

MPO Meeting Minutes

Draft Memorandum for the Record

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

April 11, 2024, Meeting

10:00 AM–11:50 AM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

David Mohler, Chair, representing Monica Tibbits-Nutt, Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

Decisions

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) agreed to the following:

- Approve the minutes of the meeting of March 7, 2024
- Approve the work scope for Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) fiscal year 2025 National Transit Database
- Release the Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2024–28 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment Six for its 21-day public review period

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

See attendance on page 11.

2. Chair’s Report—*David Mohler, MassDOT*

There was none.

3. Executive Director’s Report—*Tegin Teich, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff*

T. Teich stated that staff tabled at a Massachusetts Institute of Technology youth climate action conference and created two surveys—one for advocacy and community-based organizations and one for municipal stakeholders—to advance work for the FFY 2024 discrete study on Strategies for Environmental Outreach and Engagement.

4. Public Comments

There were none.

5. Committee Chairs' Reports

Derek Krevat, MassDOT, stated that the Unified Planning Work Program Committee will meet following this meeting and decide which discrete studies to fund in the next fiscal year.

6. Regional Transportation Advisory Council Report—*Lenard Diggins, Chair, Regional Transportation Advisory Council*

L. Diggins stated that the previous meeting of the Advisory Council discussed language updates to the Memorandum of Understanding, the scenario for inclusion in the TIP, and the Unified Planning Work Program.

7. Action Item: Approval of March 7, 2024, MPO Meeting Minutes Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. March 7, 2024, Meeting Minutes ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

Vote

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 7, 2024, was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) (Eric Bourassa) and seconded by the Town of Arlington (John Alessi). The motion carried.

8. Action Item: Work Scope for MBTA Fiscal Year 2025 National Transit Database—*Bradley Putnam, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. Work Scope for MBTA Fiscal Year 2025 National Transit Database ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

B. Putnam stated that the Central Transportation Planning Staff have been supporting the MBTA in annual submissions to the National Transit Database for many years and that this work scope is a continuation of this. The budget is \$234,000 and expected to take 18 months. The work is funded by the MBTA.

Vote

A motion to approve the work scope for MBTA Fiscal Year 2025 National Transit Database was made by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins) and seconded by MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

9. Action Item: FFYs 2024-28 TIP Amendment Six—*Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO calendar

1. FFYs 2024–28 TIP Amendment Six ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

E. Lapointe stated that Amendment Six proposes changes to the Regional Target, Statewide Highway, and discretionary programs in FFY 2024. Changes include

- cost increases for the rehabilitation of a bridge carrying Route 30 over the Charles River in Newton and Weston and a small bridge replacement project in Canton and
- application of carryover Ferry Boat funding from FFY 2021 to the MBTA's Catamaran Overhaul Project.

E. Lapointe stated that staff request for the board to vote to release Amendment Six for its 21-day public review period.

Discussion

Jen Rowe, City of Boston, discussed the MBTA's Inner Harbor Connector Plan and asked if the Catamaran Overhaul Project is related to it. Sandy Johnston, MBTA, stated that he will follow up on this.

L. Diggins asked what mechanism allows for the carryover of funds from FFY 2021. D. Mohler stated that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) allows for funding to be carried over for a set number of years.

Vote

A motion to release the FFYs 2024–28 TIP Amendment Six for its 21-day public review period was made by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins) and seconded by the City of Boston (J. Rowe). The motion carried.

10. TIP Development: Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Capital Investment Plans (CIP)—*Jim Nee, MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) Staff and Felicia Webb, Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA) Staff*

J. Nee stated that RTAs assess the capital needs of the agency using a five-year horizon with major checkpoints occurring in each quarter. In Quarter One, RTAs review needs such as the Demand Response and ADA Paratransit Services, updates to the Transit Asset Management Plan, and capital improvements such as building and vehicle maintenance, technology, safety, and capital outreach. In Quarter Two, RTAs prepare a draft CIP for MassDOT review. In Quarter Three, the FTA announces 5307 formula funds for the Boston Urbanized Area, which is split amongst the RTAs. In Quarter 4, RTAs work with MassDOT and the MPO to support TIP and Statewide TIP approval.

