resources to its bicycle and pedestrian program, which includes having a full time Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Manager to oversee planning and data analysis activities in this area. Looking at the current TIP, three out of the region's six investment programs include bicycle and pedestrian investments to some degree, including a dedicated *Bicycle and Pedestrian Program* (expanding bicycle and pedestrian off-road networks, safe crossings, new sidewalks, etc.), a *Complete Streets Program* (modernizing roadways to improve safety and mobility, such as bike lanes and continuous sidewalks), and a small-scale *Community Connections Program* (including investments to support bicycling, such as bike-share programs and bicycle parking). Though not all the individual projects include bicycle and pedestrian investments, this collection of investment programs accounts for 56 percent of the region's investments over the next five years.

The MPO has undertaken a series of bicycle and pedestrian related studies and activities over the years, largely funded under its Unified Planning Work Program. These include such analyses as assessing locations with high crash rates, evaluating network gaps, and evaluating access of bikeshare for environmental justice communities in the region. Decisions to fund bicycle and pedestrian studies are integrated into the overall UPWP scoring and voting process, which includes public solicitation, MPO staff suggestions, and UPWP Committee scoring and ranking. A list of projects is then presented to the MPO for endorsement on an annual basis. With MassDOT serving as Chair of the UPWP Committee, this eliminates redundancy with any statewide studies funded within the Boston region. Other coordination points include regular engagement with the Massachusetts Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board (MABPAB), which is chaired by MassDOT, as well as established relationships with advocacy organizations and the general public as part of the MPO's Bicycle and Pedestrian Count Database volunteer program.



MPO staff discussed some next steps for its program of activities. For example, the MPO plans to reassess its data counting program (e.g., locations, frequency of counts, data visualizations, etc.), which will look to better align and integrate existing data sources across the region, implement data collection efficiencies (e.g., automatic counters) as well as assess best practices from other regions to present a list of recommendations to the MPO board. Other examples include a reassessment of its pedestrian and bicycle report cards, which get limited use, before developing an application to share the region's bicycle report card scores. (Such an application has already been developed for the pedestrian report cards.) The intent of both report card tools is to document conditions of the region's existing bicycle and pedestrian networks to help the MPO staff identify needs.

The MPO no longer uses the 2008 regional bicycle plan that was created by MAPC and other regional stakeholders for the Boston Region MPO to guide investment decisions, nor does the MPO have a regional pedestrian plan. MassDOT published statewide bicycle and pedestrian plans in 2019 (updated in 2021), which the MPO was involved in developing. The MPO therefore determined that updating/developing its own plans at the same time would not be the best use of resources. Rather, the MPO plans to utilize MassDOT's comprehensive statewide plans and data sources when making planning and investment decisions in the Boston region, with a focus on safety and equitable access. However, with bicycle and pedestrian projects such an integral part of its investment program, the MPO might benefit from a regional bicycle and pedestrian plan to better guide their decisions. This could be a subset of the statewide plans, done in collaboration with MassDOT and its planning partners, that reflects a 3C metropolitan planning process and incorporates planned updates to its data collection and engagement strategies with the active transportation community.

### 4.9.3 Findings

**Recommendation:** The MPO should consider updating or developing a regional bicycle and pedestrian plan or needs assessment that complements the statewide plans and focuses on the specific needs and goals of the Boston region. This process could be done in partnership with MassDOT and other regional planning partners to avoid redundancy and leverage existing data to work toward shared goals and recommendations.

## 4.10 Freight Planning

### 4.10.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 167 sets the policy to improve the condition and performance of the national freight network and achieve goals related to economic competitiveness and efficiency; congestion; productivity; safety, security, and resilience of freight movement; infrastructure condition; use



of advanced technology; performance, innovation, competition, and accountability, while reducing environmental impacts.

In addition, 23 U.S.C. 134 and 23 CFR 450.306 specifically identify the need to address freight movement as part of the metropolitan transportation planning process.

Additional requirements of MPOs to integrate freight planning into the MPOs' transportation planning process include:

- As part of the MPO public participation planning requirements under 23 U.S.C. Section 134 and 23 CFR 450.316, consultation requirements include freight shippers as interested parties that should be provided a reasonable opportunity to comment on MTPs and TIPs.
- 23 CFR 490.613 implements the requirements of 23 U.S.C. 150(c)(6) to establish performance measures for State Departments of Transportation (State DOTs) and the MPOs to use to assess the national freight movement on the Interstate System.
- 23 CFR 450.316(d)(4)(vi) states that an MPO shall integrate in the metropolitan transportation planning process, directly or by reference, the goals, objectives, performance measures, and targets described in other State transportation plans and transportation processes, including as appropriate (metropolitan) portions of the State Freight Plan.

#### **4.10.2 Current Status**

The Boston Region MPO considers freight planning to be an integral component of its transportation planning process, with a demonstrated record of engaging with freight stakeholders and continuous work on an MPO Freight Action Plan dating back to 2013. The Freight Action Plan was last updated in 2019 and is tied to specific studies and activities in the UPWP and analyses for the LRTP. The Boston Region MPO region, like many large urban regions with significant logistics and freight facilities and a major international port, faces significant challenges balancing the need for goods movement and rapid delivery with demands on the multimodal transportation network, as well as regional equity and environmental impacts. MPO staff work to monitor trends in freight practices, including tracking freight demand through land use analysis, acquiring bottleneck data for the region, and analyzing freight mode shift for urban areas (e.g., e-bikes or small vehicles). This acute awareness of freight issues has led to several innovative freight planning initiatives, such as research motivated by a plan for shared bus and truck lanes near Conley Terminal at the Port of Boston and a site-specific study in the FY 2023 UPWP of freight and logistics decarbonization efforts in the North Suffolk County area.

The MPO has maintained consistent and dedicated funding in the UPWP for freight studies and outreach efforts, and for FY 2023 the freight funding was increased to support more robust outreach and data modernization efforts. The UPWP funds the decarbonization study noted



above, as well as the update to the LRTP, which supports research and engagement on freight activities and growth in goods movement. Finally, MPO staff at CTPS work with colleagues at MAPC to engage municipal planners in the region around freight and land use connections, particularly as warehousing moves further from the urban core, increasing truck vehicle miles travelled (VMT) in the region.

The MPO has a robust effort around freight planning and coordination, particularly as it partners with other agencies in the region and private sector stakeholders to understand rapidly changing freight trends. Like in many urban regions, freight, shipping, logistics and local deliveries have a substantial impact on the transportation network served by the Boston Region MPO. As the MPO increases its investment in freight planning and updates the LRTP, it is well-positioned to coordinate private and public interests in supporting and planning for a network that serves the region's freight needs.

#### **4.10.3 Findings**

The transportation planning process in the Boston Region is consistent with the Federal requirements for this topic area.

### **4.11 Environmental Mitigation, Consultation and Resiliency**

#### **4.11.1 Regulatory Basis**

23 U.S.C. 134(i)(2)(D) 23 CFR 450.324(f)(10) requires environmental mitigation be set forth in connection with the MTP. The MTP is required to include a discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities for the transportation improvements and potential areas to carry out these activities, including activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the plan.

23 U.S.C. 134(g) & (i)(5)-(6) and 23 CFR 450.316(b)-(e) set forth requirements for consultation in developing the MTP and TIP. Consultation is also addressed specifically in connection with the MTP in 23 CFR 450.324(g)(1)-(2) and in 23 CFR 450.324(f)(10) related to environmental mitigation.