Tyler Terassi, MWRTA Staff, discussed planned capital investments at the MWRTA. Investments are below, organized by FFY:

- FFY 2025
 - Replace and expand fixed route vehicles, including the introduction of heavy-duty transit low-emission and other higher capacity vehicles and supporting maintenance equipment
 - Replace two gasoline demand response vehicles with two fully electric vehicle vans
 - Maintain vehicle and infrastructure state of good repair
 - Blandin Hub Equitable Redesign
 - United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Phase 2 (will be applied for as a discretionary program)
- FFY 2026
 - Replace and expand fixed route vehicles including heavy-duty transit low-emission vehicles and other higher capacity vehicles, including related maintenance equipment
 - Maintain vehicle and infrastructure state of good repair
 - Continue zero-emission bus transition for the demand response fleet
 - USDOT SMART Phase 2 Construction
 - Final Design of Blandin Hub Equitable Redesign
- FFY 2027
 - Replace and expand fixed route vehicles including heavy-duty transit low-emission vehicles and other higher capacity vehicles
 - Maintain vehicle and infrastructure state of good repair
 - Continue zero-emission bus transition for the demand response fleet
 - Blandin Hub Equitable Redesign
 - USDOT SMART Phase 2 Construction Closeout
 - Fuel Cell Vehicle and Fueling Station Feasibility Study Phase 1
- FFY 2028
 - Replace and expand fixed route vehicles including heavy-duty transit low-emission vehicles and other higher capacity vehicles
 - Maintain vehicle and infrastructure state of good repair
 - Continue zero-emission bus transition for the demand response fleet
 - Relocation and construction of a new primary fixed route passenger transfer station
 - Fuel Cell Vehicle and Fueling Station Feasibility Study Phase 2
- FFY 2029
 - Replace and expand fixed route vehicles including heavy-duty transit low-emission vehicles and other higher capacity vehicles
 - Maintain vehicle and infrastructure state of good repair

- Continue zero-emission bus transition for the demand response fleet
- Fuel Cell/Zero Emission Bus Vehicle and Fueling Station Design/Build Project

F. Webb stated that CATA's five-year CIP programs 5307 formula and local funds, mainly for preventative maintenance activities, left a small remaining balance for other capital activities. Planned investments are below, organized by FFY:

- FFY 2025
 - Preventative maintenance and small capital/shop equipment
 - Replacement of four revenue vehicles that reached the end of their useful life in 2022 and 2023
 - Acquisition of support vehicles and replacement vans
 - ADA/Dial-a-Ride fare collection system
 - Building maintenance
- FFY 2026
 - Preventative maintenance, building maintenance, and small capital items
 - Replacement of three vehicles at the end of their useful life
- FFYs 2027–29
 - Preventative maintenance, general upkeep, and small capital items and shop equipment

Discussion

E. Bourassa asked if the MWRTA has a goal for when vehicles will be zero-emission. J. Nee stated that there are differing goals from federal and state partners on zero-emission transitions and stated that the MWRTA is working to reduce its reliance on its high-emission vehicles, currently used for demand response service. The goal is that in five years, the demand response fleet will be a zero-emission fleet, while the fixed route fleet is targeted to be converted in 10 years. J. Nee discussed the infrastructure needs of a zero-emission fleet.

11. TIP Development: MBTA CIP—Ryan Josti, MBTA Staff

Documents posted to the meeting calendar

1. MBTA Capital Program Project List ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))
2. MBTA Capital Program from Federal Funding ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))
3. MBTA FY 2025–29 CIP ([pdf](#))

Lynsey Heffernan, MBTA Staff, stated that the proposed CIP was developed in accordance with the Healey Administration, Secretary Tibbits-Nutt, and General Manager Eng to advance a transportation system of the future with investments that

address capital needs, keep the MBTA on a path to better safety, service, and sustainability, and focus on the investment objectives of safety, reliability, and modernization, accessibility, and sustainability and resilience. L. Heffernan stated that the capital program is being revamped under the leadership of General Manager Eng to generate efficiencies and deliver projects on time and on budget.

R. Josti stated that the CIP includes more than 630 projects, programming more than \$9.6 billion through the next five fiscal years, with \$843 million in new funding. Of the \$9.6 billion, 38 percent are federal funds, 11 percent are state funds, 50 percent are MBTA funds, and one percent is reimbursable funds. Proposed investments are focused on, but not limited to safety, reliability, and modernization, enhanced and improved accessibility, climate action in line with the Commonwealth's decarbonization and climate resilience goals, and modal initiatives. Investments included in the CIP can be found below:

- Major Investments
 - Structure Improvements
 - Full funding for North station Draw 1 Bridge Replacement
 - Urgent, near-term structural repair work systemwide
 - Life-extending repairs on multiple bridges
 - Commuter Rail and Ferry
 - 20-minute decarbonized service on the Fairmount Line
 - Ferry infrastructure, including accessibility improvements
 - Track Improvements
 - Vital track improvement work on rapid transit lines
 - Hi-Rail access tunnel on the Red Line
 - Washout prevention along the Commuter Rail system
 - Station Improvements
 - Accessibility improvements along the Green Line, including Newton Highlands
 - Station repairs, from stairs to lighting fixtures
 - Programmed station inspections and improvements
 - Bus Network
 - Bus Network Redesign implementation
 - New bus procurement
 - Transit Priority quick build and major corridor project
 - Sustainability and Resilience
 - Climate change vulnerability and adaptation planning
 - Energy efficiency improvements
 - Increased number of electric vehicle charging stations systemwide

- Bus Modernization
 - New funding
 - Phase 2 implementation of Bus Network Redesign
 - Transit priority to continue bus service modernization
 - Current funding
 - Construction of new Quincy facility and retrofit of North Cambridge bus garages to battery-electric buses (BEB)
 - Procurement of BEBs and overhaul of existing fleet
- Rail Modernization
 - New funding
 - Infrastructure to support 20-minute decarbonized service in the future on the Fairmount Line
 - Planning funds to continue advancing rail modernization
 - Current funding
 - Design activities on the Environmental Justice Corridor through Lynn and the Beverly section of the Rockport Line
 - Infrastructure improvements to deliver modernized 30-minute frequencies in the future on the Framingham/Worcester Line
- Safety, Reliability, and Modernization
 - New funding
 - North Station Draw 1 Bridge Replacement
 - Current funding
 - Green Line Type 10 vehicle procurement
- Accessibility
 - Green Line and bus improvements
 - Waban, Beaconsfield, Elliott, Chestnut Hill, Newton Highlands, Symphony stations
 - Priority bus stops in accordance with the Plan for Accessible Transit Infrastructure
 - Commuter Rail and ferry improvements
 - Construction of accessibility upgrades at Winchester Center, Natick Center, and North Wilmington Commuter Rail stations
 - Infrastructure and accessibility improvements to the ferry system
- Sustainability and Resilience
 - Climate planning and action
 - New funding
 - Sustainability assessment across modes and assets to identify action items and a critical path for a sustainable and resilient transit system

- Support climate action work to be developed by the Climate Policy and Planning Office
- Electric charging and non-revenue fleet
 - New funding
 - Electric charging stations at all maintenance and parking facilities
 - Ongoing procurement and modernization of non-revenue fleet to support operations and service reliability

L. Heffernan discussed challenges faced when trying to achieve the vision of the CIP. The MBTA has significant State of Good Repair needs, with an estimated State of Good Repair index of \$24.5 billion. This requires a complex and multi-year planning, design, and implementation strategy. L. Heffernan stated that declining funding availability beginning in fiscal year 2030 may hinder the ability to continue to invest at a large scale in capital items.

Discussion

E. Bourassa discussed the importance of achieving a state of good repair and making investments in vital, but less enticing advancements, such as rail infrastructure enhancements and encouraged the MBTA to discuss illustrative investments without financial constraint.

Jay Monty, City of Everett, discussed the constraints of the CIP and noted that it provides limited benefits to places like Everett that lack robust transit service and people who have limited or no transit service.

J. Rowe expressed interest in connecting on many specific projects.

Steve Olanoff, Three Rivers Interlocal Council, asked for additional information on rail electrification investments. L. Heffernan stated that the intention is to provide 20-minute decarbonized service on the Fairmount Line for fiscal year 2027, with current CIP funding to support infrastructure.

12. TIP Development: MassDOT CIP—Michelle Scott, MassDOT Staff Documents posted to the meeting calendar

1. MassDOT Highway Projects [\(pdf\)](#) [\(html\)](#)

M. Scott stated that the CIP is a fiscally constrained five-year plan that funds the planning, construction, and capital maintenance of the transportation system. M. Scott reviewed federal, state, MassDOT, and other funding sources. The CIP includes highway and transit projects reflected in the Statewide TIP along with other investments

selected through internal MassDOT and external processes. External factors shaping CIP development include implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, availability of Commonwealth funding and toll revenues, evolving travel demands, conditions and needs, partner planning processes, feedback on previous CIPs, and feedback from CIP engagement. Internal factors include the priorities of the Healey-Driscoll Administration, development of *Beyond Mobility*, findings and priorities from MassDOT modal and asset management, performance measures, and identified process improvements.

M. Scott stated that CIP investment focus areas include safety, climate stewardship, asset management, and partnerships with municipalities.