In developing the MTP and TIP, the MPO shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies as described below:



- Agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities (State, local, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight)
- Other providers of transportation services
- Indian Tribal Government(s)
- Federal land management agencies

#### 4.11.2 Current Status

*Destination 2040*, the MPO's current MTP, includes a section on consultation and states "public consultation was conducted consistent with planning rule requirements in 23 CFR 450. 23 CFR 450.324 and 310 CMR 60.03(6)(h) require that the development of the TIP, LRTP, and related certification documents provide an adequate opportunity for public review and comment." The consultation section in the MTP is housed under the transportation conformity section and specifically calls out coordination with FHWA, FTA, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. Appendix D of the MTP describes the public outreach that occurred during the MTP's development and mentions a variety of groups and individuals that were involved in the development, including but not limited to transportation environmental advocates, municipalities, and transportation equity groups. The MTP does not mention targeted outreach that is specific to engaging environmental groups and other federal agencies such as federal land management agencies or tribal governments.

During the review, the MPO highlighted their All-Hazards Planning Application, which is an interactive application where the public can view the region's transportation network and TIP projects relative to natural-hazard zones, including those subject to flooding, storm surges, and sea level rise, and identify facilities that might benefit from protective measures or adaptations. The All-Hazards Planning Application went through a major update in 2021. Also during the review, the MPO showcased a Route 1A corridor study, a 2021 pilot study which researched the incorporation of resiliency into transportation infrastructure. The segment of Route 1A in Revere that was selected for this pilot was located within a natural low-lying area and highly vulnerable to flooding from high tides, coastal storm surge, rain surge, and inundation from sea level rise. In this study, MPO staff researched literature on resilience and conducted surveys. Overall, the study helped increase the MPO staff's knowledge and experience of incorporating resilience into corridor and intersection studies and provided staff with familiarity of relevant data sources like the Massachusetts Coastal Flood Risk Model, methodologies, adaptation strategies, and knowledge of best practices. Through the study's development, it was not clear if and how state and federal environmental resource agencies were engaged.



### 4.11.3 Findings

**Recommendation:** The MPO should explore ways to engage and specifically target federal and state environmental resource agencies and stakeholders for their input during the next MTP update. The MPO should look also into ways they can engage environmental resource agencies into the planning process on a regular basis, whether it be including them in the development of corridor studies or during the development of 3C planning documents, to ensure key voices are being heard.

## 4.12 Performance Based Planning and Programming

### 4.12.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 150(b) identifies the following national goals for the focus of the Federal-aid highway program: Safety, Infrastructure Condition, Congestion Reduction, System Reliability, Freight Movement and Economic Vitality, Environmental Sustainability, and Reduced Project Delivery Delays. Under 23 U.S.C. 134(h)(2), the metropolitan planning process shall provide for the establishment and use of a performance-based approach to transportation decision-making to support the national goals, including the establishment of performance targets.

23 CFR 450.306(d) states that each MPO shall establish performance targets to support the national goals and track progress towards the attainment of critical outcomes. Each MPO shall coordinate with the relevant State to ensure consistency, to the maximum extent practicable, and establish performance targets not later than 180 days after the State or provider of public transportation establishes its performance targets. The selection of performance targets that address performance measures described in 49 U.S.C. 5326(c) and 49 U.S.C. 5329(d) shall be coordinated to the maximum extent practicable, with public transportation providers to ensure consistency with the performance targets that public transportation providers establish under 49 U.S.C. 5326(c) and 49 U.S.C. 5329(d). Additionally, each MPO shall integrate the goals, objectives, performance measures, and targets from other performance-based plans and programs integrated into the metropolitan transportation planning process.

23 CFR 450.314(h) states that the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall jointly develop specific written provisions for Performance Based Planning and Programming (PBPP), which can either be documented as part of the metropolitan planning agreements or in some other means.

23 CFR 450.324(f) states that MTPs shall include descriptions of the performance measures and performance targets used in assessing the performance of the transportation system, a system



performance report evaluating the condition and performance of the transportation system with respect to the performance targets, and progress achieved in meeting the performance targets in comparison with system performance recorded in previous reports.

23 CFR 450.326(d) states that the TIP shall include, to the maximum extent practicable, a description of the anticipated effect of the programmed investments with respect to the performance targets established in the MTP, the anticipated future performance target achievement of the programmed investments, and a written narrative linking investment priorities to those performance targets and how the other PBPP documents are being implemented to develop the program of projects.

23 CFR 450.340 states that MPOs have two years from the effective dates of the planning and performance measures rule to comply with the requirements.

#### **4.12.2 Current Status**

The MPO clearly integrates a performance framework into its planning and programming process. The TIP includes a dedicated chapter on performance, providing background on PBPP and the federally required measures, as well as its overall approach to planning, investment decision-making, and evaluating progress toward meeting its targets. The TIP illustrates through tables and graphics how individual projects are contributing toward improving performance and meeting the MPO's goals. Further, the MPO recently updated its TIP evaluation criteria to better reflect the federal performance measures, as well as changes to the MPO's investment programs. The TIP does a good job telling the Boston region's performance story. While the current MTP does include a system performance report, details from the latest TIP will be incorporated in the MTP update that will be published in 2023.

Beyond the TIP and MTP, the MPO has a dedicated PBPP page on its website that explains the purpose as well as the MPO's work to build this into the metropolitan transportation planning process, directly linking to the MTP system performance report and the TIP performance analysis chapter. Of note is the timely list and description of the MPO's recent activities, including actions to review and adopt the latest performance targets, as recent as Fall 2022; each of these descriptions includes a link to more detailed memos that explains the data assessment and basis for the target decisions. The PBPP webpage also includes a link to its interactive performance dashboard. While a great tool for sharing information, data has been static and does not include the federal measures. MPO staff shared near-term plans to identify a new user-friendly platform that will coincide with an agency effort on dashboard application development and maintenance.

As work in PBPP has matured in the past few years, the MPO has included performance in its scenario planning process, looking at different groups of projects and the impacts they will have



on different goal areas. The MPOs *TIP Before-and-After Studies* have helped advance this work to evaluate the effectiveness of selected projects to improve safety and mobility. By understanding trends in project effectiveness, the MPO can then better recommend certain projects or project elements that will help the MPO meet its goals. The MPO has a limited number of target TIP projects to assess to date, so should consider broadening this pool to include statewide projects within the Boston region. Generally, coordination with the MassDOT and other planning partners is good in this area; MPO staff meet with MassDOT and neighboring regions to discuss data and data sources available to use in its planning work, collaborating on target setting and reporting as reflected in the 2019 PBPP Agreement. To date, the MPO has decided to support statewide targets, but may consider setting its own targets in the years to come.

#### 4.12.3 Findings

**Recommendation:** The MPO's interactive performance dashboard could be a useful tool and should be updated to have current data and be regularly updated going forward. The MPO is also encouraged to incorporate the federal performance measures into the dashboard.

**Recommendation:** The MPO's *TIP Before-and-After Studies* are great efforts to better evaluate the effectiveness of its TIP projects on performance goals. To date, the MPO has only looked at MPO target projects, with limited data as a result. To better understand the full collection of regional investments on performance, the MPO should work with MassDOT and the RTAs to evaluate statewide and transit projects. The more data included in the evaluation, the MPO will be better informed to prioritize investment decisions that meet performance goals in the future.



## Appendix A – On-Site Meeting Attendance

### Day 1

Name	Organization		Name	Organization
Chris Timmel	FHWA		David Knudsen	CTPS
Derek Krevat	MassDOT		Sandy Johnston	CTPS
Jonathan Church	CTPS		Ryan Bartlett	FTA
Judy Taylor	CTPS		Charles Kilmer*	OCPC
Stella Jordan	CTPS		Sujatha Krishnan*	CMRPC
Sean Rourke	CTPS		Brad Harris*	MRPC
Betsy Harvey	CTPS		Matt Waitkins*	NRPC
Tegin Teich	CTPS		Nate Miller*	SNHPC
Rose McCarron	CTPS		Tony Komornick*	MVRPC
Rebecca Morgan	CTPS		Lisa Estrela-Pedro*	SRPEDD
Steven Andrews	CTPS		Justin Howard*	NMCOG
Logan Casey	CTPS		Jillian Linnell*	MBTA
Joy Glynn	MWRTA		Steven Olanoff*	Westwood
Tyler Terrasi	MWRTA		Meghan O'Connor*	CTPS
Jim Nee	MWRTA		Ryan Hicks*	CTPS
Jonathan Belcher	CTPS		Greg Sobczynski*	MassDOT
Michelle Scott	CTPS		Paula Doucette*	MWRTA
Benjamin Krepp	CTPS		Brandon Burns*	FTA
Ari Ofsevit	FTA		Eva Willens*	MWRTA
Annette Demchur	CTPS		Srilekha Murthy*	CTPS
Tina Hooper	FHWA		Babatunde Tugbobo*	FTA
Andrew Reovan	FHWA		Margaret Griffin*	FTA
Leah Sirmin	FTA		Ken Miller*	FHWA
Ken Dumas	CTPS			

\*Attended via Zoom

### Day 2

Name	Organization		Name	Organization
Leah Sirmin	FTA		Chris Timmel	FHWA
Andrew Reovan	FHWA		Annette Demchur	CTPS
Miranda Briseño	MassDOT		Rebecca Morgan	CTPS
Betsy Harvey	CTPS		Ari Ofsevit	FTA
Jonathan Church	CTPS		Brandon Burns*	FTA
Derek Krevat	MassDOT		Tyler Terrasi*	MWRTA
Sandy Johnston	CTPS		Srilekha Murthy*	CTPS
Logan Casey	CTPS		Babatunde Tugbobo*	FTA



Casey Cooper	CTPS		Sean Rourke*	CTPS
Michelle Scott	CTPS		William Conroy*	BRMPO
Jonathan Belcher	CTPS		Margaret Griffin*	FTA
Tegin Teich	CTPS		Paul Christner*	CTPS
Ryan Bartlett	FTA		Stella Jordan*	CTPS
Tina Hooper	FHWA		Rose McCarron*	CTPS
Judy Taylor	CTPS		Joy Glynn*	MWRTA
Benjamin Krepp	CTPS		Marty Milkovits*	CTPS

\*Attended via Zoom



## Appendix B – On-Site Meeting Agenda

### Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Planning Certification Review

10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA; Conf Rm 5 & 6  
 September 28 and 29, 2022

#### Agenda

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84440666546>

Meeting ID: 844 4066 6546

Call-in Number: 1-929-205-6099

#### DAY I – Wednesday, September 28 | 9:00 – 3:35

9:00	9:15	Welcome and Introductions
9:15	9:45	MPO Showcase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities/Accomplishments</li> </ul>
9:45	10:30	MPO Organization and Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2011 3C MOU</li> <li>• Operations plan</li> <li>• Policy board member engagement</li> <li>• RTAC</li> </ul>
10:30	10:40	<i>Break</i>
10:40	11:10	TMA Coordination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal/external coordination</li> <li>• Discretionary grants</li> <li>• Data sharing</li> </ul>
11:10	11:40	Financial Planning (MTP & TIP)
11:40	12:40	<i>Lunch</i>
12:40	1:40	TIP Development and Project Selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project readiness / project replacement process</li> <li>• TIP Evaluation Criteria</li> </ul>
1:40	1:50	<i>Break</i>
1:50	2:35	Public Outreach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Engagement Plan</li> <li>• Communications and Engagement Team</li> <li>• Effectiveness Evaluation</li> </ul>
2:35	3:35	Civil Rights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2020 Title VI Plan</li> <li>• EJ, Equity in all policies (EiAP)</li> <li>• ADA</li> <li>• LEP</li> </ul>



## Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Planning Certification Review

10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA; Conf Rm 5 & 6  
 September 28 and 29, 2022

### Agenda

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84892598978>  
 Meeting ID: 848 9259 8978  
 Call-in Number: 1-646-931-3860

#### DAY 2 – Thursday, September 29 | 9:00 – 12:15

9:00	9:45	Transit Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transit Working Group</li> <li>• Coordinated Public Transit - Human Services Plan</li> </ul>
9:45	10:15	Bike and Pedestrian Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UPWP Studies/Activities</li> <li>• Data Collection</li> <li>• Project Selection</li> </ul>
10:15	10:45	Freight Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freight Planning Action Plan</li> <li>• UPWP Studies/Activities</li> <li>• LRTP/TIP Freight Evaluation Criteria</li> </ul>
10:45	11:00	<i>Break</i>
11:00	11:30	Resiliency and Environmental Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UPWP Studies/Activities</li> </ul>
11:30	12:00	Performance Based Planning & Programming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring and Evaluation</li> <li>• Evolution of PBPP/Next Steps</li> </ul>
12:00	12:15	Wrap up



## Appendix C – Notification Letter



**U.S. Department  
of Transportation**

Federal Highway Administration  
MA Division  
55 Broadway, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Cambridge, MA 02142-1093  
617-494-3657  
617-494-3355 (fax)

Federal Transit Administration  
Region I  
55 Broadway, Suite 920  
Cambridge, MA 02142-1093  
617-494-2055  
617-494-2865 (fax)

May 6, 2022

David Mohler  
Executive Director  
Office of Transportation Planning  
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4150  
Boston, MA 02116

***Subject: Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Federal Certification Review***

Dear Mr. Mohler:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will be conducting a certification review of the transportation planning process for the Boston urbanized area, as conducted by the Boston Region MPO, between September 26-29, 2022. These dates have been confirmed with MassDOT, Boston Region MPO, Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), Cape Ann Regional Transit Authority (CATA), and MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) staff and the meeting will be held either in-person or virtually using an agreed-upon web-based platform. The review will look at the cooperative planning process as conducted by the planning partners at the State, MPO, and public transportation operators in the area. All participants in the planning process are welcome to attend the review.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) continues the requirement for certification of the transportation planning process in urbanized areas with populations exceeding 200,000 once every four years. Certification reviews are conducted with the objective of evaluating the transportation planning process. Our approach is to provide an open forum for the exchange of information and ideas that will serve to identify effective practices, as well as opportunities for improvement. The review will rely extensively on knowledge gained throughout routine contact with the planning process, as well as the scheduled certification review meeting.

As part of the certification review process, FHWA and FTA will collect input from members of the public and stakeholders concerning their views on the transportation planning process being conducted in the metropolitan area.