M. Scott stated that 84 percent of proposed fiscal year 2025–29 CIP spending is focused on reliability and modernization, with \$5.4 billion for the bridge program, \$908 million for interstate and non-interstate pavement programs, \$140 million for systematic safety improvements on state-owned roadways, \$2.5 billion for roadway improvements and reconstruction programs, and \$577 million for paving and capital needs at public use airports.

M. Scott stated that \$522 million is proposed for shared-use path and on-road improvements for bicycle and pedestrian travel, \$334 million for RTAs and other transit investments, \$392 million for statewide rail investments, and \$143 million for South Coast Rail. Electrification investments include \$86 million for the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure program supported investments to provide charging stations and \$54 million for RTA investments to fund electric vehicles and supporting infrastructure. Resiliency investments include \$30 million for the Highway Resiliency Program and \$5 million for planning to support a resilient transportation system.

Funding to support partnerships with municipalities includes \$1.02 billion for Chapter 90, \$75 million for Complete Streets, \$27 million for Local Bottleneck Reduction, \$125 million for municipal pavement, \$75 million for municipal small bridge, and \$32.5 million for shared streets and spaces.

M. Scott stated that the CIP provides support for major initiatives such as the I-90/I-495 interchange in Hopkinton and Westborough, Compass Rail and South Coast Rail, and the Cape Cod Bridges and the I-90 Allston Multimodal Project. Proposed CIP programs, currently under the Executive Office of Administration and Finance review, include a Transit Transportation Management Association grant program for \$25 million, a Water Transportation Pilot Program for \$28 million, and a Highway Freight Improvements Program for \$13 million.

M. Scott discussed opportunities to provide feedback on the CIP. Comments on projects planned or underway are shared with MassDOT Divisions to support project development and implementation and comments on projects not yet included are shared to indicate the level of public interest in the project. Comments on investment priorities and CIP programs shape ongoing and future transportation investment decisions. Comments about the CIP process can inform how MassDOT approaches investment decisions, how it communicates about the CIP, and how it engages Massachusetts residents.

M. Scott stated that work is underway to reorient MassDOT's future CIPs to align with *Beyond Mobility* priority areas and action items.

13. Members' Items

There were none.

14. Adjourn

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

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Jay Monty
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	John Alessi
At-Large Town (Town of Brookline)	Erin Chute
City of Boston (Boston Planning & Development Agency)	Jim Fitzgerald
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Jen Rowe
Federal Highway Administration	Joshua Barber
Federal Transit Administration	Kirstie Hostetter
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Brad Rawson
MassDOT Highway Division	David Mohler
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	John Bechard
Massachusetts Port Authority	John Romano
MBTA Advisory Board	Sandy Johnston
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Laura Gilmore
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham)	Eric Bourassa
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Acton)	Dennis Giombetti
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)	Kristen Guichard
North Suburban Planning Council (Town of Burlington)	Darlene Wynne
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Lenard Diggins
South Shore Coalition (Town of Hull)	Rachel Benson
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Wrentham)	Tom O'Rourke
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood)	Steve Olanoff

Other Attendees	Affiliation
Stephanie Abundo	
Karl Allen	City of Chelsea
Walter Bonin	Town of Marlborough
Miranda Briseño	MassDOT
John Cashell	Town of Woburn
Leonardo Cavalcanti	MBTA
Wes Edwards	MBTA
James White	
Glenn Geiler	MBTA
Laura Gilmore	MBTA
Joy Glynn	MWRTA
Lynsey Heffernan	MBTA
Jane Herlacher	Lincoln RTC
Andrew Jennings	
Ryan Josti	MBTA
Chris Klem	MassDOT
Josh Klingenstein	MBTA
Raissah Kouame	MassDOT
Derek Krevat	MassDOT
Aleida Leza	
Mike Malia	
Daniel Milbrandt	
Maya Mudgal	
Jim Nee	MWRTA
Josh Ostroff	MBTA
Sheila Page	Town of Lexington
Ian Perrault	
Marcia Rasmussen#	Town of Sudbury
Michelle Scott	MassDOT
Cheryll-Ann Senior	MassDOT
Derek Shooster	MassDOT
Tyler Terrasi	
Andrew Wang	MassDOT
Felicia Webb	CATA

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Tegin Teich, Executive Director

Abby Cutrumbes

Judy Day

Annette Demchur

Dave Hong

Stella Jordan

Ali Kleyman

Ethan Lapointe

Srilekha Murthy

Gina Perille

Bradley Putnam

Sam Taylor

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