If you have any questions, please contact Cassandra Ostrander, FHWA Program Development Team Leader, at (617) 494-3113 or Leah Sirmin, FTA Community Planner, at (617) 494-2459.



Sincerely,

**KENNETH  
S MILLER** Digitally signed by  
KENNETH S MILLER  
Date: 2022.05.06  
08:39:22 -04'00'

*for* Jeffrey H. McEwen, P.E.  
Division Administrator  
Federal Highway Administration

**PETER  
SHANNON  
BUTLER** Digitally signed by PETER  
SHANNON BUTLER  
Date: 2022.05.06 11:02:37 -04'00'

Peter Butler  
Regional Administrator  
Federal Transit Administration

cc: Derek Krevat, Manager of MPO Activities, MassDOT  
Tegin Teich, Executive Director, Boston Region MPO  
Jonathan Church, Transportation Program Manager, Boston Region MPO  
Steve Poftak, General Manager, MBTA  
Felicia Webb, Administrator, CATA  
Ed Carr, Administrator, MWRTA



## Appendix D – Public Meeting Notice



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

Federal Highway Administration  
 MA Division  
 55 Broadway, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
 Cambridge, MA 02142-1093  
 617-494-3657  
 617-494-3355 (fax)

Federal Transit Administration  
 Region I  
 55 Broadway, Suite 920  
 Cambridge, MA 02142-1093  
 617-494-2055  
 617-494-2865 (fax)

### Public Input Opportunity

#### Come share your views about the transportation planning process in the Boston region!

Every four years, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are required to review the metropolitan transportation planning process conducted by the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Massachusetts Department of Transportation, area providers of public transportation, and local municipal partners in order to certify that they are carrying out the process in accordance with all applicable Federal requirements.

As part of this review, the Federal agencies would like to hear from members of the public on their views of how the metropolitan transportation planning process is conducted in the region.

Please attend either upcoming virtual public input session conducted by FHWA and FTA. The first virtual public meeting session will be held during a regularly scheduled Boston Region Regional Transportation Advisory Council (RTAC) meeting, and a second virtual public meeting session will be held during the regularly scheduled Boston Region MPO meeting.

**Session 1 - During the regularly scheduled  
RTAC meeting**

**Time:** 2:30 PM – 4:00 PM  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 14, 2022  
**Location:** This meeting will be held  
virtually through [Zoom](#).

**Session 2 - During the regularly scheduled  
MPO meeting**

**Time:** 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM  
**Date:** Thursday, October 6, 2022  
**Location:** This meeting will be held  
virtually through [Zoom](#).

If you are unable to attend, you may also submit your comments or observations in writing by **October 14, 2022**, to:

**FHWA:** Cassie Ostrander, Program Development Team Leader  
 55 Broadway, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor; Cambridge, MA 02142  
 Email: [cassandra.ostrander@dot.gov](mailto:cassandra.ostrander@dot.gov)

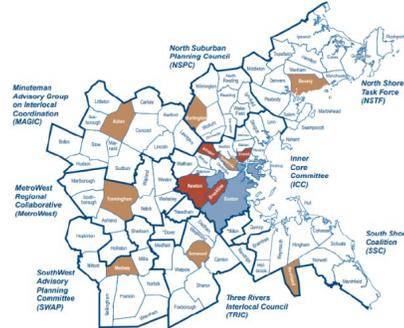
**FTA:** Leah Sirmin, Community Planner  
 55 Broadway, Suite 920; Cambridge, MA 02142  
 Email: [leah.sirmin@dot.gov](mailto:leah.sirmin@dot.gov)

*To request accommodations, or if you need this information in another language, contact the MPO at 857.702.3700 (voice), 617.570.9193 (TTY), or [civilrights@ctps.org](mailto:civilrights@ctps.org).*



# Appendix E – Public Meeting Certification Review Handout

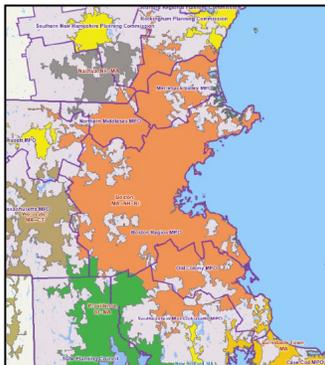
## 2022 Federal Certification Review of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Boston, MA-NH-RI Transportation Management Area



### Overview

At least once every four years, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) must certify that a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) serving a Transportation Management Area (TMA) – an urbanized area with a population over 200,000 – is carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process in adherence with federal requirements under [23 U.S.C. 134](#) and [49 U.S.C. 5303](#). The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) jointly conduct this review, make a certification determination, and produce a report that may include compliance issues (corrective actions), areas for improvement (recommendations), and/or notable practices (commendations). Based on these findings, the MPO will either be “certified,” “certified with conditions or restrictions,” or “not certified”.

### Boston, MA-NH-RI TMA



#### Served by:

- **Boston Region MPO** →
- Central Massachusetts MPO
- Merrimack Valley MPO
- Montachusett MPO
- Northern Middlesex MPO
- Old Colony MPO
- Southeastern Massachusetts MPO
- Rockingham Planning Commission (NH)
- Nashua Regional Planning Council MPO (NH)
- Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (NH)
- Statewide Planning Council (RI)



**Elected Officials**

### Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process

A **continuous**, **cooperative**, and **comprehensive** (3-C) process that informs transportation decisions, including how projects are selected and prioritized for implementation within a region.

With limited funds, this is critical for prioritizing regional needs and identifying projects that best meet performance goals and objectives while providing public benefit. The process assists in developing a framework for the future transportation system.

### 3-C Planning Process

**Continuous** – Regularly addressing short-term needs and long-term regional goals

**Cooperative** – Involving all interested parties through a public participation process

**Comprehensive** – Multimodal in scope and consistent with other regional and statewide planning products and federal planning factors



## Four Key MPO Planning Documents

Please note that there are other federal requirements applicable to MPOs, but these are four core planning documents that frame the metropolitan transportation planning process.

### Public Participation Plan (PPP)

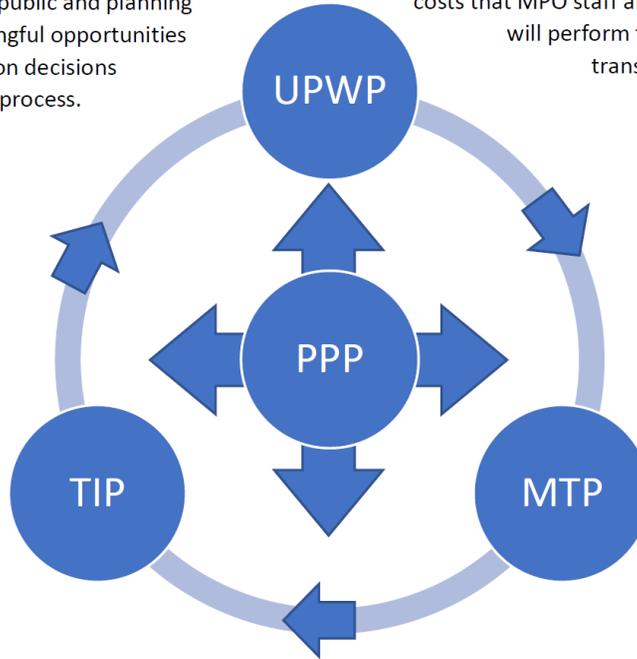
Documents public involvement strategies that provide the general public and planning stakeholders with meaningful opportunities to influence transportation decisions throughout the planning process.

*Updated as needed*

### Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Lists transportation tasks, products, and associated costs that MPO staff and other responsible parties will perform to support the metropolitan transportation planning process.

*Updated annually*



### Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Identifies transportation investments, and associated costs, by year for implementation in the region over the next 4 to 5 years. Projects reflect investment priorities from the MTP and activities from the UPWP.

*Updated annually*

### Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

**Also known as a Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)**

Establishes regional goals, strategies, projects, and priorities for an integrated intermodal transportation system that reflect current and future demand over at least 20 years.

*Updated every four years*

#### How is the Process Going? We Want Your Input!

Written comments can be submitted by October 14, 2022 to:

**FHWA:** Cassie Ostrander, Program Development Team Leader  
[cassandra.ostrander@dot.gov](mailto:cassandra.ostrander@dot.gov) or  
55 Broadway, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor; Cambridge, MA 02142

**FTA:** Leah Sirmin, Community Planner  
[leah.sirmin@dot.gov](mailto:leah.sirmin@dot.gov) or  
55 Broadway, Suite 920; Cambridge, MA 02142

#### Things to Think About...

What are your views on the planning process?

- What are some challenges?
- What are some strengths?

Do you feel you understand how the planning process works and how to get involved?

Do you feel like you have adequate opportunities to participate and be heard?



## Appendix F – Public Comments

FHWA and FTA jointly led two public involvement sessions to hear from the public on how they feel the metropolitan planning process is working in the Boston region. The first session occurred as part of the RTAC's regularly scheduled meeting on September 14, 2022, and the second session was part of the BRMPO's regularly scheduled meeting on October 6, 2022. At both of these sessions, FHWA and FTA provided an overview of the TMA certification review process and then opened it up to the public to share their comments. At the RTAC meeting, six individuals spoke. These individuals commented on the need for improved regional coordination between MPOs, especially considering transit between communities within different MPOs, as well as the need for coordination between communities within the same region; a desire to see sustainability, resiliency and intelligent design incorporated more into projects; the benefits that could be gleaned from post-delivery project assessment and evaluation; a lack of understanding and need for education of the planning process for participants and the public in order to effectively engage; and the unclear and undefined role that RTAC plays in the planning process, including its composition and importance. At the BRMPO meeting, seven individuals spoke. These individuals commented on the great work the MPO staff is doing and has done transitioning from in-person to virtual meetings due to the pandemic and noted the increase in Board member representation at the MPO meetings as a result, also observing that the shift to virtual meetings has eliminated some valuable opportunities for informal discussion and learning. Additional comments were received related to public outreach, both positive and negative: one individual mentioned that the region should take public input more seriously and consider doing more public events and bringing MPO content to other settings, while others mentioned they have been impressed with how the BRMPO handles public input and that there are many opportunities for the public to provide input in many different ways. Other commenters noted the heavy influence MassDOT has on the MPO, urged consideration of a seat for MWRTA on the Boston Region MPO Policy Board, and the importance of continuing to deliver projects and do corridor studies that help communities and towns. Another aspect that was commented on is the length of time it takes to go from a planning study or even a design public meeting to completion of a project and the difficulties that presents when trying to inform and engage the public.

In addition to the two public meetings held and mentioned above, an online feedback form was sent to members of the MPO Policy Board to solicit their input specifically. Eight MPO members responded, and comments were generally positive, highlighting that the MPO values input from its members in the decision-making process. Members also felt the MPO is responsive to new opportunities, noting their recent efforts in applying for a Safe Streets and Roads for All grant. Additionally, though, a common theme noted in a few comments was related to MassDOT's



role in the planning process and on the MPO Policy Board; members generally feel that MassDOT holds the power to make decisions and it is often difficult for MPO members to exercise their influence and challenge MassDOT.

Four written comments were also received from private citizens and residents within the region as well as from MWRTA. In its comments, MWRTA reiterated its statements previously made at the MPO public meeting regarding a seat on the Policy Board. The other written comments were similar to what FHWA and FTA heard at the public meetings and through MPO feedback. Comments on the MPO's public outreach process described the inadequacies of MPO staff notifying the public of upcoming meetings and availability of documents for review. One commentor spoke specifically to how the MPO relies heavily on email lists and should incorporate more paper flyers in mailboxes and visual sign advertisements throughout communities. Commenters also noted they were unsatisfied with the times scheduled for project meetings and comment periods, stating they were inconvenient and have often occurred around a holiday or school vacation. Additional comments were made regarding outdated information provided on the MPO's website, specifically referring to the interactive maps and the 2017 MPO Title VI Plan. Additional concerns raised included the impacts of post-COVID travel changes on the region's plans, staffing needs of the MPO, and the implications of the recent safety management inspection of the MBTA by FTA.



## Appendix G – Previous Findings and Disposition

The last certification review for the BRMPO for the Boston MA-NH-RI UZA was conducted in 2018 & 2019. The joint FHWA/FTA certification letter was issued on April 24, 2019, subject to the resolution of two corrective actions. As of December 2019, both corrective actions were resolved. FHWA and FTA jointly issued a letter on April 23, 2020, acknowledging resolution and officially recertifying the transportation planning process. The previous Certification Review findings and their dispositions are summarized below. Please note that dispositions below are reported by CTPS staff; they do not serve as an assessment by the Federal Review Team.

### **BRMPO 2018/2019 Certification Findings (as of October 2022)**

Finding	Corrective Actions/ Recommendations	Action	Disposition
<p><b>List of Obligated Projects</b>            In coordination with MassDOT and public transit operators, develop and publish a complete listing of obligated projects within 90 days after the close of the federal fiscal year. Include the approved amount programmed in the TIP, the total amount obligated, and the remaining balance for each project. This will ensure that the list of obligated projects fully meets all the required elements per 23 CFR 450.334.</p>	<p>Corrective Action</p>	<p>BRMPO staff have posted the FFY 2018 highway obligated projects list to the BRMPO web page, and have requested information on FFY 2018 obligated projects from the MWRTA, CATA, and the MBTA. BRMPO staff will work with MassDOT, the MBTA, and the regional transit authorities to post a complete listing of obligated projects within 90 days after the close of the federal fiscal year.</p>	<p>Completed for 2018, 2019, 2020 &amp; 2021 projects.</p>
<p><b>Air Quality</b>            Update MOU between the MPOs, MassDOT, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and providers of public transportation to include current requirements and the specific requirements of the <i>South Coast Air Quality Management District vs. EPA</i> ruling.</p>	<p>Corrective Action</p>	<p>The MassDOT-developed draft MOU update was presented and reviewed with staff from all MPOs in the Commonwealth, FHWA, FTA, EPA, and DEP at the annual air quality consultation meeting on March 6, 2019. At that meeting, MassDOT requested any additional comments or suggested edits within two weeks. DEP started a review by its general counsel and needed a longer comment period.</p>	<p>Completed. The MassDOT-developed Air Quality MOU was signed by all parties in September and October 2019.</p>



		MassDOT received a response from DEP on June 5, 2019. Since that time, MassDOT has worked with DEP to iron out remaining points of clarification. The revised draft is being distributed to the MPOs for their final review and signature. The expected timing of final MOU completion is early August 2019.	
<p><b>Metropolitan Transportation Plan</b>  a. Include a description of performance measures and targets used in assessing the performance of the transportation system in accordance with 23 CFR 450.306(d). Include a system performance report evaluating progress in meeting performance targets.</p>	Recommendation	<p>The BRMPO MTP, Destination 2040, to be adopted in August 2019, includes a system performance report as required by federal legislation. It will include a description of performance measures and targets adopted by the BRMPO as of March 2019.</p> <p>Performance reports in future LRTPs will describe the BRMPO’s progress in meeting these initial targets.</p>	Complete
<p><b>Metropolitan Transportation Plan</b>  b. Integrate in the MTP the goals, objectives, performance measures and targets described in other transportation planning documents, such as the transportation asset management plan (TAMP), highway safety improvement program (HSIP), Freight Plan, transit asset management (TAM) plan and others as applicable.</p>	Recommendation	<p>The Destination 2040 MTP incorporates the goals, objectives, performance measures, and targets described in MassDOT’s TAMP, TAM, HSIP, and freight transportation planning documents.</p> <p>Performance reports in future LRTPs will describe the BRMPO’s progress in meeting these initial targets.</p>	Complete
<p><b>TIP</b>  Include specific descriptions of the anticipated effect of the TIP toward achieving the performance targets and linking investment priorities to those performance targets.</p>	Recommendation	<p>The Performance Analysis chapter of the FFYs 2020—24 TIP details the BRMPO’s targets for federally required performance measures and describes how the projects in the TIP are</p>	Complete



		expected to make progress towards these targets. BRMPO staff will continue to improve these descriptions in future TIP development cycles.	
<p><b>Financial Planning</b>          In cooperation with MassDOT and the other MPOs, explore updating the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) formula to reflect current inputs (i.e., population and road mileage).</p>	Recommendation	BRMPO staff discussed this issue with MassDOT.	The TMG formed a PL Formula Subcommittee to discuss the formula for distributing planning funds to MPOs. ... This effort, while not directly addressing the MARPA formula for allocating capital funds to MPOs, provides an opportunity to explore the currently used and alternative factors such as road miles, employment, and public transit service. These conversations could provide a framework for a future MARPA formula discussion....The PL subcommittee has scheduled a meeting to discuss next steps on October 31, 2023.
<p><b>Congestion Management Process</b>          Develop and implement a process for periodic assessment of implemented strategies to better inform decision-making on potential congestion management strategies in the future. This should include evaluating projects and strategies beyond those that have been constructed with BRMPO target funds.</p>	Recommendation	BRMPO staff will perform before and after studies to evaluate congestion and safety strategies at recently completed BRMPO TIP-funded and other locations.	Staff continue work to finalize the TIP Project Impacts: Before and After Evaluations study and develop a new process to evaluate TIP projects.
<p><b>Air Quality</b>          Ensure all files associated with air quality conformity are readily available, should the public or another entity request to review (i.e., Motor Vehicle Emission Simulator (MOVES) input files, Conformity SIP).</p>	Recommendation	MassDOT is responsible for determining conformity for Massachusetts; because of this, staff believe that MassDOT should be responsible for storing and archiving MOVES inputs and resulting emission factors. Staff recommend that	MassDOT posted the updated emission factor information on its website ( <a href="https://www.mass.gov/info-details/mobile-source-emission-factors">https://www.mass.gov/info-details/mobile-source-emission-factors</a> ) in December 2021.



		<p>MassDOT provide the MOVES inputs and resulting factors on its website, and BRMPO and other Massachusetts MPOs would provide a link from their websites to this MassDOT site.</p>	<p>CTPS provided a link to this information on its website (<a href="https://www.bostonmpo.org/content/mobile-source-emission-factors-used-statewide-and-metropolitan-planning-organization-air">https://www.bostonmpo.org/content/mobile-source-emission-factors-used-statewide-and-metropolitan-planning-organization-air</a>) as part of the Data Catalog.</p>
<p><b>MPO Organizational Structure</b>  a. Develop an operations plan, as called for in the MOU. An operations plan should clarify roles and responsibilities among BRMPO members and staff, particularly among CTPS, MAPC, and MassDOT, pertaining to collaboration, communication, work assignments, and products. Additionally, it should provide further clarification on the roles of the Chair and Vice Chair, define officer roles for sub-committees, and identify other necessary processes to support an effective 3C process and facilitate BRMPO operations as the regional forum for transportation decision-making.</p>	<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>BRMPO staff will work with BRMPO board members and/or a subcommittee to determine an approach to developing an operations plan. Once the approach is determined, BRMPO staff will support the development of an operations plan.</p>	<p>The Administration and Finance Committee continues to work on development of the operations plan, and staff continue to work with members to draft sections of the plan. The committee plans, when feasible, to meet twice each month to continue developing the plan with the goal of completing a draft plan for MPO Board review early in calendar 2023.</p>
<p><b>MPO Organizational Structure</b>  b. Review voting procedures for BRMPO Board seats to ensure that all communities in the region are effectively engaged and they result in effective representation.</p>	<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>BRMPO staff will work with the MAPC (the Vice Chair of the BRMPO), MassDOT, and BRMPO members and/or a subcommittee to review the voting procedures.</p>	<p>The board voted on the following proposals, intended to increase municipal engagement:  1. Change the board’s voting procedures, such that only the municipalities in each individual subregion will vote for that subregional representative. The board approved this change in the voting procedures.</p>



			<p>2. Change the voting procedures such that the cities only vote for the two at-large city seats and that towns only vote for the two at-large town seats. The board did not approve this change in the voting procedures.</p> <p>The board also discussed the possibility of setting term limits, but no motion was presented; the board deferred on the issue. Staff will continue to expand outreach efforts to increase awareness of the benefits of engaging with the MPO. In addition, staff will work with MAPC and the MBTA Advisory Board to expand outreach for future elections.</p>
<p><b>MPO Organizational Structure</b> c. Seek to broaden the information and training opportunities available to the board members about current best practices in transportation planning.</p>	<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>BRMPO staff will work with BRMPO members to identify appropriate information and training opportunities related to best practices in the field of regional transportation planning and new technologies and trends that are influencing the field.</p> <p>BRMPO staff recently contributed to a case study report published by the Federal Highway Administration entitled “Integrating Shared Mobility into Multimodal Transportation Planning: Metropolitan Area Case Studies,” as part of this, BRMPO staff, in coordination with MAPC, are presenting on a webinar</p>	<p>Staff continue to provide forums that expose Board members to other transportation stakeholders through quarterly Inner Core Committee transportation meetings and Transit Working Group small meetings and focus groups.</p>



		on July 30, 2019. BRMPO staff intend to notify BRMPO members of this learning opportunity.	
<p><b>Public Outreach and Public Involvement</b>  a. Refine efforts to measure the effectiveness of public involvement strategies.</p>	Recommendation	BRMPO staff are working to develop a more robust approach to tracking outreach strategies by type, populations reached, and outcomes. Staff are researching best practices used by other MPOs and will be testing new approaches to and methods for evaluating the effectiveness of various outreach strategies this summer (2019). Staff will continually refine these efforts as we continue to learn from our peers, test new approaches, and research best practices.	<p>Staff continue to track and analyze metrics around the BRMPO’s public engagement efforts according to the measures outlined in the PEP. Staff are preparing a memo summarizing engagement activities and effectiveness for FFY22 to share with the board, per guidance in the PEP. Staff continue to use tracking and analysis tools to identify action areas for improving engagement effectiveness, such as building relationships with representatives of under-engaged groups.</p> <p>Staff continue to work toward choosing an engagement tracking software solution to better track public comments, event participation, and engagement efforts.</p>
<p><b>Public Outreach and Public Involvement</b>  b. Establish a social media policy that makes clear to the public how comments received through social media will be used, i.e., whether or not they will become part of the public record and be considered for incorporation into plans and projects.</p>	Recommendation	BRMPO staff are working on drafting a social media policy.	<p>With the challenges of virtual engagement, staff capacity to focus on developing the social media policy has been limited. BRMPO is exploring ways to expand its capacity to develop such policies. The Outreach and Communications team has started the next phase of the communications audit, which includes interviews with select</p>



			<p>BRMPO staff members to engage in a discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of the agency’s external communications efforts. Staff are developing a schedule for external interviews.</p>
<p><b>Transit Planning</b>  a. Refine the TIP project selection and prioritization process in consideration of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a clear, mode-neutral process by which transit projects, including, but not limited to, bus priority projects, can be planned and programmed with consideration for all eligible funding sources.</li> </ul>	<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>It is BRMPO staff practice to work with the BRMPO to revise its TIP project selection criteria after the adoption of new goals and objectives in the LRTP. The next LRTP is scheduled to be endorsed by the BRMPO in August 2019, and BRMPO staff’s work to revise TIP project selection criteria began in June 2019.</p> <p>Since the BRMPO may adopt a Transit Modernization Investment Program and a Dedicated Bus Lane Investment Program (subset of the existing Complete Streets Investment Program) in the new LRTP, BRMPO staff will focus on developing TIP project evaluation criteria that allow the BRMPO to analyze and prioritize future projects that fall into these investment categories.</p>	<p>BRMPO staff will continue to solicit transit projects and evaluate them using the BRMPO’s newly adopted TIP scoring criteria. This effort will include a range of transit project types across the BRMPO’s investment programs, including dedicated bus lanes, transit operating projects, and other transit capital projects.</p> <p>Complete (for clarification of BRMPO evaluation of MassDOT and MBTA TIP projects and explanation of the alignment between CIP and TIP project selection processes).</p>
<p><b>Transit Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarifying in public documents how the MPO evaluates proposed project lists from MassDOT and the MBTA, (for inclusion in the TIP), how these proposals address the targets which have been adopted for Performance Based Planning and Programming, and how the CIP and TIP project selection processes are aligned.</li> </ul>	<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>Chapter 2 of the FFYs 2020–24 TIP clarifies how the BRMPO considers MassDOT and MBTA projects proposed for the TIP. The BRMPO does not currently evaluate these projects in the same way that they do the group of TIP projects funded with regional target funds. Projects proposed by MassDOT and the MBTA are evaluated with</p>	<p>MPO staff will continue to describe how investments included in the TIP, both those prioritized by the MPO and those prioritized by the Commonwealth or regional transit agencies, address adopted targets for Performance-based Planning and Programming. This information will be included in the Performance</p>



		<p>criteria established by the PSAC. While the BRMPO currently uses project selection criteria that are different from MassDOT’s PSAC criteria, the BRMPO develops project criteria with consideration of the PSAC criteria. The impact of this coordination is that all funded projects in the region (regionally funded/prioritized and state funded/prioritized) are prioritized in a way that moves the region towards the common goals and objectives of the BRMPO and MassDOT.</p> <p>Chapter 2 of the TIP also describes how the CIP and TIP project selection processes are aligned.</p> <p>Chapter 4 of the FFYs 2020–24 TIP explains and analyzes how investments, both regionally prioritized and state prioritized, address the targets adopted for Performance-Based Planning and Programming.</p>	<p>Analysis chapter of the FFYs 2022–26 TIP and future TIPs.        Complete for FFYs 2022–26 TIP        Complete for FFYs 2023–27 TIP</p>
<p><b>Transit Planning</b>        b. The BRMPO, MassDOT, and MBTA should develop a consolidated list of ferryboat funding in the TIP, such as a separate summary table, including FBP funds, any discretionary funds awarded to the region, and 5307 and 5337 funds allocated for ferry capital projects.</p>	<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>BRMPO staff will work with MassDOT, the MBTA, and other stakeholders to develop a consolidated list of ferryboat funding in the TIP.</p>	<p>MassDOT provided a list of ferryboat funding in the TIP</p>
<p><b>Transit Planning</b>        c. The MBTA and CTPS should use their combined expertise in reporting to the NTD to identify any other eligible services within the TMA which could be voluntary reporters and</p>	<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>BRMPO staff will work with MassDOT Rail and Transit and the MBTA to identify potential voluntary NTD reporters.</p>	<p>Staff completed verifying the eligibility of the potential voluntary reporters.</p>



<p>contribute to the state’s formula fund apportionment, including, but not limited to, ferry operators, intercity bus operators, and municipal transit systems.</p>			
<p><b>Title VI and Nondiscrimination Data Collection and Analysis</b>  a. Complete further analysis to ensure that the transportation needs of Title VI and EJ communities are being met.</p>	<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>BRMPO staff will continue to explore and implement additional ways to determine if the transportation needs of Title VI and EJ populations are being met.</p>	<p>BRMPO staff continue to work on the study Identifying Transportation Inequities in the Boston Region and plan on completing the study this quarter. Staff also continue to conduct equity-related analyses—including air quality, safety, and transportation access analyses—for the Long-Range Transportation Needs Assessment.</p>
<p><b>Title VI and Nondiscrimination Data Collection and Analysis</b>  b. Develop disparate impact/disproportionate thresholds as referenced in the MTP. Accurate thresholds are critical to ensuring and demonstrating equitable transportation planning.</p>	<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>In May 2019, the BRMPO completed phase one of developing a methodology to identify potential DI/DBs. In this first phase, staff identified the forecasting error for each metric used to determine DI/DBs. BRMPO staff will conduct a UPWP study in FFY 2020 to complete phase two, which will develop a threshold for each metric.</p>	<p>BRMPO staff completed the “Disparate Impact Metrics Analysis” study and finalized a DI/DB Policy for the MTP. This included reconvening the DI/DB Policy Working Group in August 2020. The DI/DB Policy will be presented to the MPO board for its endorsement in November 2020.</p>
<p><b>Title VI and Nondiscrimination Data Collection and Analysis</b>  c. Update the website to publicize the findings/recommendations or status update of the DI/DB policy working group. The participating stakeholders may feel their efforts to be heard were futile and become discouraged from participating in future events.</p>	<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>The BRMPO website includes the findings and recommendations of the DI/DB Policy Working Group and the resulting draft DI/DB Policy, and references plans to refine the draft policy in FFY 2020.</p>	<p>Complete</p>
<p><b>Title VI and Nondiscrimination Outreach, Access &amp; Limited English Proficiency (LEP)</b></p>	<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>BRMPO staff will identify and implement new ways to engage Title VI and EJ</p>	<p>Engagement staff have identified the issue of compensating</p>



<p>Continue to implement innovative outreach techniques designed to engage traditionally underserved Title VI/EJ populations. The targeted outreach efforts can include participating in special events that may not have a transportation focused agenda but are held in LEP communities.</p>		<p>populations in BRMPO activities, especially people with limited English proficiency. BRMPO staff will continue to attend special events in communities around the region, using innovative engagement tools and evaluating outreach efforts.</p>	<p>advocates and members of the public in EJ and LEP communities for their time spent contributing to advisory groups, focus groups, and regular meetings as a barrier to deeper engagement. Staff have begun identifying possible solutions and studying the practices of other similar organizations. Staff continue to proactively engage and build relationships with representatives of EJ and LEP communities and seek opportunities to attend and participate in events in those communities.</p>
<p><b>Environmental Mitigation</b>        Address resiliency of the transportation system in the MTP and TIP selection criteria; and seek other opportunities to emphasize the importance of resiliency in transportation planning and programming of projects.</p>	<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>The BRMPO incorporated resiliency into its current MTP, Charting Progress to 2040, as part of its Needs Assessment under the System Preservation goal. It was also included in the evaluation of projects for the recommended MTP under that goal area, rating projects on the ability to improve emergency response and respond to extreme conditions. The new Destination 2040 MTP has strengthened resiliency in multiple areas of the MTP and Needs Assessment documents. The BRMPO broadened its System Preservation and Modernization goal to specifically include resiliency in its goal statement and continued to include it in the objectives. It expanded resiliency in the</p>	<p>The new TIP criteria, which include strengthening resiliency in project selection, were adopted by the MPO at its October 1, 2020, meeting. Resiliency information is being incorporated into the next MTP Needs Assessment and will be used when considering the MTP projects and program selection.</p>



		Needs Assessment and expanded its Complete Streets program to include resiliency investments as an eligible project type for TIP funding. With this new goal and the related objectives, the BRMPO will revisit its TIP project evaluation criteria beginning in the summer of 2019 to reflect the enhanced focus on resiliency and to account properly for projects that prioritize resiliency investments.	
<b>Performance-Based Planning and Programming</b> a. Performance Dashboard website should distinguish what content is related to federal performance measures and what is not related to federal performance measures. Throughout planning documents, ensure that performance measures, metrics, and related data and information are clearly defined and not conflicting.	Recommendation	BRMPO staff will review and update the Performance Dashboard and provide notes about whether specific content on the various pages relates to federally required performance measures. BRMPO staff will review planning documents during development cycles and make any necessary clarifications or text additions to ensure that performance measures, metrics, and related data and information are clearly and consistently defined. Where necessary, staff will provide explanations and define relationships between measures so they do not appear to be in conflict.	Updated text is now available in various pages on the MPO's Performance Dashboard site.  MPO staff will continue to ensure that descriptions of performance measures, metrics, and related data are clearly and consistently defined in planning documents and other materials. Complete
<b>Performance-Based Planning and Programming</b> b. The BRMPO, MassDOT, and providers of public transportation should evaluate existing planning agreements for any necessary updates regarding the roles and responsibilities for	Recommendation	The most recent coordination agreement for the Boston UZA was fully executed in January 2019, and the Performance-Based Planning and Programming Agreement for MassDOT, Massachusetts MPOs, and transit agencies was executed in April 2019.	Complete



<p>performance data, information sharing, target selection, and performance reporting.</p>		<p>These recent agreements accounted for roles and responsibilities for data and information sharing, target selection, and performance reporting. BRMPO staff may suggest updates for MassDOT and other signatories of these agreements to consider, as needed. BRMPO staff will also coordinate with MassDOT on any performance-related terms that should be incorporated into the updated Air Quality Agreement.</p>	
<p><b>Freight Planning</b>          Consider adopting a routine cycle to updating the Freight Action Plan.</p>	<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>BRMPO staff propose to prepare regular Freight Action Plan updates quadrennially to ensure that the Action Plan reflects the current needs of the BRMPO.</p>	<p>An update has been completed and was presented to the BRMPO in July 2019.</p>
<p><b>Connected and Autonomous Vehicles and Transportation Network Company</b>          a. Include rideshare CAVs into long-term planning activities.</p>	<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>BRMPO staff will continue to engage with stakeholders, academia, and other government entities to understand how TNCs and CAV technology will affect transportation planning in the region. Staff will work with MassDOT and the DPU to request information from TNCs and rideshare providers. Staff will explore new data sets and tools as a means to facilitate scenario planning and research opportunities concerning this topic in the Boston region.</p>	<p>BRMPO staff monitor developments in technology, data sets, research, and tools to understand how TNCs and CAVs should be incorporated into the BRMPO's long-term planning activities.</p>
<p><b>Connected and Autonomous Vehicles and Transportation Network Company</b>          b. Explore opportunities to more formally integrate rideshare and CAV interest into the RTAC, stakeholder working committees, etc. This could include representation from</p>	<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>BRMPO staff will conduct outreach to groups representing rideshare and CAV interests with the goal of getting them involved in RTAC. In addition, staff will solicit RTAC member interest in presentations</p>	<p>The RTAC membership outreach included the DPU and groups representing rideshare and CAV interests. Communications and Engagement staff continue to support RTAC and</p>



<p>Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities, neighborhood associations, and/or the business community.</p>		<p>concerning state of the practice and the BRMPO's efforts to incorporate rideshare services in long-term planning.</p>	<p>partner with members on membership expansion, programming meetings, and engagement planning. Staff continue to seek diverse representation from members of the advocacy and business communities.</p>
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## Appendix H – Federal Review Team

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## Appendix I – List of Acronyms

- 3C:** Continuing, Cooperative, and Comprehensive
- AADT:** Average Annual Daily Traffic
- ADA:** Americans with Disabilities Act
- AQ:** Air Quality
- BRMPO:** Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
- CATA:** Cape Ann Transit Authority
- CFR:** Code of Federal Regulations
- CMP:** Congestion Management Process
- CTPS:** Central Transportation Planning Staff
- DOT:** Department of Transportation
- EDC:** Every Day Counts
- EJ:** Environmental Justice
- FAST:** Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act
- FFY:** Federal Fiscal Year
- FHWA:** Federal Highway Administration
- FTA:** Federal Transit Administration
- HSIP:** Highway Safety Improvement Program
- ISTEA:** Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act
- LEP:** Limited English Proficiency
- LRTP:** Long Range Transportation Plan (also known as the “Metropolitan Transportation Plan”)
- MAPC:** Metropolitan Area Planning Council
- MassDOT:** Massachusetts Department of Transportation
- MOU:** Memorandum of Understanding
- MPA:** Metropolitan Planning Area
- MPO:** Metropolitan Planning Organization
- MTP:** Metropolitan Transportation Plan (also known as the “Long Range Transportation Plan”)
- MWRTA:** MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
- NHS:** National Highway System
- OTP:** Office of Transportation Planning (MassDOT)
- PBPP:** Performance Based Planning and Programming
- PPP:** Public Participation Plan
- PTASP:** Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan
- SAFETEA-LU:** Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users



**STIP:** Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

**TAM:** Transit Asset Management

**TAZ:** Traffic Analysis Zones

**TEC:** Transportation Evaluation Criteria

**TIP:** Transportation Improvement Program

**TMA:** Transportation Management Area

**TTTR:** Truck Travel Time Reliability

**UPWP:** Unified Planning Work Program

**U.S.C.:** United States Code

**USDOT:** United States Department of Transportation

**UZA:** Urbanized Area

**VPI:** Virtual Public Involvement





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